



KALEIDOSCOPE

The big occasion of the past month was the appearance of Zora Arkus-Duntov, designer of the Corvette, at the G.M. Tech. Center last Jan. 22. Needless to say, the man knows his beans.. But, more than this, he proved himself an excellent orator; always having the situation well in hand giving anyone who dared a goodly share of verbal warfare. Those who tried to sharpshoot the man soon learned how vain the attempt was. The program, which was quite informative to say the least, was entertaining as well due mainly to the manner in which it was presented. The boss-men at the Center were more than cordial, and treated all who came as 'special' guests. Our hats of th Jim Peak, Zone Manager of Cheverolet, and Iir. Stehle, (hope the spelling of his name is correct) the gentleman behind the Center. Jim Case, chief instructor for Cheverolet at the Center, was kind enough to show your's truly and his "pal" Marilyn Kane through the classroom set up expressly for mechanics from the dealers in the area. Quite complete, to say the least. I'm waiting for classes to open for Corvette drivers. At that time, I'll camp out four weeks in advance at their front door!.....

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Don't forget the Corvette/Jaguar rallye coming up Sunday, Feb. 16. We've got to turn out strong, as we are returning the favor this time, remember? The evening will cap off the day with dinner (free, I hear) at the Village in Richmond. Everyone will have time to go home and clean up before dinner. See Ron Craven, Activities Chairman Supreme, for the details.....

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The Racing Driver's Club (RDC) is running their second practice race at the Kingdon Air Strip near Lodi on Sunday, Feb. 23... Ray Altman, who's name sounds quite familiar but who's face I can't place, has the details. I missed the last one (stock brakes are useless at these affairs - right, Newland?) but I hear Bob Nix looked real fine out there. Class B is getting pretty warm.....

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VERY BAD NEWS about Hugh Woods of Borrego Springs, Calif. One of the top Corvette pilots in the L.A. area, he ran into a peck of trouble at the last Paramount Races. Unfortunately, he lost control during practice and crashed into the end of a guard rail. I won't go into detail, but he was severely injured. I'm presently trying to get his address out of L.A. (yes, I have friends) at which time I'll send him a wire wishing him well on behalf of the NCCA.

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What happened to all my reporters?? Where's all the 'hot scoop' and interesting news (sometimes known as scandal) that all of you were going to get me. I know, you want to leave me to my own resources...That's fine, but I'm scrapping bottom now.

On Feb. 9, the Highlanders are opening their season with a high speed Auto-Cross being held at the Ford (kissin' cousin to the Thunderbarge) Plant in Milpetas. Judging from their past events, this promises to be a lulu. So, you fender-benders, come and run. They always show up in force at our events, so let's return the favor. Call Ken Wallace, persona non grata due to his many Auto-Cross wins, for details.....

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Congradulations to Bill Souja, Ray Altman, Ed McCarroll, John Milton, John Zeh, Nick Zeigler, Hank Vonder Mehden, Dick LaGrutta and Howard Hill on becoming proud Daddys of spanking new Corvettes...in cooperation with the B of A. .. Just to show that I'll take my share of the limelight, congratulations to me too!!

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Don't forget the change of meeting place for Feb. 4. Dailey's instead of Cochran & Celli, due to circumstances beyond our control....Be there, as this is the meeting at which we'll vote on the proposed amendments to our bylaws, as well as the prospective amendment to our Articles of Incorporation.

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Also, Feb. 9, the will be 'Roll-Bar Clinic' at Bill Breeze's Sport Car Center, near the Richardson Bay Bridge in Sausalito. A representative of the SCCA will be there to tell the wrongs and rights in regard to the proper installation, and will answer all your cotton-pickin' questions. (Take it from me...if you value your head, use Chrome Molley or Shelby Seanless. Water pipe is for the sink, not the track.

For the first time since the running of the 1957 Sebring, Corvettes saw International competition at Caracas, Venezuela in a Grand Prix for sport cars. Although they appeared somewhat large, etc. compared to the Maseratis & Ferraris, etc., they made a pretty fair showing for themselves. The trio of cars were led by America's top Corvette pilot, Dick Thompson. Two '58's and one '57 ran the race. Thompson came through with a 12th overall, and 6th in class, which isn't too bad against cars built expressly for racing. The race proved totally disastrous for the Maserati factory. A four of their cars entered, including a private entry...were demolished. This included three (count them) 4.5 litre v-8's, and one three litre, representing virtually hundreds of thousands of dollars. Whether or not this had any bearing on the factory's decision to withdraw from all competitions is anyone's guess. I guess yes.

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Dues for the year 1958 are now due and payable. Send your check to John Milton. Feb. 28th is the deadline! Don't take a chance on having your name dropped from the roster.

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In case you didn't notice, Jerry Austin, Los Angeles' top Corvette-pusher, amassed over 7000 points this past year in National competition. Took about 4th, I believe. He is the one who drives that red car with the 'C.S.Mead Chevrolet Co.' sticker on it. There's a deal! I'm still waiting for some dealer to break down my door and force me into driving one of his cars.

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Reminder...Bob Vitale and Pat Gellenbeck have a social lined up for March 2nd to a winery complete with dinner, I think. See them for details.

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I wish to inform all sports car drivers that my Corvette and I 'have arrived.' We were accepted today. An Isetta waved to me!!

A few days ago, the writer had the extreme pleasure of interviewing the immortal and world famous Guiseppe G. Gallo, designer of the famed "Gallo Thunderbird." Allow me to give you a thumbnail sketch of this worldly gentlemen.

A bottle baby of some reknown, Signor Gallo decided at the age of seven to build his own car and automotive company. (His ole man was getting tight with the family bus.) He took the motor out of an old vacuum cleaner and hooked it to his grandfather's Victrola. Thus was his first car born.....The Singer.....At the age of 13, G.G., as he is known to all his intimates (males not withstanding) ran away from home (actually, his folks moved and 'forgot' to tell him) and fled to Milano, the city now famous for the Maserati & Ferrari. Here, hungry and tired, he had no choice but to take a job in a bloomer factory. As he recalls it: "I used to pull down about twenty a week." He was speaking of his take home pay, naturally. By the age of 20, he had acquired such notoriety in this field, that he was forced to leave Italy, post haste. He journeyed to England,..without the benefit of steamship, and met an English nobleman who he immediately conned out of some 30,000 pounds. With these funds, he opened another automobile factory which immediately went into receivership. I understand he drank up the profits...all \$30.00. By this time, he began to think: "Thy buy booze, when I can make it." Such was the first inception of the Gallo Thunderbarge...er...I mean Thunderbird. Being known much too well in England, he came to America, where he was presently schooled at good ole Levenworth U. Upon release, I mean graduation, he set up shop with Angelo Petri to perfect a new type of injector system. After years of toil and hard work, they finally succeeded in their task. Such is how the drip-less wine bottle was born. The new idea clicked so well that many stars begged to be photographed with the subject of the idea. One such luminary to pose was the and only (we hope) Elsa Maxwell....Memorable yet is the portrait of Elsa, glass in hand, bottle akimbo, pasty look, which is affectionately remembered as: "The Bottle and the Bulge." At present, Guiseppe is a guest of the City of San Francisco (county jail). He still is acclaimed by thousands of followers, many of whom may be seen at 3rd and Howard Sts. in S.F.....Well...next time you see a Thunderbird, a dripless wine bottle, or Elsa, think of our hero, still residing in Sweet Solitude remembering the days when..Latest word says he is presently penning his memoirs in the pen. The forthcoming manuscript will be a sequel to 'The High and the Mighty.' It will be appropriately entitled: "The Mighty High."