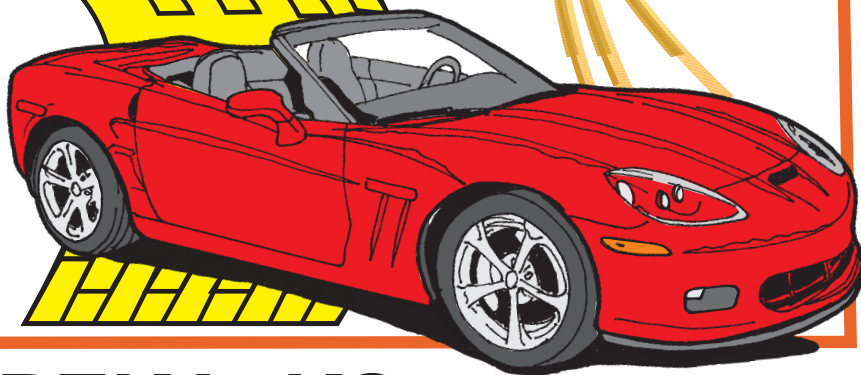


# Blue Bars

2012

WEST REGION



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# SUNBURST CC

## 35th

# ANNIVERSARY



On a cold March night in 1977, a small but dedicated band of Corvette enthusiasts met in the basement of the police station in Crystal Lake, Illinois. Their common interest brought them together to start something that has

grown and evolved over 35 years: the Sunburst Corvette Club! Yes, this storied club is celebrating their 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2012, and their renewed energy and enthusiasm is being broadcast with a new slogan: "Shifting Gears For Over 35 Years." The membership is very active and enjoys their cars in a myriad of ways, from autocrossing to cruising, but always with a meal somewhere along the way. "We're a dining club that travels by Corvette!" proclaims former president Ron Gliot. Added to this is the Sunburst Corvette



Club dedication and legacy of charitable giving; the club supports many local charities including The Salvation Army, Children's Memorial Hospital, Habitat For Humanity, McHenry Open Arms Mission, Open Heart Magic, and Save-A-Pet. Members nominate charities and the



group votes on the donation to be made at the end of each year.

In keeping with the club's fervor for Corvettes and food, the Board of Directors wanted to do something special

to mark the 35<sup>th</sup> milestone. The new club president, Tom Palmer, found a "Committee of Two" to take on the task of creating a celebration event, albeit with a very short calendar at hand – after all, it was only January when the torch was lit, giving the Committee just two months to plan and organize. Nevertheless, Karen Baird and Kevin Daleiden jumped on the project. Initially, after considering various banquet facilities

and restaurants, the Committee was perplexed. The club Christmas Party was just a matter of weeks before, so they knew this jamboree needed to be different. Plus, Karen visited several banquet halls and couldn't find one that had the right atmosphere. "We didn't want to just sit and look at each other across a white tablecloth," she explained. "And there was no budget for a band or DJ." The Committee rattled their brains for ideas, but finally took the sage advice of Carla Daleiden: "Why not just have a cocktail party?"



"This idea was perfect," said Kevin. "Whenever we have meetings, the most fun is at the beginning and the end, when people are socializing." So taking Carla's idea, Karen and Kevin reached out to the

one place they knew would know how to throw a cocktail party – the Anvil Club in East Dundee, Illinois. "I have been a member for 20 years," said Kevin, "and they absolutely know cocktails and parties!" One call to Jody Gaydusek and the ball was rolling! "They couldn't have been easier to deal with and highly flexible!" Kevin added. Barry Hubscher, General Manager of the Anvil Club, even came up with the great marketing idea: \$35 for the 35<sup>th</sup>! Cocktails and Hors d'Oeuvres included! How could it not succeed?

Setting the date was a little more difficult – so many schedules to work around in such a short window caused a lot of concern, but finally a decision was made: March 10, 2012 was set. It was the only weekend on the club calendar that had no other activity – who says Corvette clubs are dormant in the winter? Not Sunburst members! They seem to constantly have something going on!

The Board put out the word at the general membership meeting in February, and the Committee used the "Yahoo Groups" email system to alert members near and far about the event. Since many of the Sunburst members spend their winter months somewhere warmer than Illinois, the internet has become a virtual Corvette highway for keeping up with club events and news. The club made a special effort to invite former members to attend, reaching out through regular mail as well.

By the time March 10 rolled around, there were 56 of the Sunburst faithful who braved the oddly mild Illinois winter night to attend the



35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration. Five Corvettes even showed up and were given priority parking right in front of the Anvil Club – the valet was in heaven!

Inside, the group was treated to magnificent cocktails and a diverse menu, including prime rib sandwiches, barbecue meatballs, bruschetta, salmon pinwheels, and a huge, delicious cake! Karen Baird handled registration and made sure that everyone received a smart little set of specially-designed Sunburst Corvette Club memo pads. Carla Daleiden helped by handing out the Celebration Pins that were made to note the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Profits from the sales of pins are dedicated to the support St. Jude's Research Hospital. The club is planning a special trip to Memphis in October to present the yearlong fundraising check in person.

A special moment was held to honor Dave and Julie Thomas' 1977 Corvette – the only '77 in the club! Karen had prepared a special gift: a gift basket with a set of large playing cards featuring Thomas' own car on the backs of the deck! It was only sad that the '77 had to spend the special night alone at home in the garage, but who would bring a beauty like that out on a March night? You just know Dave said "No way!"

As a special exhibition, Mark Dalbello put together an electronic collage of club photos showing 35 years of members, events, friendships, and of course, Corvettes! "He loves to do this sort of presentation" said his wife, Pat Dalbello. It was a professional job, to be sure, and his expertise showed. He graciously offered the DVD's for sale to the membership with profits going to St. Jude's. Supplies ran out that night!

Table decorations were provided by Kevin and Carla Daleiden, honoring the autocrossers in the club by using traffic cones as a base for lovely floral decorations. Of course, taste comes in many different shades! Over the year, the cones will travel to the races with the autocrossers (known to some as the Corvette Racing Squad, or C.R.S.) to honor the 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Mehlinae and Lee Douglas helped set up (and later take down) the large 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary banners and other decorations.

Thanks to Mike Stevens, the event has been recorded for posterity in a whole set of photos. This will make it easier for the organizers in the future to put together the photo collage!

Since the Anvil Club is steeped in history and mystery, the Director of Membership Development, Bobbi Baehne, led a tour through the club so that Sunburst members could see for themselves the real Tiffany shades, the bullet hole in the doors that came from a Chicago brothel, and many other oddities collected over the years by Anvil Club members. One of the main features is the actual forge that remains from when the building was a real blacksmith shop!

As the night wore on, the members spent the time talking and socializing, and everyone appeared to have a marvelous time. Comments abounded that it was a memorable evening and the atmosphere was just right for the event. Bonnie Edwardsen said "it was exactly like it needed to be...classy, fun, well run, exactly like a 35th anniversary party should be." One of the keys to success was the lack of table seating. "Our goal was to have people mingle, as opposed to everyone taking a seat at a banquet table," said Kevin. "At a traditional dinner, once everyone sits down, the only interactions they have are with the four people sitting around them." At this cocktail party, everyone had ample opportunity to meet and greet every other person there. "I'm pretty sure I had a conversation with each Sunburst member who came in the door!" stated Carla Daleiden. There were stand-up tables so that everyone had a landing zone for their plate

and cocktail, and the room was constantly in motion, making for a constant flow of conversation.

Eventually, as the last lingering partiers cleared up the detritus from the shindig, the after-party began in the bar! After enjoying some laughs and a final round of thirst-quenchers, the last three couples made their way out the doors of Anvil Club, to be greeted by the burble of their mellifluous exhausts – the valet was warming up all three Corvettes! "Light 'em up!" said Karen. Good thing the East Dundee police were somewhere else right then!

Over the next few days, the Sunburst Facebook page was covered with comments and tributes to the night, so it appears that it was a rousing success! The organizers were just as pleased at the turnout and support. "I thought it turned out exactly like we had envisioned it. I loved the venue at the Anvil Club and enjoyed the entire night," stated Karen Baird. You can be sure that the next event planned by "The Committee of Two" will be just as exciting, if not more so! Keep an eye on that Sunburst Corvette Club – they're going to keep "Shifting Gears For Over 35 Years!"

*Submitted by Kevin Daleiden, Sunburst CC*

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