



EVENTS INTO JUNE 2026

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THAT DODGE CHARGER GOT A HEMI IN IT? ONLY IF IT'S A HELLCAT



By Alisa Priddle, *MotorTrend.com*

Bringing the Hemi V-8 back to Dodge's muscle car is not as easy as it sounds.

If Dodge were to add a Hemi V-8 engine to its current Charger muscle car, it would have to be a Hellcat. "The only way it makes sense to charge for [an optional Hemi] now is I have to go all the way up to a Hellcat," says Tim Kuniskis,

head of American brands and North America marketing and retail strategy for Stellantis.

Kuniskis is known as the Hemi guy for his years of promoting street-legal Dodges with rumbling engines and eye-popping power numbers. When the executive was put in charge of Ram, the V-8s were still of paramount importance. And when he briefly left the company and the Hemi was discontinued for full-size Ram pickups, people put two and two together. That was further reinforced when Kuniskis returned to Stellantis about six months later and one of his first priorities was to get the V-8 back as an option on the trucks.

So, it was inevitable that we used an opportunity to talk to Kuniskis at the Detroit auto show to ask if there are plans to give the latest generation of the Dodge Charger muscle car a Hemi option in addition to the turbocharged Hurricane inline-six engine and electric motors currently offered.

Not As Easy As It Sounds

Doing so isn't a slam dunk or an easy move, he says, as

his experience bringing back one version of the Hemi back to the trucks has proven.

Chargers are all-wheel drive, which takes up some space in the engine compartment and adding another engine brings another layer of complexity—as well as additional weight to a car that's already heavier than its predecessor.

Putting the 5.7-liter Hemi in a Charger gives it 395 horsepower, far less than the 550 hp that the smaller and lighter high-output Hurricane 3.0-liter twin-turbo inline-six engine already provides. In terms of performance, the 5.7-liter engine is not even in the ballpark, Kuniskis said in an interview.

The supercharged 6.2-liter Hemi Hellcat engine gets closer. "If you were to put a V-8 in the car you would probably go to Hellcat instead of 5.7," he says, stressing that he was careful to use the word "probably."

► Story continues on Page 13

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That inaugural car show sparked a flame in Mike nineteen years ago when he came to Sanger, and because of his love of cars, he decided to put this one together in front of the original Buick, Pontiac, GMC dealership on "O" Street. The success of this event was so remarkable that the Chamber of Commerce decided to align its Blossom Day activities with the car show.

Behind the scenes lies the hard work and dedication of Mike, his loyal friends, family, and many volunteers. Their commitment has transformed this car show into the crown jewel of the valley.

But that's not all, we've added a twist to the mix with the young enthusiasts - the Lego Masters competition! With the support of Sanger Bible Church, prepare to be amazed by the creativity and ingenuity of these K-8th grade students. And

that's not all, as there will be many more fun activities for kids.

As you enjoy strolling through the vibrant streets filled with amazing cars, the air will be filled with the beats from our live band, plus a DJ. And for those seeking refreshment, you won't be disappointed as there will be close to 100 vendors with all of your favorite food and treats; in addition to the Beer & Wine Garden - all at your service, allowing you to fully enjoy all of the sights and sounds of the car show.

For you early-birds on March 14th, we've got a special treat - free coffee and donuts to welcome you as you roll in with your cherished car show entries.

So buckle up, Sanger & the Central Valley! Get ready for an unforgettable ride at the Webber Realty Group Car Show. Mark your calendars, bring your friends and family, and join us for all of the fun that will leave you wanting more.

For an entry form or more information, please call Mike at 559.618.2196, go to WebberRealtyGroup.com, or email: Mike@WebberRealtyGroup.com.


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Old Cars
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NEWSPAPER

IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR AGAIN

By Vic Groab

All the car clubs are setting up for a great season of events and fellowship. All the wonderful things we do throughout the active season don't just evolve by themselves. There are fellow enthusiasts working and planning for us so we can maximize our pleasure during the nice weather season. There are tours, shows and picnics galore, you just need to know how to find them.

First of all you need to understand what kind of event you enjoy the most. When Linda and I were young we drove early cars all over the country, we drove a 1912 Kissel Kar over the continental divide in Colorado and back just for the fun of it. I cannot do that anymore, now we are more interested in cars and coffee meets that allow us to meet other less ambitious hobbyists. At age 19 I loved driving my modified 120M Jaguar 150 MPH. These days I am happy to drive my 1965 Mustang GT fastback 35mph in town to the weekly cruise and coffee meet. The bottom line is hanging out with people you enjoy sharing your segment of the hobby with.

I live in Tulare County and enjoy the clubs and hobbyists in that area, here we have the weekly cars and coffee in Mary's Vineyard shopping center from seven to eleven every Saturday morning that is open to any collector car of any

year and people of any age. There are participants as young as teen agers and old as me, we all share the interest in our car hobby. There are show cars and old beaters, all are welcome and interesting. Although the pharaohs' car club is the active host anyone is welcome.

There are a variety of active car clubs in the area, The Horseless Carriage club is open to anyone interested in collector cars but has a core of historic early cars. They have a National early car tour based in Friant in early May that will have 1915 and earlier cars from all over the country, a one and two cylinder car tour in Exeter in April and several events open to any collector car of any year model throughout the season. All collector cars are welcome in the club.

The model A Ford club has their Round up in spring time that has as many as 100 1928 to 1931 Ford cars in attendance. They also have monthly events for these cars at the local level.

The Pharaohs have the before mentioned every Saturday cruise but also an evening cruise April 10 and show April 11 in Visalia and an amazing picnic in the fall at Mooney grove.

I know there are many clubs that have events as well, The Vapor Trailers, The Vintage Chevrolet club, T bird club, Corvette club and many more. All these have a following and

events to participate in. This is duplicated in each area of our great country. Just seek and enjoy.

Publications like the Old cars newsletter you are reading have lists of events in the first part of the publication. If you have an event contact them and have it listed, if you are looking for something to do look at the calendar of events and contact the people involved, or just show up.

I have a friend that has several cars that is timid about just showing up not knowing anyone, she is afraid she won't fit in. We all feel that way at first, just walk up to someone and ask about their car. Everyone wants to talk about their pride and joy. That is the icebreaker. If someone is interested in your car take time to explain it to them. You can make some wonderful friends with a start like that.

Linda and I have made friends and acquaintances from literally all over the world through the old car hobby, people we would never have an opportunity to get to know otherwise. I have often said, "some of these people are way too smart to just play around with silly collector cars, yet here they are hanging out with the likes of me with that special, to them old car."

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2025 RPM Drag Racing

By Alan Curtis

Santa Margarita Ranch Airstrip in San Luis Obispo County. This event had everything a early drag racer loves , Early flat head V-8s and event a few 4 cylinder engines cars.

The Rain Dragster were a big hit with the attendees .Along with the drag races there was a car show and swap meet.



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Right-to-Modify Bill Gets Congressional Hearing; SEMA Makes Case for Access to Calibration Data



From the SEMA Washington, D.C., office

The landmark, SEMA-supported bill to preserve Americans' ability to modify their vehicles has reached an important milestone, with members of a key congressional committee considering the merits of the "ADAS Functionality & Integrity Act" (HR 6688). This bipartisan legislation would require the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) to create guidelines to ensure that automotive businesses have the information needed to properly calibrate advanced driver assistance systems (ADAS) after vehicles are modified.

The U.S. House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Commerce, Manufacturing and Trade hearing, titled "Examining Legislative Options to Strengthen Motor Vehicle Safety, Ensure Consumer Choice and Affordability, and Cement U.S. Automotive Leadership," represents a key step for SEMA's top federal legislative priority, where it was discussed alongside other bills that strengthen motor vehicle safety, ensure consumer choice and affordability and cement American automotive leadership.

Bill sponsor U.S. Rep. Diana Harshbarger (R-Tenn.) spoke in support of her bill, which would require NHTSA to establish ADAS guidelines to create modification ranges and tolerances for new vehicles starting in model-year '28. The bill also requires the guidelines to establish ADAS test procedures that enable aftermarket businesses to properly test and validate that the vehicle systems have been properly calibrated.

SEMA submitted a statement for the record, outlining the critical need for lawmakers to pass HR 6688.

"Millions of Americans modify and customize their vehicles to enhance their vehicles' safety, performance and comfort. Their reasons for modifying vary. For some, it's a means for doing business and earning a livelihood; for others, it's how they recreate or express themselves. Regardless of their needs and preferences, it is imperative that evidence-

based calibration and testing procedures are in place to ensure that ADAS is properly functioning for the protection of people both inside and outside the vehicle," wrote SEMA President and CEO Mike Spagnola. "Those who choose to modify or customize their vehicles are no less deserving of enjoying the safety benefits of ADAS than vehicle owners who choose to keep their vehicles in their stock condition."

Background

The ADAS Functionality & Integrity Act would require NHTSA to establish ADAS guidelines to create modification ranges and tolerances for new vehicles starting in model-year '28. The bill also requires NHTSA to create guidelines that establish ADAS test procedures that aftermarket businesses can properly test and validate that the vehicle systems have been properly calibrated.

This legislation is crucial to being able to safely make common modifications, including installing bike racks, wrapping a vehicle, installing larger wheels and tires or installing a winch or aftermarket bumpers, without compromising the functionality of ADAS.

The bill is also timely, because a forthcoming federal mandate that would require new, model-year '29 vehicles to feature automatic emergency braking, bringing important safety systems to all new vehicles sold in the United States.

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SAVE THE DATE

The Visalia Car Show presented by The Pharoahs Car Club of Visalia 2026

It's that time of year again! Time for the Pharoahs Car Club of Visalia Car Show. This year, our car show will be on April 11, 2026. Thanks to the George Family, our show will again be held at the Milan Institute, located at 6500 S. Mooney Blvd. We will present awards for the top 20 cars, as well as awards for Best of Show, Best Chevy, Best Mopar, Best Ford, Best Muscle Car, Best Hot Rod, Best Truck, Best Modern Vehicle, Best Custom, and Best Air-Cooled. There will be craft vendors, a bounce house, and plenty of food! We will also have a dancer performances and Music. We expect a large turnout, so register your vehicles early. Free spectators are free! Don't miss out on this family-friendly event. Hope to see you there!

This year, we have added a pre-show Cruise Night on Friday, April 10, at Raising Cane's on the corner of Mooney Blvd and Caldwell Ave from 6 PM to 8 PM. We will have registration available, so come sign up for the car show and avoid the line on Saturday morning.

As in years past, we will be donating a portion of the proceeds from our car show to a local nonprofit. This year's recipient is Mending Fences at JM Ranch. Mending Fences is a local equine therapy nonprofit that provides youth with life skills that build confidence and self-esteem, reduce substance use, and foster self-development. Mending Fences also helps veterans in our community. For more information on Mending Fences, please visit their website at <https://www.mendingfencesatjmrbanch.org>.

Thank you to all who help make our event a success!

THE VISALIA CAR SHOW & PRE-SHOW CRUISE NIGHT

*Join the Pharoahs of Visalia
Friday night for our first ever Car Show Kick-Off Cruise Night*

April 10, 2026 - at Raising Cane's - Mooney Blvd & Caldwell Ave | 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Bring your ride or just bring yourself and your family. Car Show Registration will be available on site. Get signed up early, make Saturday morning a breeze, and be part of the fun!



April 11, 2026

6500 S. Mooney Blvd.

\$30 pre-registration / \$35 day-of

Gates open at 7am

Show from 9am - 1pm • Awards at 1pm

Top 20 & Ten Category Awards

• Best of Show • Best Mopar • Best Muscle Car • Best Truck • Best Custom

• Best Chevy • Best Ford • Best Hot Rod • Best Modern Vehicle • Best Air Cooled

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A portion of the proceeds will be donated to Mending Fences

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For information call Glen at (805) 286-2448 or check us out on Facebook, Instagram, and at www.PharoahsCarClubOfVisalia.org

► Story continued from Front Page

THAT DODGE CHARGER GOT A HEMI IN IT? ONLY IF IT'S A HELLCAT

The business case is a bit tricky. "The reality is when you get into that rare air, the take rate is pretty small," he says. It serves as a halo vehicle, generating buzz and appealing to Hemi enthusiasts, while the majority of buyers want the more powerful and efficient Hurricane engine under the hood.

Lessons Learned From Ram Launch

Kuniskis is also a little gun-shy after the trials of launching the current Ram with many trims and the return of the 5.7-liter Hemi as an extra cost option on most versions.

"People say to me you brought back the [5.7-liter] Hemi on truck and it's great, everyone's happy. Now bring back a 6.4-liter Hemi into truck. They say if the 5.7-liter fits, the 6.4-liter will and you should do it."

First off, the 5.7 was not easy. "It was a miracle that we got it done in 10 months." And it made sense. The smaller V-8 was a decent alternative to the 420-hp standard output version of the Hurricane I-6, with comparable power, torque, and instantaneous response, just with a different flavor. It was a good option and about 10 percent of buyers have opted for the Hemi as the truck launch continues to ramp up. Kuniskis thinks the Hemi take rate will climb to about 35 percent.

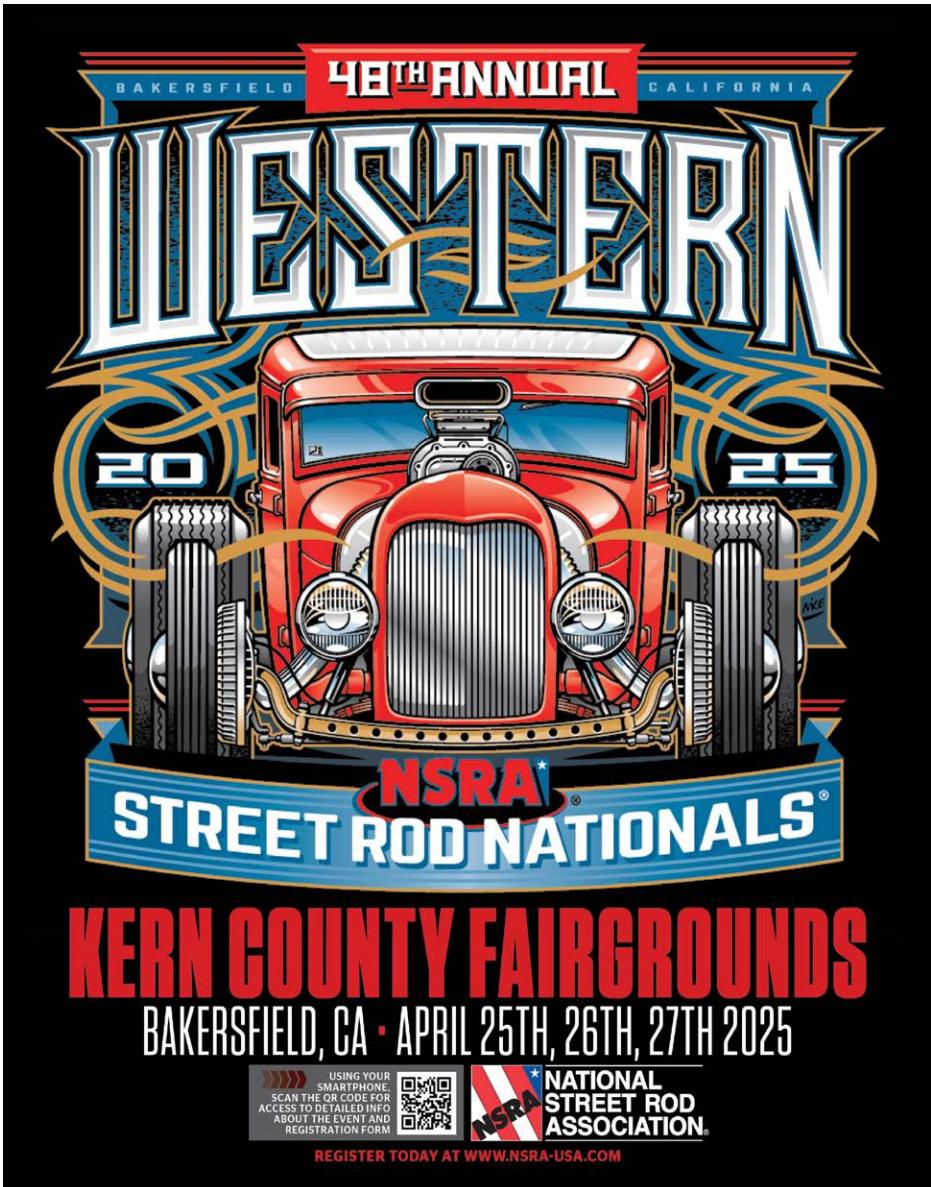
But the 5.7-liter Hemi is not on a level playing field with the high-output Hurricane engine with its 550 hp and 528 lb ft of torque. Competing would require adding the 6.4-liter Hemi to the truck lineup and even that is less horsepower.

Overwhelming for Dealers

"Now I've added a massive amount of complexity, not so much from an engineering and production standpoint, it's now at the dealership," Kuniskis says. He starts citing numbers: 2,400 U.S. dealers, 14 brands, four brands sold in one showroom, an increasing number of powertrain options. "Before you know it you have so many cars that dealers say, 'Uncle! I can't stock all this. I'm going to now pick and choose the ones I want to sell.'"

Which is to say Stellantis could invest billions of dollars in options that never make it to the overwhelmed dealer or the customer. Some buyers might specifically order something not on the lot, but such orders represent only 5 percent of sales.

"So, that doesn't work and you have to make a tough call," Kuniskis says. That is where he is on requests for a 6.4-liter in trucks too, knowing it is a lot of investment in an option with few takers, given how attractive the current offerings already are. Had the Hurricane engine never gone into the trucks, offering two Hemis would be a no-brainer. Replacing or supplementing the popular Hurricanes with Hemis is a tougher call.



Automotive Classifieds



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ROADSTER



1957 CHEVY
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A large advertisement for KYNO 940. It features a classic 1940s Ford Woody station wagon in the background. In the foreground, there is a pink and blue graphic with the text "Join us on" and a Facebook logo. To the right, there is a large, stylized logo for KYNO 940 with the text "The Best Carshow Tunes in California!" above it. Below the logo is the text "Listen Free! @ kynofresno.com". The background has a colorful, horizontal gradient.

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THE APPRAISAL CORNER

By Paul Rabe

The Classic Car Market traditionally reflects the overall American economy. Domestic inflation issues persist, with overall economic uncertainty effecting everyday Americans. Here at home, everyday items like eggs, milk, and meat continue to rise. If you bought parts for your classic car, you have seen the impact that inflation and tariffs continue to have. Interest rates have created increased costs and have led to economic uncertainty. We continue to see that all these economic factors continue to impact the collector car hobby.

The 2026 collector car market shows a split trend: top-tier, best-condition vehicles remain strong or appreciate, while the mass-market segment is trending downward due to rising ownership costs, with modern enthusiast cars (90s/00s) gaining favor. Expect continued

growth in online sales, however, prices will continue to drop. Key trends include increased demand for analog performance cars, shifting focus to American tastes (SUVs, manual transmissions), and a focus on "modern classics" with limited electronic interference. It continues to be a "buyers' market" as values for our collector cars continue their continued downward trend by -12% average overall during 4th quarter 2025. This continuing trend is since my last article in October 2025.

Of course, some very popular models and many concourse level, top-tier vehicles continue to hold their value. If you are considering selling, understand it is a "buyer's market". We also see that sellers continue to price their vehicles at first quarter 2025 prices, but actual sales have dramatically slowed.

If you have recently bought a collector car, you probably got a steal. If your selling, you may need to reconsider your asking price if you haven't had many serious buyers. There are numerous online resources that reflect actual collector car sales numbers. If you are looking to buy a classic car, this may be the time for you to enter the hobby. If you are buying or selling, this is a perfect time to get a market valuation if you are trying to sell. This is not a good time to get an appraisal for insurance purposes as the values have dropped.

When getting an appraisal or market valuation, one thing to keep in mind is the actual realistic condition of your classic. There are some amazing cars here in the central valley, with most of us driving #2 and #3 cars. As an appraiser, I can only accurately appraise the vehicle by seeing in person. Visually inspecting the vehicle in person is vital in interpreting the actual value of the car. Here is a great article when interpreting the actual condition and determining the accurate value of your current or perspective vehicle.

Southwestern cars (especially California Cars) are valued more than vehicles on the East Coast. Collector cars are rated and evaluated based on scale of 1 to 6. One being cream of the crop and 6 being a parts car rusting in a field. Hagerty evaluates car values on the first four conditions. Classic.com is another great resource and gathers data on the market for a specific vehicle generation, model and year. Last October, Old Cars and Motorsports ran my article which featured information from John "Gunner" Gunnell who was the automotive books editor at Krause Publications in Iola, Wisconsin and former editor of Old Cars Weekly and Old Cars Price Guide here is how classic vehicles are rated. Mr. Gunnell gave us valuable information regarding value and quality. He rates vehicles in the following ways.

NO. 1: EXCELLENT - Concourse quality

Top quality original or restored to current maximum professional standards of quality in every area or perfect original with components operating or appearing as new; a 95-plus point show car that isn't driven. 99-point vehicle.

NO. 2: FINE

Well-restored or a combination of superior restoration and excellent original; also, an extremely well-maintained original showing very minimal wear.

NO. 3: VERY GOOD

Completely operable original or "older restoration" showing wear; also, a good amateur restoration, all presentable and serviceable inside and out. Plus, combinations of well-done restoration and good operable components or a partially restored car with all parts necessary to complete and/or valuable NOS parts.

NO. 4: GOOD

A drivable vehicle needing no or only minor work to be functional; also, a deteriorated restoration or a very poor amateur restoration. All components may need restoration to be "excellent," but the car is mostly useable "as is."

Story continues on Page 21

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CARS ON K RETURNS TO DOWNTOWN TULARE FOR A SPRINGTIME CLASSIC

Tulare, CA – The Tulare Chamber of Commerce is excited to announce the return of Cars on K, Downtown Tulare's largest and most anticipated community event, taking place Saturday, April 4, 2026, from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM on K Street.

Cars on K traditionally takes place on the first Saturday of April, and in 2026 that date happens to fall on the Saturday before Easter. Rather than shift the event, the Chamber embraced the timing, knowing car enthusiasts would be out in full force and seeing it as an opportunity to add even more fun for families through festive, spring-inspired elements. Last year's event drew nearly 200 vehicles and more than 7,000 attendees, making it the Chamber's largest community event to date.

Cars on K showcases an impressive lineup of classic cars, hot rods, muscle cars, trucks, and custom builds lining Downtown Tulare's historic K Street. Beyond the car show, the event offers a full downtown experience with food and non-food vendors,

live music, and activities for all ages.

Downtown Tulare businesses also play an active role in the event, with many shops joining in through sidewalk sales, in-store specials, and themed promotions that add to the energy of the day. Cars on K provides a unique opportunity for attendees to explore local businesses while enjoying one of the city's most vibrant community events.

"Cars on K has truly become a signature event for our community," said Tulare Chamber of Commerce CEO, Donnette Silva Carter. "It celebrates automotive history, supports local businesses, and brings thousands of people into Downtown Tulare for a day of connection and fun."

Vehicle registration is open at www.tularechamber.org, with early registration priced at \$35 and day-of registration at \$40. Registered vehicles will compete for Best of Show and Top 30 Awards. Vendor registration for both food and non-food vendors will also

be available through the Chamber's website.

Sponsorship opportunities are available for businesses interested in supporting Cars on K, including event, t-shirt, and trophy sponsorships. Additional event details will be announced in the coming months.

###

About The Tulare Chamber of Commerce: The Tulare Chamber of Commerce works to promote local businesses and enhance the community through various programs, events, and initiatives. We are dedicated to fostering economic growth and improving the quality of life in Tulare.

For more information, visit www.tularechamber.org or call (559) 686-1547.

Tulare Chamber of Commerce
220 E. Tulare Ave. Tulare, CA 93274
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CARS On K
TULARE, CA

Hop on Over to Cars on K
Saturday, April 4, 2026
9 AM - 2 PM

A springtime classic returns to Downtown Tulare the Saturday before Easter.

Downtown Tulare on K Street
Cars | Food | Music | Vendors
Best of Show + Top 30 Awards

Scan to register your ride, become a sponsor, or vendor

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A flyer for the Cherry Auction Auto Swap. The top left features a green dollar sign character with arms and legs, holding a red baton, with the text 'DEAL GUY' above it and 'SHOWS APRIL & SEPT EVERY YEAR' in a green box. The top right has a red and blue checkered border with the text 'AUTO SWAP' in large blue letters and 'April 12th' in red. Below that is a yellow box with the text 'Find the parts you need at the price you want!' and 'RESERVATIONS HELD UNTIL 7 A.M.'. The middle left has a red box with 'PARTS! USED & CLASSIC' and a red box with '4640 S. Cherry Ave Fresno, CA 93706 (559) 266-9856'. The middle right has a red box with 'FOR SALE OR SHOW' and a list of fees: Display Cars \$30, Sell Cars \$30, Vendors \$30, Admission \$10 (12 and Under FREE). Below that is a red box with 'Classic Cars/Trucks for Sale or Show in Car Corral' and a map of the area. The bottom left has a red box with 'LOTS OF PARKING!' and 'ATM AVAILABLE'. The bottom right has a red box with '1971 ORANGE KRATE' and a list of services. The bottom center has a red box with the website 'www.cherryavenueauction.com' and a photo of a red Schwinn bike.

THE WINNING EDGE #54

By Mike Lewis

Hi everybody, I hope you are all enjoying this summer as much as we are. I will admit it's tough keeping up with the yard work.

Before we get into the heavier side of cylinder head modifications, I would like to briefly discuss the surface finish in the port and combustion chamber. Depending on whether you buy your heads ported and ready to bolt on, leave them stock with a sand cast surface or plan on porting them yourself surface preparation can be of interest. There is not necessarily a standard port finish but, the opinions of associates I have talked with differ very little. The percentage of flow loss from port wall friction is about 4% on a sand cast surface and 3% on a polished surface. As you can see the difference is very minimal. On aluminum heads I like to finish the intake port surface with a 50 or 60 grit cartridge roll. On iron heads you may want to use a coarser cartridge roll or even a fine porting stone. Maintain this roughness from the valve to the point of fuel delivery. This will help kick the liquid fuel back out into the airstream. From the fuel delivery point up the air inlet system you can polish the interior surface.

The surface on the exhaust port and combustion chamber should be fairly smooth or polished. This will minimize any air flow loss from port wall friction. I generally finish them with a 180 grit cartridge roll. This will help with heat and carbon buildup.

One last thought I would like to share with you is spark plug depth. When flowing a head I like to use the same plugs as the customer has used and on several occasions have found the plug way down in the hole below the combustion chamber surface. On a couple of others I found the plug hanging into the combustion chamber with two or three threads showing. I know what you're thinking, but please check anyway if you haven't already done so.

Till next time,

Mike Lewis

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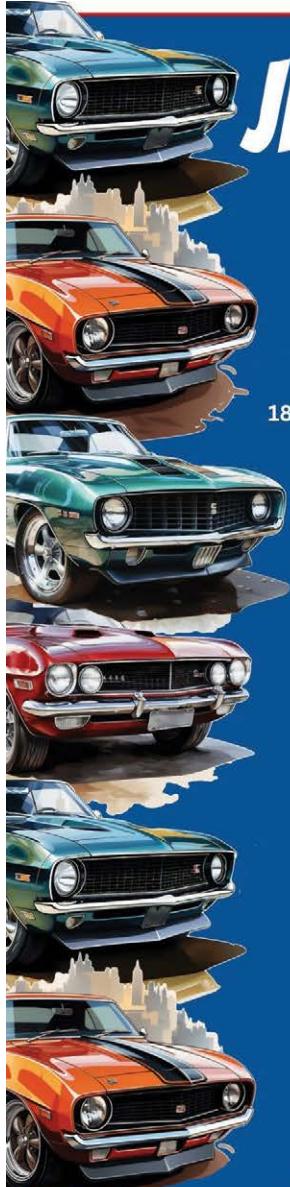
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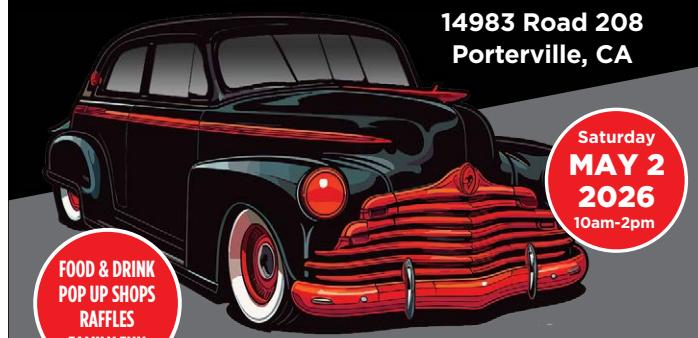
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Story continued from Page 16

THE APPRAISAL CORNER

NO. 5: RESTORABLE

Needs complete restoration of body, chassis, and interior; may or may not be running, but isn't weathered, wrecked or stripped to the point of being useful only for parts.

NO. 6: PARTS CAR

May or may not be running, but is weathered, wrecked and/or stripped to the point of being useful primarily for parts.

Gunnell says, "Another way to think of the condition coding system is to visualize a pyramid in which No. 1 condition is at the top and No. 6 condition is at the bottom. The point of the pyramid has only enough room for the best one or two cars of a particular model. At the next level, the pyramid can fit more cars. At level 3, even more cars can fit and so on. Think of the car or cars at the top of the pyramid as the absolute best of the best. Usually only a single car fits here, although it's conceivable that two could be restored identically. These are not only show cars, but they are also the show cars that win national awards every time."

The best thing to do when evaluating the real-world value of any collector car is to do your own research or hire professional like my Classic Automobile Inspections or Kenny Munyon of the Garage Fathers in Exeter. Kenny buys and sells vehicles all over the country. He has his finger on the pulse of the classic car market. A market that he has seen slow drastically over the last 6 months. Recently he sold his 1965 Ford Galaxie convertible recently to David Freiburger (formerly of Roadkill Garage). Check it out on both of their YouTube channels. Kenny and I make it our business to know the market. Prices have dropped and sales have cooled making it a prime buyer's market.

While understanding the classic car market is most helpful when creating an asking price or making an offer, a vehicle is only worth what someone is willing to pay for it. That decision is up to you, and it is often a decision made

with the heart and not the head. As an appraiser, I have the time and the resources to accurately evaluate the condition and market value.

About the author: Paul Raheb is proud to be a member of the Pharaohs Car Club of Visalia. He is the owner/ap-

raiser for Classic Automobile Inspections of Central California, and the promoter/organizer of the Back In School Car Show held at Golden West High School the second weekend in October. He, his wife Kim, and son Elijah are all active in the classic car hobby.

37th Annual

Visalia Breakfast Lions Club Downtown Visalia Car Show

May 16th 2026

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Registration • 8am - 10am

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CLASSIC CARS WILL STILL NEED A SMOG TEST IN CALIFORNIA AFTER LAWMAKERS REJECT JAY LENO BILL



By Ryan Saballow, www.calmatters.org

Keeping up with your California representatives felt impossible before. Now you can watch them like a hawk: Sign up for My Legislator, your weekly, personalized report that tracks what your state representatives say and do.

Jay Leno's star power wasn't enough to persuade a California legislative committee to pass a measure to allow owners of classic cars like him to be exempted from the state's rigorous smog-check requirements.

The Assembly Appropriations Committee on Friday blocked Bakersfield Republican Sen. Shannon Grove's Senate Bill 712 from advancing for a full vote. Leno had testified in support of the measure in Sacramento earlier this year.

The committee's members and its powerful Democratic chairperson, Assemblymember Buffy Wicks of Oakland, did not provide a reason for killing the bill during Friday's hearing, which quickly and with little fanfare announced the fate of 260 other bills that had been placed on the committee's so-called "suspense file." Seventy other bills also were killed without explanation.

The Senate and Assembly's appropriations committees, which both met Friday and rejected hundreds of bills, are supposed to be the gatekeepers for bills proposing to spend taxpayer money. But the committees' suspense files are where hundreds of politically touchy bills die quietly each year with only a few insiders knowing the real reasons.

State officials did, however, warn the committee that the proposal could potentially cost the state money, and the state's influential environmental organizations opposed it.

Asked why the committee killed the measure, Wicks told reporters after the hearing, "I'll have to go back and look. I can't remember."

Grove said she was "deeply disappointed that once again, the California state Legislature did not prioritize California's classic car culture and the enthusiasts who were relying on this

measure to pass."

"Sadly, today California said 'no' to helping preserve these rolling pieces of history and let down classic car clubs across the state from lowriders, to hot rods and every American classic in between," she said in a statement.

1. Just the right amount of news
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The proposal, which Grove dubbed "Leno's Law" after the former late-night talk show host and comedian, would have exempted owners of classic cars manufactured before 1981 from having to pay to have them emissions tested every two years at a certified auto shop. Classic cars also would have been exempted from passing smog tests at the time of purchase.

The exemptions would have only applied to vehicles with special "historical vehicle" license plates and would have needed to be insured as a "collector motor vehicle."

Jay Leno testified this spring

Leno, the owner of nearly 200 classic cars, told the Senate Transportation Committee in April that smogging a classic car built before modern emissions standards is a major barrier to owning one in California.

With a modern car, it's "plug in, get your money – boom – get out. It's very quick to get a smog check with a modern car," Leno said. "It's not impossible in an older car, but it's tricky. It takes time and often causes charges four, five, six times more than a regular car." Leno said classic car owners struggle to even find a shop with the equipment needed to test them.

Before Friday, the bill, which had 19 Republican and four Democratic coauthors, had passed the full Senate and its only other Assembly committee with only a handful of progressive Democratic lawmakers voting against it.

Supporters included a host of California car clubs and the California Automotive Wholesalers' Association. But clean air and environmental groups as well as the Bay Area Air Quality Management District and California Air Pollution Control Officers Association opposed it, according to the CalMatters Digital Democracy database.

State regulators also warned the measure could cost the Bureau of Automotive Repair, which oversees the state's smog testing program, and the Department of Motor Vehicles hundreds of thousands of dollars each year. Officials cited concerns it would reduce revenue from smog check and vehicle license fees.

It also could have potentially cost the California Air Resources Board \$1.2 million to hire new staff to collect updated data for air quality models and to revise California's federally required pollution-reduction plans, according to the appropriations committee's analysis.

Wicks, in her introductory remarks at the start of Friday's hearing, said the state needed to rein in costs.

"Obviously, we have an enormous amount of budget constraints still," Wicks said. "We have to ensure that we are serving our most vulnerable folks in our communities and making sure that we are doing everything we can to put our best foot forward for a strong social safety net."

CalMatters politics reporter Yue Stella Yu contributed to this story.



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