

## Panama City, Florida Trip

The Wilson's and the Riley's left to join the Circle City Corvettes of Dothan, AL on Thursday, May 17, 2007. The Riley's were about 30 minutes behind the Wilson's. How in the world they managed to catch up with us is beyond my wildest dreams. Just ask Wanda if she knows what passing gear is now !!!!! We arrived at the Dothan National Golf Resort and Hotel at approximately 2:30 p.m. We were welcomed by a photographer taking photos of all Corvettes to be displayed at the banquet on Saturday night.

On Thursday night, we were treated with grilled hamburgers and trimmings. After the meal, there were special guests introduced: Wil Cooksey, Corvette Assembly Plant Manager, Steve Grilli, Assembly Plant Quality Manager, Tony Norris, Assembly Plant Master Vehicle Assembly Engineer and Sonny Kilgo, Retired from the Corvette Assembly - Plant Action Center. Each gentleman gave a history of their career with the plant. They attended the entire event, from Dothan to Panama City. If I'm not mistaken, they drove 2008 Corvettes. After the dinner, we had door prize drawings and a 50/50 ticket drawing. There were 110+ people and the 50/50 pot was \$300+. Of course, we did not win. There was a silent auction and the auction brought about \$820+ to be given to the club charity. After that, we were entertained with karaoke and a dance.

OK, are you ready! We left Dothan on Friday morning, caravanning to Panama City, with 104 Corvettes in line. Talk about beauty. We were escorted for a few miles, and there were road blocks at several intersections. We all felt very special.

We arrived in Panama City about 12:30 p.m. and had lunch at Spinnakers. If you're not familiar with Spinnakers, it draws the largest crowd during spring break week. Good food and good socializing. After lunch, we went to the Bay Point Marriott for check in. What a gorgeous place! There was also a Corvette display at the local Tommy Thomas Chevrolet. We were on our own for dinner that night. Don't forget to ask Wanda or Janie about the Red Snapper served at Pompanos Restaurant. We attended the pool party, where Doug and Linda Henslee, Leslie Mayeaux and Ed Robinson joined us. Believe it or not, it was cool that night.

Saturday morning, we got up early, didn't want to miss any thing, had breakfast and attended seminars with the special guests mentioned earlier, joined by Kirk Bennion, C6 Design Engineer. During all seminars there were question and answer segments. Any question for any Corvette.

On Saturday night, the banquet was held in the St. Andrews Ballroom. A 32 item auction was held with items such as Corvette jewelry, watches, autographed pictures of Corvette race drivers, and two - 2008 fenders, signed by Corvette Engineers and all special guests. The most amazing item auctioned was a signed photo reprint of Zora Duntov which brought a whopping \$1000. With the auction and T-shirt sales of Circle City Corvettes, they raised approximately \$9800 for the National Corvette Museum in Bowling Green, KY.

After the auction, Wendell Strode, Executive Director of the National Corvette Museum, gave an update of the museum and future plans. Hey, keep checking the museum website, you might find some interesting improvements happening around there. Our club will probably want to make another trip to the museum in the near future.

Of course, everything has to come to an end. We were not able to stay for the Sunday morning cruise, but will certainly put this event on the club calendar for next year. I encourage everyone to try to attend. Panama City is a fun spot and Circle City Corvettes were wonderful host and hard workers. They made it a very enjoyable weekend.

And, one last note. The night of the banquet everyone, who had their photo taken, was given a mouse pad with their very own Corvette smack dab in the middle.