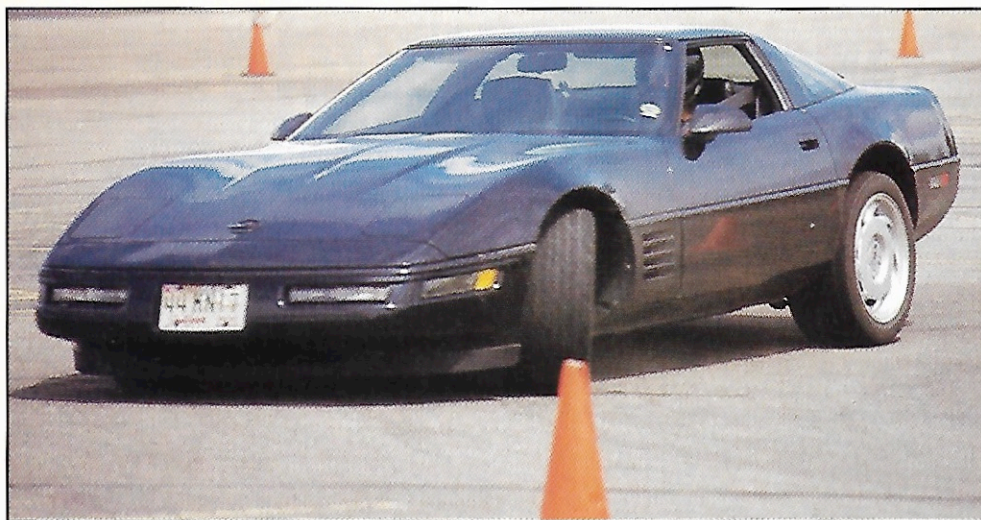


# *The Black Hills Corvette Classic*

*Each summer, hundreds of Corvettes head for the hills*

*text and photography by Thomas and Kelly Glatch*

In 1874, the discovery of gold created a rush of thousands of prospectors to the Black Hills of South Dakota. Today, thousands more rush to the Black Hills every July in search of another treasure — Corvettes. The annual Black Hills Corvette Classic, hosted by Dean and Deb Schultz and the Sioux Falls Corvette Club, has grown over the past 22 years into one of the nation's premiere Corvette events.



## No Need To "Save The Wave"

For years we at *Corvette Fever* have lamented the less frequent use of "the wave" by Corvette owners. That ancient sign of our shared enthusiasm seemed to be seen less in recent years. No need to complain anywhere in the vicinity of the Black Hills Corvette Classic. Everywhere we went we passed plenty of Corvettes, and virtually every Corvette driver gave us "the wave." Just goes to show the dedicated nature of the participants of the Black Hills Corvette Classic. And it shows "the wave" is still alive and well.

## The Black Hills Corvette Classic

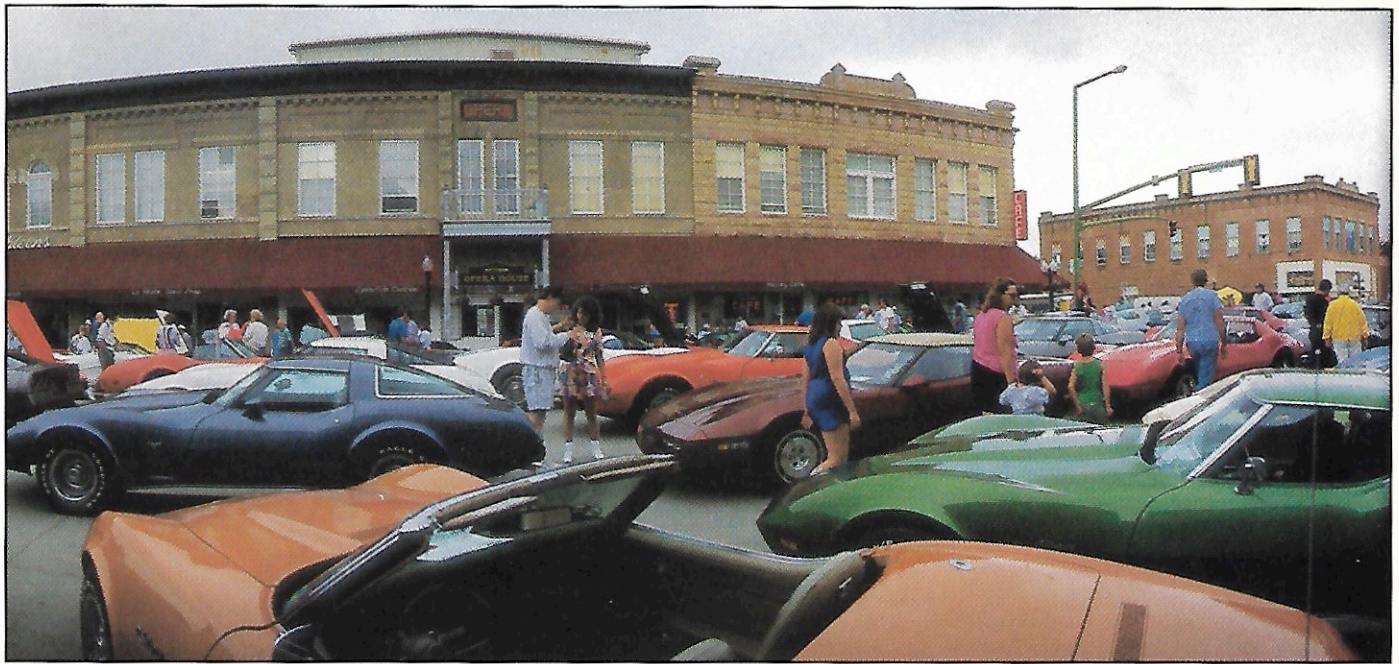
This year, the rush for the Hills began at 7 a.m. on Thursday, July 15. That is when a convoy of 300 Corvettes left Terry Schulte Chevrolet in Sioux Falls, South Dakota, for a 400-mile road trip clear across the state to the town of Spearfish, site of the Black Hills Corvette Classic. Leading the way were five 1994 Corvettes direct from Chevrolet, the first public showing of the latest model. With a breakfast stop at Al's Oasis on the Missouri River, and a lunch break in Wall (home of the

world's largest drug store), the road tour rode into the Holiday Inn Spearfish at 3 p.m. "It was wild," said first-time road tour participant Karl Metz of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. "We were traveling at 85 mph at times. It was like something out of *Smoky and the Bandit*."

Another 200 Corvettes from around the country met the road tour at the Holiday Inn Spearfish, the host of the Black Hills Corvette Classic. Chevrolet's 40th Anniversary Corvette display was

on hand, including the one millionth Corvette. We enjoyed just walking through the parking lot looking at Corvettes driven from all over the United States and Canada, and visiting with the owners. Most of the cars were built within the last 20 years — understandable considering the driving distances involved — but there were a nice selection of mid-year and straight-axle cars as well. One thing missing were the "Trailer Queens," as virtually all of the show participants





were driven in. Missing also were the swap meets and auctions that are part of many other Corvette shows. The Black Hills Corvette Classic has a relaxed, party atmosphere without the high-pressure business of other events.

Friday morning dawned with a Poolside Concours judging at the Holi-

day Inn. Then, Corvettes began assembling in downtown Spearfish. Four blocks of Main Street were open to only Corvettes, with nearly 600 cars filling the street. Tommy Morrison brought along two of his famous race cars, the 24-hour record setting ZR-1 and the 1987 Nelson Ledges winner. The one millionth Corvette was also on display, next to the 999,999th Corvette being raffled off for the Spina Bifida Association. Walking down Main Street we saw nearly a dozen 40th Anniversary Corvettes, along with a number of Collector's Editions and 35th Anniversary cars. NBC-TV's *Today Show* was even here, with a live interview of National Corvette Museum Director Dan Gale.

Saturday, participants could try their hand at an autocross staged at the Black Hills State College, or drag racing at the Intermountain Drag Strip in nearby Belle Fourche. Many others joined tours of the sights in the Black Hills, lead by members of the Sioux Falls Corvette Club. Corvette owners could sample the gambling at historic Deadwood, or the gold mining town of Lead, both less than 30 miles away. Just outside of Spearfish is the beautiful Spearfish Canyon Scenic Byway, where the movie *Dances With Wolves* was filmed. And many Corvettes could be seen at one of the great wonders of the world, Mount Rushmore, just 60 miles away. The show wound to a close on Saturday night with a banquet at the Holiday Inn with 700 in attendance.

The Black Hills Corvette Classic has a dedicated and growing group of participants. Getting to the Black Hills

requires a certain amount of effort. The nearest metropolis is Denver, 400 miles away. Even Corvette owners from the neighboring states of Wyoming, North Dakota, Nebraska, Iowa, and Minnesota must all drive a few hundred miles. Yet Corvettes from 30 states and four Canadian provinces made it to the show. We saw license plates from as far away as Florida, Arizona, Washington State and Alberta, Canada. One Corvette owner from Maine told us he drove his 40th Anniversary roadster 2,378.1 miles to be at the show. He was going to return home via Tennessee and the Blue Ridge Parkway. In 1992 this same owner put 10,000 miles on his previous Corvette, racing it on the Bonneville Salt Flats and driving on Hwy 1 along the California coast after leaving the Black Hills.

That's the kind of dedication we saw everywhere at the Black Hills Corvette Classic. With the beautiful surroundings and festive atmosphere, this show is unique among Corvette events, and many participants plan their summer vacations around the Classic. Why else would all these owners drive hundreds of miles across the vast heartland of America? Must be "gold" in them thar Hills!

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*The Black Hills Corvette Classic has a dedicated and growing group of participants.*



### More In Store For '94

Dean and Deb Schultz and the Sioux Falls Corvette Club promise a bigger and better Black Hills Corvette Classic next year. July 14-17 are the dates for the 1994 Classic. To help plan for next year's event, look for a "Corvette Country" on the Black Hills in a future issue of *Corvette Fever*. For more information on the 23rd annual Black Hills Corvette Classic contact:

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