



by M.A. Persson, New England Corvette Club

Why bother with Back to the Beach? The drive to get there can be long. The weather isn't always that great. The ocean is COLD in June, so swimming, if you do it at all, is chilly and quick!

So, why do people come back year after year? Why does each year's attendance increase? Why do Ralph Quaglietta and Sandie Bergeron, the veteran B2B organizers, have to turn folks away every time?

The answer is simple, and unanimous, no matter whom you ask: the people. Everyone comes to see old friends and make new ones, all united in their appreciation of America's sports car.

Art and Karen, (for privacy's sake, no last names will be used in this article) an "Indie" couple (not affiliated with a formal Corvette club), drive an '05 yellow roadster, and have owned four Corvettes over the past ten years. Their favorite part of B2B is "seeing everyone!" They call Back to the Beach "the place where all Corvette people network, gather information, catch up and hang out..."

Pam, of Cape Cod Corvette Club, drives an '04 Lemans Blue Commemorative ZO6. She has owned seven Corvettes in five years, and comes to B2B for the "beach, and lots to do!" Her favorite part of the event is the Saturday afternoon parade, which took place this year at 4PM on June 12th. A long line of Corvettes snaked its way through downtown Old Orchard Beach, escorted and facilitated by the great officers of the OOB Police Department. People lined the streets, sat on their front porches and waved, clapped, smiled and laughed as the cars went by. One little old lady wearing a bright pink dress and a white hat stood in her front window, leaning on a walker with one hand and waving with the other.



The owners of an '04 Magnetic Red roadster and members of the Corvette Club of Rhode Island, Jim and Rosemary say coming to B2B is "just a blast!" They enjoy the fun with friends from other

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Jim and Arlene, and "Indie" couple from New York, would agree. These owners of three Corvettes drove their '93 yellow roadster 267 miles from home to attend, and say the best part of B2B is "socializing on Friday and Saturday afternoons by the pool...". Owners of Corvettes since 1976, their total is eight over the years.

As word about Back to the Beach spreads, folks come from all over the country to attend. This year's "Farthest Traveled" award went to Laura and Frank, who came all the way to Maine from North Carolina. The owners of seven Corvettes since 1985, their local club is RTP Corvettes in Raleigh, and they drive a 50th Anniversary roadster and an '02 Electron Blue ZO6.

Joe and Stella, members of another far away club, Corvettes of Naples, Florida, attended also, but according to Joe, "only drove from New Hampshire, a trip of 107 or 312 miles." Asked for clarification, Joe said that "Google told him the trip would be 107 miles, but we got lost and drove 312..." in their '00 red roadster. Stella says her favorite part of the weekend was "the nice people".

Proof of just HOW nice Corvette people can be could be obtained from Kim and Derek, members of Corvettes United. They have a '93 Polo Green Anniversary Corvette, and Kim is president of their club, but Derek, brave man, safely wore his Mustang jacket all weekend! Turns out, though, that he has owned Corvettes longer than Kim has! Their favorite part of the weekend is the parade through town, but they say a major attraction is the chance to see "all these beautiful, colorful, exotic cars in one place!" This opportunity came on Saturday morning during the annual after breakfast cruise-in at the Captain's Galley restaurant, location of all the delicious meals graciously served during the weekend.

Judi from Eastern Mass Corvette Club agrees! Her favorite part of the weekend is "the laid-back show on Saturday morning." Her own car is a



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'72 red roadster with a white top that she has been working on for quite a while. She has owned Corvettes for 22 years, and comes every year because B2B is "such a good time!"

Another "red Corvette owner" (aren't they all supposed to be that color?), Larry, from



Gate City Corvettes, owns two of them: an '09 Victory Red ZO6 and an '08 Victory Red roadster. He has owned Corvettes since 1967, and enjoys supporting Ralph and Sandie's event ("they work hard to put it on...") and the chance to meet old friends and make new ones.

Sue and Jim almost won the longest-driven award, clocking in at 1400 miles from their home in Ohio in their '00 Torch Red roadster (they own the first Torch Red car manufactured that year!) and make the trek every year because, as they say of the Back to the Beach crown, "It's a family!"

Pioneer Valley Corvette Club members Steve and Judie have owned five Corvettes since 1972, with their current cars being a '60 Turquoise, a '65 Green coupe and a Millennium Yellow '05. They enjoy the non-competitive atmosphere of the weekend, the fun times, and, (what a surprise!), "the people!"

Even the nicest people get hungry once in a while, and the food is something that draws Paul, a member of Silver City Corvette Club. He enjoys the excellent buffets (breakfasts and



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dinners are included in the price) and the "homey atmosphere, the good people and the nice area." (This year, Ralph and Sandie added a meal at the Rock 'N' Roll Diner, located in nearby Scarborough). Paul plans to continue to attend in his '06 Monterrey Red roadster.

Elaine of South Shore Corvette Club agrees and will be back in either her '05 Daytona Sunset Orange roadster or her '02 Electron Blue roadster. She describes the event as being "the epitome of Corvette camaraderie throughout New England and the USA!" She says it's hard to pick a favorite part, but she'd have to go for the "arrival of so many people and the re-establishment of friendships!"

Spindle City Corvette Club member Judi describes the event in a nutshell when she says, "It's the best car event all summer!" She arrives in her '99 Nassau Blue roadster, the latest in the Corvettes she has owned "off and on" for the past 38 years!

Ron and Pam of New England Corvette Club are on their second Corvette in ten years, an '04 red roadster. Their reason for attending Back to the Beach? Two words say it all: "The people."

But of course, these wonderful people at Back to the Beach would be at home mowing their grass and doing laundry if it weren't for the two most important people of all: Ralph Quaglietta and Sandie Bergeron, who came up with the idea for this great Corvette weekend over seven years ago, and worked to make it a reality. They have improved and expanded the weekend every year since and are the principal reason so many folks love to attend. What do people like best about Ralph and Sandie?

Everyone who meets them comments on their hard work and "the energy they put into the show...they are just good people!" People describe them as "...so friendly, welcoming, upbeat and positive!" "They are who and what they are! They don't put on airs, and they treat people as they want to be treated." "They are such down-to-earth people! They get enjoyment out of seeing others happy!" "They truly are very wonderful, thoughtful, giving people who do so much to put this fantastic weekend together for all of us to enjoy!" "They are inclusive: they bring in people from all the clubs and work tirelessly to make folks happy, year after year."

One such happy attendee summed it up with these words: "The best things about Ralph and Sandie are their humor and the joy they bring to this event. You will never meet two people more dedicated to Corvettes. They always have a great outlook on things and have only one goal in mind: to make sure everyone has a good time! I think every year they exceed it!"

The website and the dash plaques and the flyers may say, "Back to the Beach Corvette Weekend", but everyone who attends knows that it's really a Back to the Beach People Weekend. With nice cars.

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