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## Concours celebrates Cadillacs and Corvettes

By **Jeff Samoray**, OU Web Writer

Classic car owners from across the United States and as far away as Europe regularly show their vehicles at Oakland University's **Concours d'Elegance**, one of the world's most anticipated international automobile events. More than 20,000 auto enthusiasts will gather on the campus of Oakland University and the lush lawns of **Meadow Brook Hall** on Sunday, Aug. 4, to view a lavish display of some of the world's most prized collectible automobiles.

The Concours has a distinct international flavor, but this year's featured marques are decidedly close-to-home. Celebrating two automotive milestones, the 24th annual Concours will highlight the 100th anniversary of Cadillac, the automobile that defined the standard in luxury, and the 50th anniversary of Corvette, perhaps America's most celebrated sports car.

Paul Ayres of Farmington Hills will show his 1913 Cadillac Model 30 Touring at this year's Concours. The vehicle, which seats six, is one of only a handful known to still exist. Ayers said the vehicle was originally delivered to a dealer in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., and it remained in that city until he purchased it last April.

"The car sat in the back of an auto repair shop in Wilkes-Barre from about 1930 to 1970," Ayers said. "When the auto shop owner died, a gentleman who lived there bought the whole shop and its contents just to get the car. He did a full restoration on it around 1970, but decided this past spring that he wanted to part with it. It was in very nice shape – all I had to do was a little tinkering and tune up the electrical system."

One of the unique features of the car is that it is a right-hand drive vehicle, with the shift lever and parking brake adjacent to the right-hand door.

"It's a three-speed on the floor right next to the door," said Ayres, a retired General Motors executive. "It sort of makes the right-hand door unusable because of where the shift lever is placed. Cadillac moved the steering wheel to the left side and the shift lever to the middle in 1915. It's capable of top speeds of about 50 to 60 miles-per-hour, but I wouldn't drive it that fast because only the rear wheels have brakes, which was standard at that time. But it's quite comfortable for a drive at about 25 or 30."

Helga Clark and her husband Darwin, a General Motors executive, will bring a more modern vehicle to the Concours, but one that will turn just as many heads: a 1963 split window Chevrolet Corvette.

"The Corvette is maybe the first true American sports car," Helga said. "My husband just fell in love with the Corvette and never got over it. To this day, that's his very favorite. The first Corvette we ever owned was a '63. We bought a brand new one and our first daughter was able to ride in the back. But when we had our second child, it just wasn't practical. We had the car a couple of years and then we sold it to a man who totaled the following week."

Clark said her husband purchased their current 1963 Corvette, a black model with a red interior about eight years ago and completely restored it.

"My husband just has gasoline in his veins – he truly loves cars," she said. "We thought our '63 was in good shape until after we purchased it. But my husband really got into it and spent a lot of time doing research on it and restoring it. It's a beautiful car that's won all kinds of awards."

Other cars that will be shown among the more than 238 at this year's Concours are a 1908 Cadillac Tulipwood Bodied Victoria Touring, a 1934 Pierce-Arrow Convertible Coupe, a 1938 Horch 855 Erdmann & Rossi Special Roadster, and a 1967 Chevrolet Corvette Convertible.

Tickets for the Meadow Brook Hall Concours d'Elegance may be purchased in advance at **Meadow Brook Hall**, by phone, or at the gate on the day of the event. The cost of admission, which includes a program, is \$20 for adults, \$10 for ages 13-17, and free for children 12 and under. Groups of 20 or more can purchase tickets for \$15 each. Parking on the Oakland University campus is free; shuttle buses will be available.

For tickets or more information, call (248) 370-3140 or visit the **Concours d'Elegance** Web site.

**SUMMARY**

Celebrating two automotive milestones, Oakland University's 24th annual Concours d'Elegance will highlight the 100th anniversary of the Cadillac and the 50th anniversary of the Corvette. The Concours has a distinct international flavor, but this year's featured marques are decidedly close-to-home. More than 20,000 auto enthusiasts will gather to view a lavish display of some of the world's most prized collectible automobiles.

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