



## Yesterday's Chevrolet San Fernando Valley Region

EDITOR: Steve Rosenberg –February 2012 [www.sfvregionvcca.com](http://www.sfvregionvcca.com)

For those of you that were at the meeting in January, and there were a lot of you, I mentioned that I was registered to bid on a car at Mecum auction in Florida. Well today is Sunday night and the auction is four days away. Oh, for those you that were not at the meeting that car I'm interested in is a 1970 El Camino SS big block Muncy four-speed. Maybe it's my middle-age crisis, or is that old-age crisis? And before you ask if I buy this car I will have another 1970 El Camino for sale. One with a new engine and transmission. The one in the auction looks like the one I have now except on steroids



I requested from the auction company that the seller provide me with more pictures, particularly the undercarriage and both sides of the engine. The seller did provide some pictures but only of the engine. I e-mailed back the auction company and told them to inform the seller that I did not get what I wanted and I could only go for that car as a nice driver not a show car. Well that did not get me any more pictures. But who knows, maybe something will happen Monday Tuesday or Wednesday. If I was a seller and had an interested party I would give them anything they wanted.

I will keep you informed.

Today is Tuesday and the Mecum auction has started. Although the auction is not on TV today it is available online. I did watch it online for a while and can only hope that the good prices for the buyers last through Thursday afternoon.

It's now Thursday morning, the day of the auction for the 70 El Camino that I'm interested in. A little after seven o'clock in the morning I received a phone call from Mecum. The representative was at the car was able to give me his description of the vehicle plus answer my questions. The information he gave me had pluses and minuses. The minuses were the chrome and non-stock items under the hood. If anything the information he gave me has lowered my maximum bid. It's still about five hours before that car comes up for bid.

Lot number T236 which is a 1970 El Camino SS big block, four-speed is up for auction at four o'clock. At about 5 min. before four o'clock my telephone bidder assistant calls me. Even watching it online is at least a 1 1/2 second delay. On TV it's about 3 or 4 seconds. The car opened at \$20,000 and I was able to get in at \$24,000. It soon jumped up to \$27,000 and I was out. Eventually it sold for \$34,500 and the reserve was \$33,000. Maybe if I had seen the car in person I would've gone higher. However spending as much as \$35,000 in the blind is a bit nervous. So now I still

have a lovely 1970 El Camino parked alongside my house that I still love. **All-California 2012** will be hosted this year by the San Diego region. Information is available in this month's G&D on page number 19. I attended their last All-California meet and they are a class operation and do a good job. The dates are April 26 through the 29th.

## Area 1 Director's Report

*Jim Karras, #43031*

February 2012



The VCCA has yet another new region. The Louis Chevrolet Region is located in Paris France. The region was named after Chevrolet's founder and namesake who lived in France before moving to the United States. The charter members of the new region wanted to become a formal region of the VCCA during Chevrolet's 100 anniversary year. Well, they made just under the wire as Don Williams signed the region's Charter on December 31, 2011. The region has members from several countries around Europe so it truly is an International region.

Don't forget, through the VCCA Member Value Program you can obtain a 15% discount for your favorite Valentine at 1-800-FLOWERS. To place an order and receive your discount, log on to [www.1800flowers.com](http://www.1800flowers.com) and enter code VCCA where it says "Enter your Promotion Code for Special Offers" prior to checkout or call 1-800-FLOWERS® (1-888-755-7474) and mention Promotion Code VCCA. For more information about the other VCCA MVP partners, visit [www.vcca.org/mvp.htm](http://www.vcca.org/mvp.htm).

If I can be of help, please give me a call at (714) 633-8210, send e-mail to [JimKarras@aol.com](mailto:JimKarras@aol.com) or visit my website [www.area1vcca.org](http://www.area1vcca.org). Until next month, drive safe and enjoy the ride! ~Jim



This guy had a "write your own" insurance policy & the replacement air bag was not covered 😊



A compact spare tire?



When he saw the ad on eBay it said NOS door handle  
Thank you Sherwin for this story....

### **CAR TUNES**

Radios are so much a part of the driving experience, it seems like cars have always had them. But they didn't. Here's the story.

### **SUNDOWN**

One evening in 1929 two young men named William Lear and Elmer Wavering drove their girlfriends to a lookout point high above the Mississippi River town of Quincy, Illinois, to watch the sunset. It was a romantic night to be sure, but one of the women observed that it would be even nicer if they could listen to music in the car.

Lear and Wavering liked the idea. Both men had tinkered with radios – Lear had served as a radio operator in the U. S. Navy during World War I – and it wasn't long before they were taking apart a home radio and trying to get it to work in a car. But it wasn't as easy as it sounds: automobiles have ignition switches, generators, spark

plugs, and other electrical equipment that generate noisy static interference, making it nearly impossible to listen to the radio when the engine was running.

### **SIGNING ON**

One by one, Lear and Wavering identified and eliminated each source of electrical interference. When they finally got their radio to work, they took it to a radio convention in Chicago. There they met Paul Galvin, owner of Galvin Manufacturing Corporation. He made a product called a "battery eliminator" a device that allowed battery-powered radios to run on household AC current. But as more homes were wired for electricity, more radio manufacturers made AC-powered radios. Galvin needed a new product to manufacture. When he met Lear and Wavering at the radio convention, he found it. He believed that mass-produced, affordable car radios had the potential to become a huge business.

Lear and Wavering set up shop in Galvin's factory, and when they perfected their first radio, they installed it in his Studebaker. Then Galvin went to a local banker to apply for a loan. Thinking it might sweeten the deal, he had his men install a radio in the banker's Packard. Good idea, but it didn't work – half an hour after the installation, the banker's Packard caught on fire. (They didn't get the loan.)

Galvin didn't give up. He drove his Studebaker nearly 800 miles to Atlantic City to show off the radio at the 1930 Radio Manufacturers Association convention. Too broke to afford a booth, he parked the car outside the

convention hall and cranked up the radio so that passing conventioners could hear it. That idea worked – he got enough orders to put the radio into production.

### **WHAT'S IN A NAME**

That first production model was called the 5T71. Galvin decided he needed to come up with something a little catchier. In those days many companies in the phonograph and radio businesses used the suffix “ola” for their names – Radiola, Columbiola, and Victrola were three of the biggest. Galvin decided to do the same thing, and since his radio was intended for use in a motor vehicle, he decided to call it the Motorola.

But even with the name change, the radio still had problems:

When Motorola went on sale in 1930, it cost about \$110 uninstalled, at a time when you could buy a brand-new car for \$650, and the country was sliding into the Great Depression. (By that measure, a radio for a new car would cost about \$3,000 today.)

In 1930 it took two men several days to put in a car radio – the dashboard had to be taken apart so that the receiver and a single speaker could be installed, and the ceiling had to be cut open to install the antenna. These early radios ran on their own batteries, not on the car battery, so holes had to be cut into the floorboard to accommodate them. The installation manual had eight complete diagrams and 28 pages of instructions.

### **HIT THE ROAD**

Selling complicated car radios that cost 20 percent of the price of a brand-

new car wouldn't have been easy in the best of times, let alone during the Great Depression – Galvin lost money in 1930 and struggled for a couple of years after that. But things picked up in 1933 when Ford began offering Motorolas pre-installed at the factory. In 1934 they got another boost when Galvin struck a deal with B. F. Goodrich tire company to sell and install them in its chain of tire stores. By then the price of the radio, installation included, had dropped to \$55. The Motorola car radio was off and running. (The name of the company would be officially changed from Galvin Manufacturing to “Motorola” in 1947.)

In the meantime, Galvin continued to develop new uses for car radios. In 1936, the same year that it introduced push-button tuning, it also introduced the Motorola Police Cruiser, a standard car radio that was factory preset to a single frequency to pick up police broadcasts. In 1940 he developed with the first handheld two-way radio – the Handie-Talkie – for the U. S. Army. A lot of the communications technologies that we take for granted today were born in Motorola labs in the years that followed World War II. In 1947 they came out with the first television to sell under \$200. In 1956 the company introduced the world's first pager; in 1969 it supplied the radio and television equipment that was used to televise Neil Armstrong's first steps on the Moon. In 1973 it invented the world's first handheld cellular phone. Today Motorola is one of the second-largest cell phone manufacturer in the world. And it all started with the car radio.

## **WHATEVER HAPPENED TO....**

The two men who installed the first radio in Paul Galvin's car, Elmer Wavering and William Lear, ended up taking very different paths in life. Wavering stayed with Motorola. In the 1950's he helped change the automobile experience again when he developed the first automotive alternator, replacing inefficient and unreliable generators. The invention lead to such luxuries as power windows, power seats, and, eventually, air-conditioning.

Lear also continued inventing. He holds more than 150 patents. Remember eight-track tape players? Lear invented that. But what he's really famous for are his contributions to the field of aviation. He invented radio direction finders for planes, aided in the invention of the autopilot, designed the first fully automatic aircraft landing system, and in 1963 introduced his most famous invention of all, the Lear Jet, the world's first mass-produced, affordable business jet. (Not bad for a guy who dropped out of school after the eighth grade.)

## **Next Meeting**

**Thursday February 2<sup>nd</sup> , 2012**

**17015 Burbank Blvd, Encino**

**7:30 –9:00 PM**