

# Old Cars

www.oldcarsweekly.com

Weekly News & Marketplace

## EXPRESS

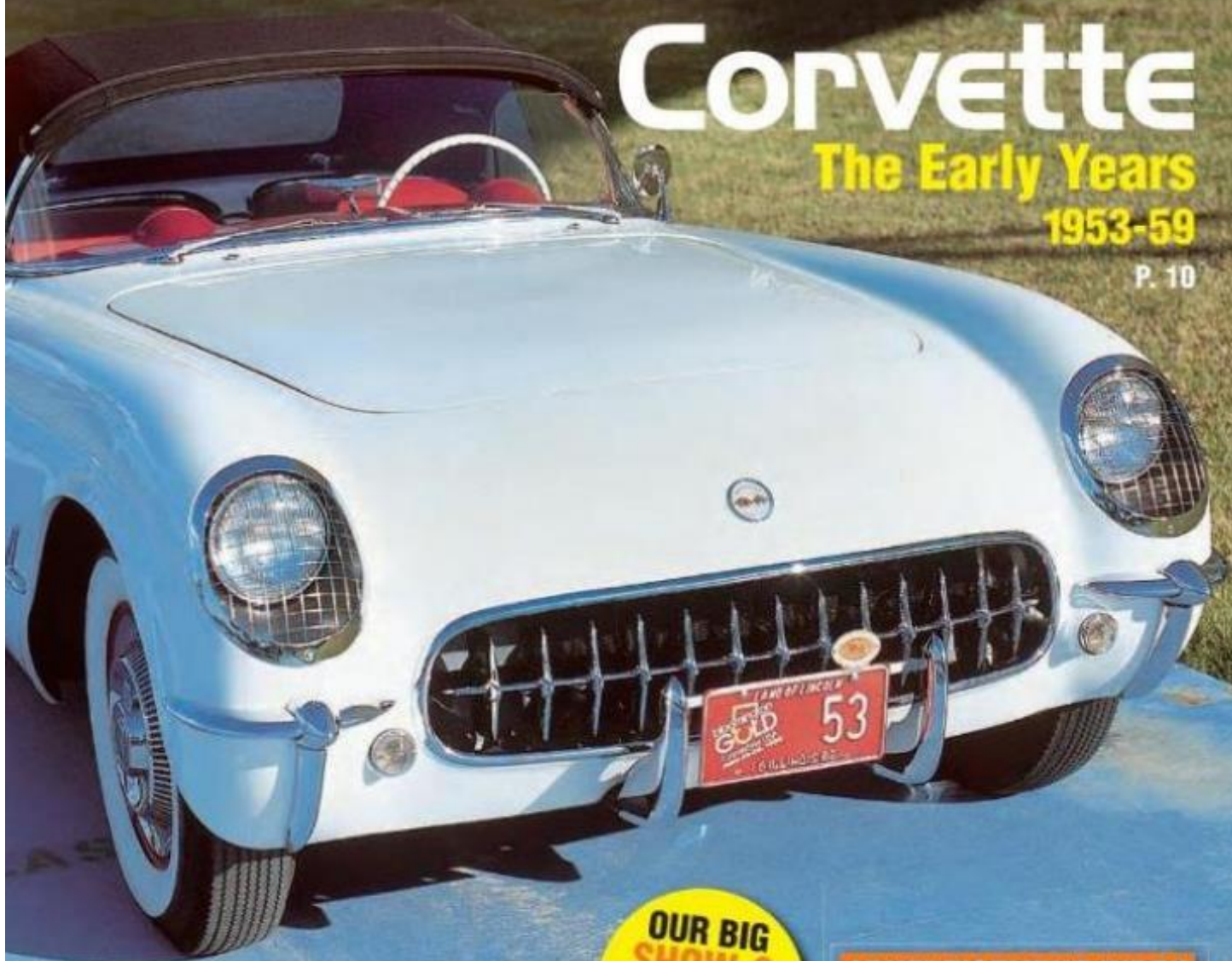
July 13, 2017

# Corvette

## The Early Years

### 1953-59

P. 10



## PLUS

- HOBBY NEWS & NOTES, P. 8
- FORD FIND: RARE MODEL Y PROTOTYPE, P. 32

**OUR BIG  
SHOW &  
AUCTION  
CALENDAR**

P. 48

### ADVERTISEMENT INDEX

Madison Classics .....	2
Heartland Die-Cast & Promo.....	3
Cars of Summer .....	5
Holmen Lions Kornfest Car Show.....	6
Diecast Direct, Inc. ....	7
D & D Classic .....	9
Krause Publications .....	15





Jerry Heasley

**1956 Corvette hardtop with 210-hp standard V-8**

# 1956

In 1956, the Corvette began to define itself as a true American sports car. A lot of people would have been perfectly content if Chevrolet had frozen Corvette styling with the 1956 model. The same basic grille styling was kept intact, but the grille teeth looked a bit slimmer. Chevrolet styling studio chief Clare MacKichan directed the 1956 redesign, which was somewhat inspired by the thrusting headlamps and twin-bulge hood of the Mercedes-Benz 300SL gullwing coupe. There were new front fenders with chrome-rimmed headlights; glass windows; external door handles; chrome-outlined concave side body coves and sloping, taillight-integrated rear fenders. The dash layout remained the same as in the past. The 1956 rear view mirror, located on the center of the top of the dash, was adjusted by using a thumbscrew. Improved-fit soft convertible tops were standard and a power top was optional, as was a removable fiberglass hardtop. Upholstery colors were limited to Beige or Red, but seven nitro-cellulose lacquer body colors were available. They were Onyx Black with a Silver panel (Black or White soft top); Polo White with a Silver panel (Black or White soft top); Venetian Red with a Beige panel (Beige or White soft top); Cascade Green with a Beige panel (Beige or White soft top); Aztec Copper with a Beige panel

(Beige or White soft top); Arctic Blue with a Silver panel (Beige or White soft top) and Inca Silver with an Imperial Ivory panel (Black or White soft top).

## I.D. NUMBERS

Numbers were the same as for previous models with the number symbols changed as follows: E56S001001 to E56S004467. All Corvettes were V-8 powered and all Chevrolets with V-8 engines used a V serial number prefix. The first symbol E indicates Corvette. The second and third symbols (56) indicate the model year. The fourth symbol identifies the assembly plant S = St. Louis, Mo. The last six symbols indicate the sequential production number. The beginning engine numbers were 0001001 and up at each assembly plant with F = Flint, Mich. and T = Tonawanda, N.Y. Suffixes were as follows: GV for 265-cid 210-hp V-8 with Powerglide; GU for 265-cid 240-hp V-8 with two four-barrel carburetors, high-lift "Duntov" camshaft and three-speed manual transmission; GR for regular 265-cid 225-hp V-8 with dual four-barrel car-



Nicky Wright

**1956 Corvette**





Jerry Heasley

**1956 Corvette convertible with one of only 887 Beige interiors**

buretor, and three-speed manual transmission; FK for 265-cid 210-hp V-8 with three-speed manual transmission and FG for 265-cid 225-hp V-8 with Powerglide.

**NOTE:** Powerglide adds 95 pounds to weight.

**ENGINES**

**BASE ENGINE:** V-8. Overhead valve. Cast-iron block.

Displacement: 265 cid. Bore and stroke: 3.75 x 3.00 inches. Compression ratio: 9.25:1. Brake hp: 210 at 5600 rpm. Five main bearings. Solid valve lifters. Carburetor: Carter Type WCFB four-barrel Model 2419S.

**OPTIONAL ENGINE:** V-8. Overhead valve. Cast-iron block. Displacement: 265 cid. Bore and stroke: 3.75 x 3.00 inches. Compression ratio: 9.25:1. Brake hp: 225. Five main



Jerry Heasley

**The 1956 Corvette convertible; 1,259 of 3,467 had two-tone paint**



bearings. Solid valve lifters. Carburetor: Two four-barrel carburetors.

**OPTIONAL ENGINE:** V-8. Overhead valve. Cast-iron block. Displacement: 265 cid. Bore and stroke: 3.75 x 3.00 inches. Compression ratio: 9.25:1. Brake hp: 240 at 5200 rpm. Five main bearings. Solid valve lifters. High-lift camshaft. Carburetor: Two four-barrel carburetors.

#### TRANSMISSIONS

**MANUAL TRANSMISSION:** A close-ratio three-speed manual all-synchromesh transmission with floor-mounted gear shifter was standard equipment.

**AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION:** A two-speed Powerglide automatic transmission was optional equipment.

#### CHASSIS FEATURES

Wheelbase: 102 inches. Overall length: 168 inches. Overall height: 51.9 inches. Overall width: 70.5 inches. Front tread: 57 inches. Rear tread: 59 inches. Ground clearance: Six inches. Tires: 6.70 x 15. Frame: Welded steel box-section, X-braced type. Front suspension: Independent; unequal-length A-arms; coil springs, tube shocks. Steering: Saginaw worm-and-ball, 16:1 ratio, 37-foot turning circle. Rear suspension: Live axle on semi-elliptic leaf springs, anti-roll bar, tubular shock absorbers. Rear axle type: Hypoid semi-floating. Brakes: Four-wheel hydraulic, internal-expanding, 11-inch diameter drums, 157 square inches effective lining area (121 square inches with optional sintered metallic linings). 15-inch steel bolt-on wheels. Standard rear axle ratio with three-speed 3.70:1; with Powerglide: 3.55:1. Optional axle ratios: 3.27:1, 4.11:1 and 4.56:1.

#### OPTIONS

RPO 101 Heater (\$115). RPO 102 Signal-seeking AM radio (\$185). RPO 107 Parking brake signal (\$5). RPO 108 Courtesy lights (\$8). RPO 109 Windshield washer (\$11). RPO 290 White sidewall tires 6.70 x 15 (\$30). RPO 313 Powerglide automatic transmission (\$175). RPO 419 Auxiliary hardtop (\$200). RPO 426 Electric power windows (\$60). RPO 449 Special high-lift camshaft. (\$175). RPO 469 Dual four-barrel carburetor equipment (\$160). RPO 473 Hydraulic folding top mechanism (\$100).

#### HISTORICAL FOOTNOTES

Production of 1956 Corvettes began November 4, 1955. Chevrolet general manager Ed Cole and Corvette chief engineer Zora Arkus-Duntov decided it was time for the Corvette to go racing in 1956. Zora drove one car to a two-way average of 150.583 mph at Daytona's Flying Mile. John Fitch also set a record of 90.932 mph for the standing-start mile at Daytona and 145.543 mph in the production sports car class. In the spring of 1956, at Pebble Beach, Calif., dentist Dr. Dick Thompson finished second overall and first in class in a sports car road race. Thompson went on to take the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) 1956 championship with his Corvette. A 225-hp 1956 Corvette could go from 0-to-60 mph in 7.3 seconds; from 0-to-100 mph in 20.7 seconds.

1956 CORVETTE					
Model Number	Body/Style Number	Body Type & Seating	Factory Price	Shipping Weight	Production Total
2934	2934	2-dr Rols-2P	\$2,900	2,730 lbs.	3,467



1956 Corvette ragtop

Jerry Heasley