

CERC
P.O. Box 58
Warren, MI 48090

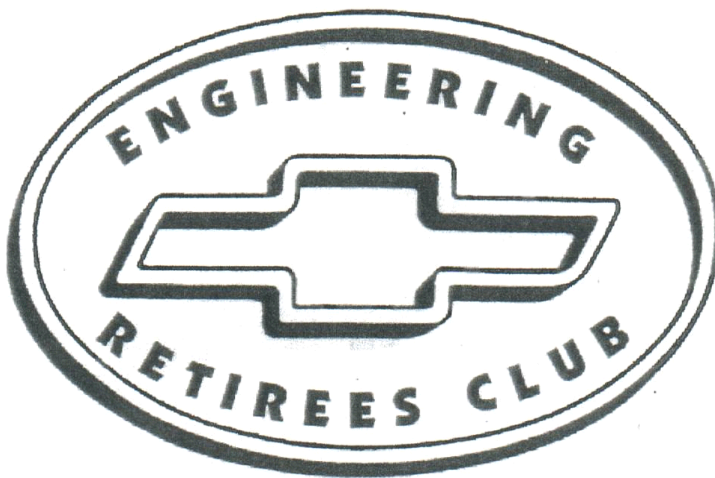
FIRST CLASS



Send to:

GOD BLESS AMERICA

THE CERC "COMPANION"



FEBRUARY, 2011

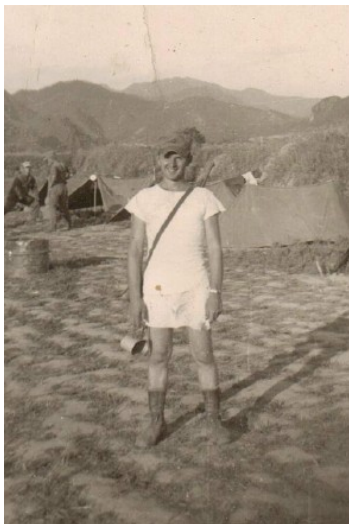
CERCS VETERAN INFORMATION

Compiled by Tom Zebehazy

Korean War Veteran Al Bederka: Al joined the U. S. Marine Corps Reserves in October 1947 and did his reserve basic training at Camp Lejeune North Carolina. He went on active duty in August 1950 and did training at the Naval Amphibious Base at Little Creek Virginia and at Camp Pendleton in California. When his unit shipped out to Korea, Al was sent to Communications School. He was given the choice of four different schools and he chose communications so that he would stay on the west coast and be able to catch up sooner with his original unit in Korea. He wrote three requests to join his unit in Korea and even tried to flunk out of Communications School so he could be reunited with his unit; but to no avail. Al eventually graduated from Communications School as a Wireman and was assigned to the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Division and was sent to Korea in February, 1951. By this time, his original unit had already participated in the Chosin Reservoir Campaign, a major battle of the Korean War.

As a Wireman, Al was responsible for laying wire between the battalion and the front line company. Land lines were required since wireless communications could be intercepted by the enemy. Al participated in four battle campaigns through the center of Korea in very mountainous terrain. He recalls one occasion where they were on a ridge that was under fire and had to go over the hill rather than around it to avoid the enemy. Still, he remembers bullets being reflected by the sun hitting all around him, even between his legs. On another occasion, they were laying wire during the night and had laid the wire through a mine field. They had gone back and forth a number of times without hitting any of the mines. The next day when others were inspecting the wires, a few of them lost their lives when they stepped on the mines. Al also remembers being blown off one hill about 30 yards by an artillery shell, but he was not injured.

After one battle campaign, the only thing Al wanted to do when they got back to the battalion was to wash all the mud off himself and his clothes. He got a Korean boy to take all his clothes down to the river to be washed. All he had left was a white t-shirt and white shorts. Unfortunately, the battalion was called to order and Al was forced to lineup only in these clothes and his carbine. Soon he could hear coming down the chain of command "What the hell is that?" Al's response "clothes being washed.." then echoed back up to the battalion commander. One of the other Marines took the picture seen on the right.



After laying wires, Al would try to hitch a ride on a jeep that was headed back to the battalion. One time a truck loaded with artillery shells and a few Korean civilians stopped to give him a ride. Al refused the ride as he could see a jeep coming down the road.

Soon, Al saw a large explosion that turned out to be the truck with artillery that ran over a land mine. Lucky for Al, this was the only time he passed up a ride. There was an AP photo of him staring at the huge crater left by the explosion.

On one patrol, they surprised a Chinese soldier and were able to get the jump on him and disarm him. They took him back to battalion and knew Intelligence would want to interrogate him. For fun, they decided to toss the soldier into the Intelligence officer's tent to see what happened. After all the commotion of the officers trying to get their guns, they were reprimanded for pulling such a stunt. But it was these type of fun activities that helped them take their minds off the constant fighting. As it turned out, the Chinese soldier was a mine setter and they were able to get information on the mine patterns that the Chinese were using.

With his tour of duty in Korea nearly complete, Al was promoted to Staff Sergeant and was one of the youngest at 21 years of age. With 11 days left before Al was to leave Korea, the replacement Marines were starting to show up. These inexperienced soldiers were immediately given a hazardous assignment that Al and his team of three others thought they should not go on. So they volunteered to take their place and during this patrol, Al stepped on a land mine. His left foot was nearly blown off and he lost large portions of his right leg muscle above and below the knee.

Two of the other three Marines with him were also wounded, but not as seriously. Sgt. Lilla, who had shrapnel in his left leg, applied tourniquets to Al's legs. The one soldier that wasn't injured ran 1 ½ miles back for help. They jury rigged a stretcher to get Al off the mountain and he was airlifted to a field hospital. A team of three surgeons operated on Al's legs and he can remember that the spinal anesthetic they administered only numbed his upper legs and not his lower legs. He had to tell the surgeons that he could feel all the cutting and cleaning they were doing on his wounds.



Al was transferred to the USS Consolation, a hospital ship, where he stayed for two weeks and had two more surgeries. He was then sent to the Naval Hospital at Yokosuka Japan, just south of Tokyo. Normally, when your discharge date comes up, you will be sent back home even if you are wounded. But a doctor at the hospital felt Al should stay longer until he was fully recovered. Al credits him for making him walk without a limp and without a cane. While in the hospital, he met another Marine from Berkeley Michigan by the name of Tirpak. Tirpak was writing letters to five girls back home and Al was only writing letters to his sweetheart, Ruthie. He told him that it wasn't fair that he got so many letters. So, unbeknownst to Al, Tirpak wrote a letter to the *Los Angeles Examiner* about the lonely wounded Marine in the hospital in Japan. Soon Al was receiving a ton of mail and at one mail call, he received 110 letters and packages. He couldn't explain why he was suddenly so popular. It wasn't until 1954, when Al ran into Tirpak at a dealership in Detroit, that he found out about the article in the *LA Examiner*.

One family actually offered to let Al stay at their home anytime he was in Los Angeles. Al communicated with them for 10 years after getting out of the service. A couple of years ago, when Al and Ruthie were staying at a timeshare in Las Vegas, Al met a retired journalist from the *LA Examiner* that remembered the article.

When Al was well enough to get out of the hospital, he was given liberty and allowed to go see the sights in Tokyo. When he and a buddy stopped at a bar for a drink, they were bought a second round by an Air Force captain that turned out to be the helicopter pilot that airlifted Al after his accident.

Al was discharged on June 14, 1952 and received a Purple Heart, the Korean Medal with 4 battle stars, a United Nations Ribbon and a Korean Ribbon. Al wouldn't have ended up in the auto industry if he hadn't stepped on a land mine. The doctors recommended that he get a job where he didn't have to stand, so Al went to the University of Detroit and studied drafting. Between semesters, he went to the Chrysler Institute which helped him get a job at Fisher Body in 1955 in the convertible group. When he didn't feel that he was getting appropriate raises, he left Fisher Body and worked at Aero Detroit for two years on a Chevrolet chassis program. He joined Chevrolet Engineering in 1957 as a body draftsman and enjoyed working on all the new body programs from that point forward. He spent two years in England working on the GM10 program just before he retired. He retired in 1988 when he was 58 years old and after 31 years at Chevrolet. He then went to work for Roy Sjoberg on the Viper at Chrysler for 1 ½ years. He spent another 1 ½ years at American Sunroof before really retiring.

Throughout his career, Al was known as "Lucky Al." Besides the luck he had in Korea with not losing his legs and avoiding being shot, Al survived a head-on collision in 1949 with only minor injuries. He was also known to win all the baseball and football pools. He says that his best luck was meeting his wife, Ruthie, who he dated for 5 years, and has been married to for 56 years.

Note from Tom Zebehazy: This will be the last veteran's article that I will write since I do not have any information from other veterans. If you would like to share your veteran experience in the *Companion*, please either send an e-mail to tomzeb2@aol.co or call me on 248-342-5079. I will be more than happy to sit down with you or talk with you on the phone.

To All Members

Recently we have been informed by the Gazebo Banquet Center, that there will be an increase in the cost of our luncheon (per person).

Therefore, we will have to increase our cost to the members. The present cost of \$11.00 per person will be increased to \$12.00 per person.

This increase will be in effect for our February Meeting.

All members who have paid in advance will be notified of the additional cost.

Gilbert Opaleski; President

EDITORIAL NOTES

CHRISTMAS PARTY OBSERVATIONS Although the CERC Board considers our 14DE10 party a success, I understand it was not a match to prior years. Thus belated thanks are past due to those CERC members previously responsible, most recently **Barbara Zynda, Carol Walker, and Diana Cromie**. The 2010 party was arranged by Board members, and was enjoyed by 129 attendees, mostly as couples, but with some 21 welcome singles.

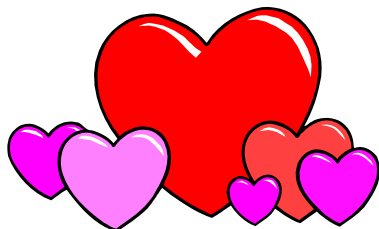
The Board members sincerely invite a CERC couple, member, or spouse, male and/or female, to head up and organize the 2011 Christmas Party. Any volunteer(s) please contact Gil Opaleski, CERC President.

PHOTOS (NOW "IMAGES") AND MEMBER INPUT Pictures now make up about half of the *Companion* content, thanks primarily to Dick Verduyn, Don Hoffman, and me. We need more submissions by members, not only of luncheon attendees but of other activities (such as sent to me by Joe Vlk and Tom Hill many issues past). It's best to submit items online, to althebert@comcast.net, but I will scan hard copy items mailed to me.

AUTOMATIC ONLINE COMPANION DELIVERY If you are not now receiving an email PDF file version of your CERC *Companion*, it's likely due to Webmaster Ken Deer's not having an up to date email address for you. The official member info keeper is Joe Orlando, to whom you should verify your phone number and email address, via jporlando@att.net.

2011 MEMBERSHIP DUES CERC annual dues, still \$15 as of now, are to be paid by check, not later than February 28, 2011, to avoid loss of membership or dues increase. See last page for address.

VIRTUAL AIRCRAFT MUSEUM Aircraft-interested persons can bring up information on all airplanes of all nations, at <http://www.aviastar.org/index2.html>.





“DOOR PRIZE” CASH WINNERS

Don Hoffman

Gerry Kwapis

Carl Dobrzynski

Gary Johnston



Ed Rzepecki

Mike Leash

Pat Suhy

John Finegan



Lou Ilg

Roseetta and Ray Culbertson

Lil and Vince Lauro

Kay Ilg



JACKIE O'S PAGE

(Jackie Olinger, aboard USS Lexington)

Did you know?

Drinking water at the correct time maximizes its effectiveness on the Human body:

2 glasses of water after waking up - helps activate internal organs

1 glass of water 30 minutes before a meal - helps digestion

1 glass of water before taking a bath - helps lower blood pressure

1 glass of water before going to bed - avoids stroke or heart attack

Here's a joke for you. A blonde female police officer pulls over a blonde gal for speeding. The officer walks up to the car and asks the blonde driver for her driver's license, but has to explain.

She says, 'It's that thing in your purse with your picture on it.' The blonde driver looks all over and finally pulls out her compact, opens it up, looks in the compact's mirror, and then hands it to the cop.

The blonde cop looks at the compact, rolls her eyes, hands the compact back to the driver, and says to her, "If you'd just have told me you were a police officer when I first pulled you over, we could have avoided this whole thing!"

Today I'm Fine - How are you?

It's better to say "I'm fine" with a grin,
Than to let people know the shape we are in.

There's nothing the matter with me,
I'm just as healthy as can be,

I have arthritis in both knees,
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.

My pulse is weak, my blood is thin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

All my teeth have had to come out,
And my diet I hate to think about.

I'm overweight and I can't get thin,
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

And arch supports I need for my feet.
Or I wouldn't be able to go out in the street.

Sleep is denied me night after night,
But every morning I find I'm all right.

My memory's failing, my head's in a spin.
But I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in.

Old age is golden I've heard it said,
But sometimes I wonder, as I go to bed.

With my ears in a drawer, my teeth in a cup,
And my glasses on a shelf, until I get up.

And when sleep dims my eyes, I say to myself,
Is there anything else I should lay on the shelf?

The reason I know my Youth has been spent,
Is my get-up-and-go has got-up-and-went!

But really I don't mind, when I think with a grin,
Of all the places my get-up has been.

I get up each morning and dust off my wits,
Pick up the paper and read the obits.

If my name is missing, I'm therefore not dead,
So I eat a good breakfast and jump back into bed.

The moral of this as the tale unfolds,
Is that for you and me, who are growing old.

It is better to say "I'm fine" with a grin,
Than to let people know the shape we are in.

I'M FINE!! HOW ARE YOU?

If you need a shoulder to cry on, pull off
to the side of the road.



Chuck and Lydia Combs

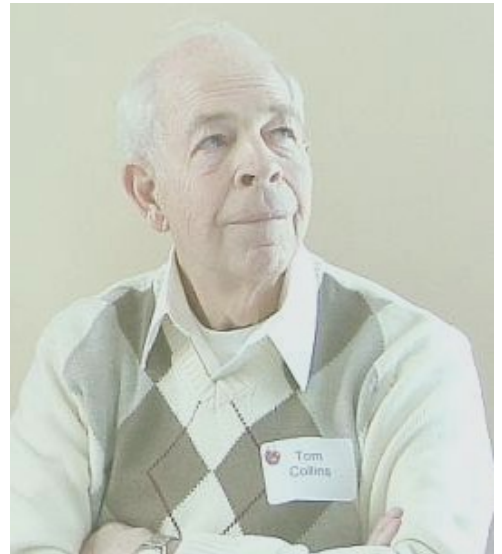


Terry and Chuck Dellofano



Lil Anderson

Frank Gordon



Tom Collins



Kay and Ed Pauly



Mary Collins



These are really pieces of history. Have fun reading.

Where did Piss Poor come from?

They used to use urine to tan animal skins, so families used to all pee in a pot & then once a day it was taken & sold to the tannery . . . If you had to do this to survive you were "Piss Poor"

But worse than that were the really poor folk who couldn't even afford to buy a pot . . . They "didn't have a pot to Piss in" & were the lowest of the low.

The next time you are washing your hands and complain because the water temperature isn't just how you like it, think about how things used to be.

Here are some additional facts about the 1500s:

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May, and they still smelled pretty good by June. However, since they were starting to smell . . . Brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor. Hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and men, then the women and finally the children. Last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the old saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the Bath water!"

Houses had thatched roofs - thick straw - piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof; hence the saying "It's raining cats and dogs."

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying, "Dirt poor." The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on floor to help keep their footing. as the winter wore on, they added more thresh until, when you opened the door, it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entrance-way. Hence: a thresh hold.

(Getting quite an education, aren't you?)

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables

and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while. Hence the rhyme: Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old.

Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man could, "bring home the bacon." They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and chew the fat.

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or the upper crust.

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would Sometimes knock the imbibers out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of holding a wake.

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a bone-house, and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive . . . So they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the graveyard shift.) to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be "saved by the bell" or was considered a "dead ringer".

And that's the truth . . . Now, who ever said History was boring!!!



Wally Duda's Band (Wally in center)



Sharon Nazione Lil Lauro Jim and Kay Matthews Lou Rosetta Vince Ray
Ilg Culbertson Lauro Culbertson



Dolly Mashione Chuck Dellofano Terry Dellofano
Marylou Freda Ellen Verduyn



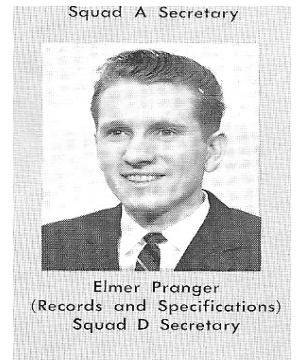
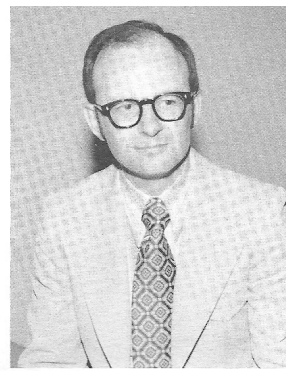
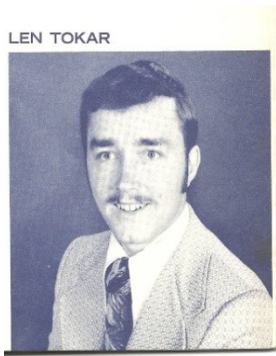
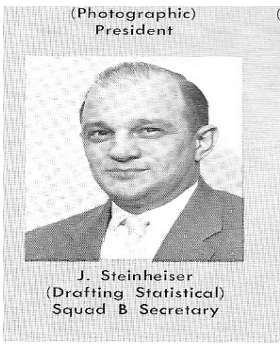
Warren Galbraith Darrell Pawlowski



Ellen and Dick Verduyn

Don and Elaine Hoffman

A LOOK BACK



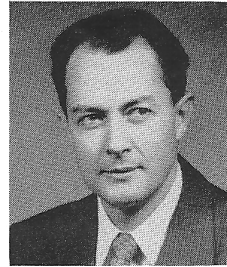
BOB MOSER



An early picture of Louis Chevrolet at the wheel of one of his early prototypes.

Ron Schell — Supervisor of the Suggestion Group

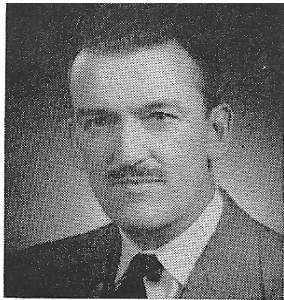
critical Drafting Group:



EARL C. KEIGHTLEY



Lynn Evans—Personnel Director



WALTER R. MacKENZIE



Vern Salinas

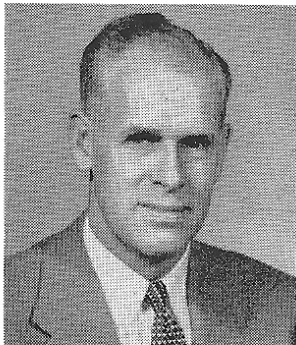


Don MacPherson

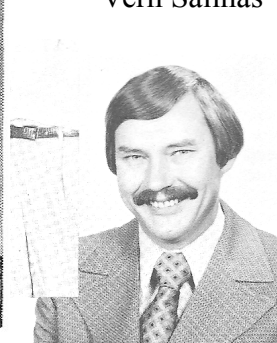


J. D. Ruhala

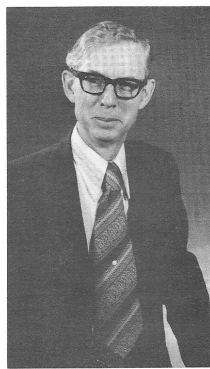
Records, and Technical



GEORGE C. AITKEN



Ken Hanson



Walter Lloyd



H. E. Stroeters



Early photos from Pat Carollo (Odd arrangement was best I could do)



Dick Verduyn

Veronica Schmidt



Yvonne and Dave Hesse



LEFT
Gil Opaleski



RIGHT
Mal Hanson



Frank and Dolly Maschione



Diane Suhy

Geri Rzepecki

WE CARE

BILL PRONOVICH Died December 11, 2010, at age 82. Bill was a WWII Navy veteran; and had 35 years of GM service. His Chevrolet years included work on the Corvette design team and CEC bowling.



Bill and Marie Popovich

From Robert Gervais: **George Aitken** will be 100 on May 11th, this year, now living at 1904 Dunham Dr., Rochester, MI 48306. Also from Robert::

ROBERT GERVAIS - FLORIDA
I WAS SADDEN TO READ OF
JIM CARLISLE PASSING, JIM &
I GO BACK A LONG WAY, NO
MATTER IF YOU WORKED WITH
OR FOR HIM IT WAS A PLEASURE
ALSO TO HEAR HIM TALK, ONE
TIME HE WAS AT MY HOUSE,
MY MOTHER WAS THERE &
AFTER HEARING JIM TALK,
MY MOTHER TOLD ME IF I
HAD 10% OF THAT TALENT
I WOULD GO FURTHER AT
WORK, JIM WILL BE MISSED.

From Jim's family (via Susan Anderson) A very sincere Thank You for CERC member attendance at their Dad's memorial service and for our correspondence. Thank YOU, Susan.

From Ed Verdoin: About the **WEBER** brothers, **FRITZ & BILL**. Fritz' widow Jean advises that Bill's wife Gerry has had dementia for over a year now. Bill visits Gerry daily, but he is wasting away and has stroke-related difficulty in talking. Cards to Bill, at 101 Stonewood Dr., Fairfield Glade, TN 38555-6565, would be a welcome gesture.

MEMBER INPUT

CECs Henry P. DuRussel Bowling League will end its 50 year duration with a Golden Anniversary 50th bowling final date, Saturday, February 19, 2011, 2 PM at Pampa Lanes on Van Dyke. The League is named for Fr. DuRussel, whose used bowling ball was found and traced to him, in Oscoda, MI. CEC bowlers and guests are invited to this final event by Ed Verduin and the League.

MEMBER INFO

NEW MEMBERS

Janet Jacob
 7040 Webster Road
 Imlay City, MI 48444
 janjacob@aol.com

810 724-0269

Kathleen Sitzman
 4329 N. Wood Rd.
 Lincoln, MI 48742
 kams@chartermi.net

989 736-3557

NEW EMAIL ADDRESS

James F. Hinkle
 hinkle.james.f@gmail.com

NEW EMAIL ONLY (No mailed hard copy)

John Bretz
 jlbretz14@comcast.net

Paul Huzzard
 paulhuzzard@aol.com

Don Brooks
 donbrooks205@comcast.net

Norman Sawaya
 normansawaya@aol.com



Mira and Carl Dobrzynski

To Right: Angela Orlando



Above: Frances and Carl Diegel

Below: Pat and Bob Mitchell



Marion Teske



CHEVROLET ENGINEERING DIRECTOR AND EXECUTIVES



R. C. Stempel
Engineering

Memories to most of you, perhaps, but this 1976 organization was five years after I left Chevrolet for the legal-liaison assignment to GM Engineering Staff, so this, from **Al Kaflik**, was news to me.
Al Thebert, Editor



H. B. Ernst



P. E. Hitch



P. J. King



N. E. Stasel



R. N. Wright



R. W. Brewbaker



R. J. Eaton



D. R. Hubbard



R. L. Keinath



W. A. Lerg



G. J. Mach



D. R. McLellan



A. H. Rasegan



N. D. Sholler



C. D. Simmons



E. H. Stepp



J. D. Vicary



T. R. Zimmer



Rose and Billy Clarke



Martha Zwar



Marlene and Len Sitek



Lillian Anderson



Left: Toni Leach Above: Sandra Studebaker and Tom Hill

2011 CERC OFFICERS

President Gil Opaleski 4789Lorwood Dr. Smiths Creek, MI 48074 810 989-2564 opaleski401@comcast.net	Vice President Rev. Ed Verduin 28076 Palomino Ave. Warren, MI 48093 586 558-4519 reveddievee@wowway.com
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Treasurer Dick Verduyn 41841 Pond View Dr. Sterling Hts., MI 48314 586 739-4488 verduyn@aol.com	Secretary Pat Carollo 14243 Lakeshore Sterling Hts., MI 48313 586 247-4477 patcarollo@wowway.com
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2011 COMMITTEES

Companion Editor Alan Thebert 11826 Forest Glen Ln Shelby Twp., MI 48315 586 786-6611 althebert@comcast.net	Webmaster Ken Deer 8553 Charles Ct. Sterling ILHts., MI 48312 586 264-7466 deerken@gmail.com
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Luncheon Ray Culbertson 44117 Dylan Sterling Hts., MI 48314 586 323-1292 rayandrosetta@sbcglobal.net	Store Sales Mal Hanson 30151 Barbary Ct. Warren, MI 48093 586 751-0865 hansonm9@comcast.net
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Golf Outing Jack Braden 876 Edgemont Park GrosPte. Park, MI 48230 586 786-0572	Membership Joe Orlando 2057 Shady Dr. Warren, MI 48092 586 751-8592 jporlando@att.net
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Menu & 50/59 Raffle Carlotta Aurelia 258 Beechview Dr. S Rochester, MI 48306 248 651-7709 jaurelia@sbcglobal.net	50/50 Raffle Dave Dolby 1835 Spring Grove Dr. Blmflld Hills, MI 48304 248 853-5963 davidadolby@aol.com
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Christmas Party PARTY ORGANIZER AND PLANNER(S) NEEDED; CONTACT GIL OPALESKI	GM Retiree Relations Pam Flores, GM Comm. 300 Ren. Cen. MC: 482-C29-B24 Detroit, MI300 313 667-1420 pamelaflores@gm.com
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NEXT CERC LUNCHEON:

THEME: **ST. VALENTINE'S DAY**

Date: Tuesday, February 8, 2011
Where: The Gazebo, Mound & 13
Time: Come @ 11, Eat @ Noon
Cost/each: \$12 to CERC by 02FE11
Pay via: Check to CERC luncheon
Mail to: CERC, P.O. Box 58
Warren, MI 48090
Pay @ door?: \$15 cash or check

Luncheon Menu—(Cash bar @ 11:30)

Swedish meatballs w noodles
Breaded baked chicken
Tiliapa w garlic dill butter
Green & yellow beans w carrots
Smashed potatoes w horseradish & Btr
Tossed salad, dressing choices
Veggie and fruit trays
Assorted relishes
Dinner rolls & butter
Coffee, tea, milk
Fresh fruit desert
Chocolate and vanilla puddings

CERC MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name: _____
Spouse: _____
Street: _____
City: _____
State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Phone: _____
Email: _____

NOTE If you change your mailing address seasonally, **YOU** must so advise your own local U.S. Post Office to forward mail. Also advise CERC via Joe Orlando of any other contact info updates, to CERC, P.O. Box 59, Warren, MI 48090

CEC / GM WORK INFO (briefly, CEC Dept, etc.)

_____ Yr. Retired _____

DUES: \$15 To be paid annually, by 28FE, by check to CERC Dues, Box 58, Warren, MI 48090.

