

# Bloomington Gold's Collector Seminars

By David Burroughs

**W**hen spending over \$50,000 for a collector Corvette, did you ever feel like you may be "taken for a ride" by the seller, rather than by the expensive Corvette you're pondering? Bloomington Gold trains people to distinguish the authentic collector pieces from those that just "look" that way. It can be the other way around, as well; some sellers don't realize how good their cars are until they've been through one of our seminars. We use real life unrestored original cars and contrast them with cars that are restored, repaired, or that may look good but don't have the quality earmarks found on blue chip Corvettes.

The goal of the course is to increase our clients' awareness of where to look, what to look for, and how to interpret what they see. This allows our clients to be better prepared to buy, sell, evaluate, or restore collector Corvettes and hopefully avoid costly mistakes due to lack of insight and information about a particular model. Students may select a seminar about any one of many year/model Corvettes that we offer. Every year, we change the year/models offered for our seminars.

## OVERVIEW

This four-hour class is NOT an advanced level study of all the intricacies

embedded into a collector Corvette. Some people spend years learning them. Instead, it is designed to provide the non-expert with a check list of some critical components indicative of the authenticity of the entire car. Attendees learn from actual low-mileage unrestored original cars; not from a book or expert. Seasoned instructors, most of whom are Bloomington Gold judges, will point out the original finishes, installations, and configurations of these components and contrast them against the same components installed on a restored, damaged, or altered car of the same year.

A checklist is presented to each attendee for the specific components the class will inspect on both the original and restored cars. They will include components within each of the four major sections; interior, exterior, suspension and engine area. The Benchmark car is then compared to the restored car in the following areas:

## INTERIOR

30 minutes total

- Seat materials & belts for install & configuration
- Door panels for texture & softness
- Carpet for finish, texture, & configuration
- Steering wheel for finish & configuration
- Halo & window trim for finish
- Dash & console for finish

## EXTERIOR

60 minutes total

### Paint & Body

- Fender & hood for texture & waves
- Door jambs for texture & sheen
- Door bottom for coverage
- Under hood, hinges & wax stripping
- Surround for texture & veining
- Undercoat & fender wells

### Hard Trim

- Wheels / caps / tires
- Wipers
- Badges
- Chrome / bumpers
- Convertible top

## SUSPENSION

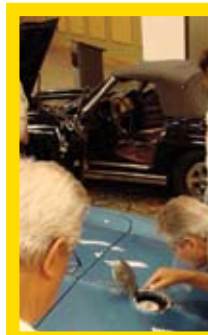
30 minutes total

- Frame
- Springs
- Control arms
- Steering knuckles
- Brake calipers

## ENGINE COMPARTMENT

60 minutes total

- Fender wells for texture & finish
- Firewall for texture & finish
- Latches for finish
- Wiring harness for install & configuration
- Radiator & support for finish & configuration
- Engine finishes
- Valve covers





- Block, water pump, heads, exhaust manifold
- Intake manifold
- Shielding finish & configuration

This process takes about three hours and is followed by the fourth hour, in which attendees listen to a group presentation about documentation. That discussion includes the following issues:

#### IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- Order form
- Window sticker
- Gas tank sticker
- Warranty book
- Shipper copy
- MSO

#### NON-DOCUMENTS

- Owner's manual
- Radio instructions
- Jacking instructions
- Sales brochures
- Tires, batteries, accessory receipts

#### POTENTIALLY IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

- Matching numbers
- Original photos
- Historic documentation
- Magazine articles
- Event paperwork (races, shows, etc.)
- Ownership history/trail

- Bills of sale
- Signatures of celebrities
- Signed affidavits
- Maintenance records

#### IMPORTANT "NUMBERS"

- VIN tag
- Trim tag
- Block stampings
- Block casting dates
- Block casting numbers

After this clinic, you should be more able to answer these questions:

- What does "matching numbers" mean in an ad?
- Does it really mean anything that you can count on? Are you sure?
- How is factory original paint and interior determined? Why should anyone care?
- How does one recognize original interior from replacements?
- If someone advertises a Survivor, how do you know what that means?
- Does it mean it's certified? Why should you care?
- What are the earmarks to look for to know if the car is an unrestored original?
- What's the difference between a GoldCertified car and a non-certified one?
- Are GoldCertified cars restored or original? Are you sure?

- What is a dead giveaway that a car or chassis has been repainted?
- What is a dead giveaway that the nose, fenders, or tail light panel has been replaced?
- What is the difference between accurate original convertible top and a replacement?
- Who are credible advisors that can be trusted to help you purchase a collector Corvette?
- How do you know if the trim tags accurately portray the original color and interior?
- What are the dead giveaways that the document is not accurate?
- Can documents be forged to the degree that most people can't tell?
- Just because you can't find dead giveaways, does that mean it's original?

If attendees have more detailed questions apart from the inspection form, the instructors will usually stay a while after the seminar to provide some more in-depth explanations, to allow us to cover a large amount of information in a limited time.

Registration opens February 15, 2009. For more information, please visit our website, [www.bloomingtongold.com](http://www.bloomingtongold.com).

C&C

