

Newsletter Takes Top Honors • Gold Strike in Silver State

# DRIVING FORCE

Fall 2015 | [semaSAN.com](http://semaSAN.com)



*Celebrating*  
**10 YEARS**  
STATE AUTOMOTIVE ENTHUSIAST  
LEADERSHIP CAUCUS

# LEGACY OF *Leadership*

# Legislative Caucus Celebrates a Decade of Successes

With More Than 700 members, State Legislative Caucus Continues to Thrive

In its daily efforts to promote and protect the auto hobby, the SEMA Action Network (SAN) continues to partner with state lawmakers from across the country through the State Automotive Enthusiast Leadership Caucus. Celebrating its tenth anniversary, the Caucus is a bipartisan group of state lawmakers whose common thread is a love and appreciation for automobiles.

Supported by SEMA's Government Affairs office in Washington, D.C., the Caucus has been instrumental in raising the motor vehicle hobby's profile in the state legislatures and in the eyes of the public. Working in state capitals, these legislators are frequently called upon to oppose overly restrictive legislation that seeks to prohibit vehicle modification and proactively protect the hobby by improving existing motor vehicle statutes and creating new programs to safeguard and expand it.

Among other things, State Caucus members have been responsible for legislation to provide titling and registration for custom cars and street rods, remove the tax burden on collector car owners, implement an objective exhaust-noise testing program, create emissions exemptions, allow single rear license plates and abolish ethanol requirements in gasoline.

"We are the people that write and pass laws for our individual states," said West Virginia Delegate Gary Howell, the current Caucus chairman. "As many of the laws that govern



Former New York Assemblyman Bill Reilich with his classic '57 Chevy Bel Air.



Former Montana Senator John Brueggeman addresses a crowd at the SEMA Show.

how we title, register, inspect and equip our vehicles are handled at the state level, these state legislatures wield a lot of power over the hobby. That includes modifications you can do to your car or truck. Fortunately, there are a lot of state legislators that are fans of cars themselves, many of whom are members of the State Caucus. We want to protect your right to work on and modify your ride."

As a lifelong enthusiast and owner of Howell Automotive in Keyser, West Virginia, Howell joined the Caucus in 2011 upon his election to the West Virginia House of Delegates. He has worked extensively in the motorsports industry, raced both stock cars and drag cars, built winning race cars and award-winning show cars and designed racing parts. Among other vehicles, the MOPAR fan counts several of the brand's offerings in his garage, including a Jeep Cherokee XJ and Dodge SRT-4.

Howell was preceded as Caucus chairman by former New York Assemblyman Bill Reilich, who took the reins in 2007. "Being a member of the State Automotive Enthusiast Leadership Caucus and then serving as its chairman was one of the most rewarding experiences of my career. I enjoyed fighting alongside fellow legislators from throughout the county to preserve the rights of auto enthusiasts. I believe it is critical that we work together to protect this important piece of our American History."

Reilich, who now serves as the Town Supervisor of Greece, New York, immediately

demonstrated his willingness to get involved in keeping automotive-related laws fair and hobby-friendly after joining the Caucus in 2006. Reilich's quick response helped delay action on a bill that threatened to ban brush and grille guards on all motor vehicles that use New York's public roadways. "My love of automobiles goes way back to my early days of my pedal car," Reilich remembers. His own collection has included a '57 Chevy Bel Air, an '81 Ford T-Bird and a late-model Ford Mustang.

Upon the Caucus' formation in 2005, former Montana Senator John Brueggeman was chosen to lead the new group. "Being named Caucus chairman was among the greatest honors of my legislative service," recalls Brueggeman. "There's no organization I'd rather be involved with. It's been very close to my heart. It was rewarding to work with the SAN to help recruit legislators from across the United States and organize them into a political juggernaut for the rights of enthusiasts. Unchecked, creeping regulation will take us off America's roads. The bottom line is there are people who don't understand us, may not like us, and wouldn't miss us if we were gone. Building a vigilant core of legislators who have a passion and understanding for our way of life is critical to preserving our rights in a changing world."

Brueggeman has been interested in everything mechanical since childhood. He worked for a CNC machine shop while studying engineering in college, which gave him a great understanding of manufacturing. The experience boosted his CAD/CAM skills, and later, he became a certified TIG welder. While he's owned several collector vehicles of various styles, including custom motorcycles, the '65 GTO and the '65 Shelby Cobra are among his favorite cars. "Whether cars or bikes, it all boils down to the fact that I still get goose bumps every time I see machined metal or a perfect weld," Brueggeman says.

"These three leaders are not alone. By joining the Caucus, lawmakers from all around the country have demonstrated their commitment to upholding the rights of vehicle enthusiasts," said SEMA Vice President of Government Affairs Steve McDonald. "In addition, hobbyists are able to quickly identify which state legislators have chosen to be recognized for their support of this great American hobby. We are extremely proud that the Caucus has con-

## SAN DIRECTOR'S DISPATCH



Colby Martin

# It's Not Just What You Know, It's Who You Know

tinued to grow in numbers and influence in each of its 10 years in existence. We look forward to more years of success under Delegate Howell's leadership."

"As chairman, I'm very proud to have contributed to the growth and continued relevancy of the Caucus," adds Howell. "Many of my fellow state legislators in West Virginia have recently stepped up and joined. The more we can make lawmakers aware of this family hobby and the number of their constituents



Delegate Gary Howell at the West Virginia state capitol in Charleston.

that are actively involved, the better. By working in conjunction with the SAN, the Caucus acts as a political oil pressure gauge. Without this group, and the legislative alerts it delivers, it would be too late to have an impact on a given bill."

Approximately 700 state legislators from all 50 states are involved in the Caucus. For a full listing of Caucus members, visit [www.semaSAN.com/StateCaucus](http://www.semaSAN.com/StateCaucus).

### On The Cover

*Pictured from left to right, former Senator John Brueggeman (Montana), former Assemblyman Bill Reilich (New York), Delegate Gary Howell (West Virginia).*

**S**trong relationships form the necessary foundation of any success—be it a sports team, an office staff or even a performance vehicle. After all, what good is a bunch of horsepower if the remainder of the drivetrain won't transfer it to the ground? The overall result is only going to be as good as the weakest component. This is especially true in advocacy groups such as the SEMA Action Network (SAN). In the role as SAN director, I've been fortunate to work together with fellow auto enthusiasts, car club leadership, business owners, lawmakers, colleagues and many others. Each bring valuable assets to the SAN. Meaningful ties with members of each contingent serve a role that cannot be overstated.

Our society has moved into an age where electronic communication has seemingly dominated every other form of interaction. However, while speed and efficiency may be improving, these benefits often come at the hefty expense of personal connection. Reliance on technology may very well begin unravelling human relationships that were otherwise strong. The importance of the SAN in this regard can be found in its name. We are a networking operation that uses the tools of modern technology but strives to retain the common touch. Let's take a look at how our organization is best served by cultivating its human connection.

The car-crazed community is about the people who participate, not the machines. Over the summer, I was able to visit local events supporting the national celebration of Collector Car Appreciation Day. At these events, I was welcomed with open arms as a member of this rare extended family. Similarly, getting to know lawmakers in a "real" context has felt especially rewarding to me. By way of background, I had limited interest in my high school government classes. I've since learned firsthand that there are personalities behind each of those names on the ballot. It's



*In 2013, I had the rare opportunity to showcase the hobby to my own federal representative, former Congresswoman Gloria Negrete McLeod (left). The event—Hot Rod's "Hot Rod Homecoming," a celebration of the publication's 65th anniversary—was held in her Southern California district.*

the SAN's mission to build firm bridges with elected officials through the SAN-supported State Automotive Enthusiast Leadership Caucus. As part of their affiliation, Caucus members are invited to attend functions related to the hobby throughout the year. Many of them enjoy car shows as much as we do. There is nothing better than rubbing shoulders with a legislator at an event where a familiar passion for four wheels spouts naturally and can lead to mutual benefit.

Lastly, the *Driving Force* staff is always seeking to reach out to its diverse readership through the products we deliver. Creating content in each issue that appeals to everyone all the time is virtually impossible—but we try. Since the SAN's inception in 1997, this newsletter has been the glue that binds our force together through its coverage of the current legislative and regulatory landscape on issues of critical concern. May the contributions made by each facet of the SAN continue to reinforce the rest.

—IGNITED WE STAND!



# Enthusiasts Pay Tribute to the Auto Hobby

## Hobbyists Worldwide Celebrate Sixth Annual Collector Car Appreciation Day

**O**n July 10, 2015, thousands paid tribute to the automobile in honor of the sixth annual Collector Car Appreciation Day (CCAD). Intended to honor the classics of the past and the future, a wide range of official events (numbering more than 150) were held throughout July in the United

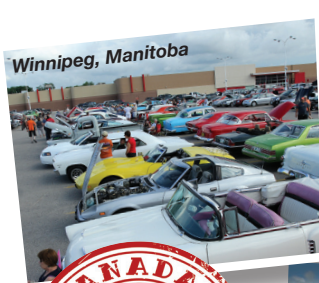
States, Canada and France to commemorate the day.

As in previous years, the occasion was designated by a SAN-requested U.S. Senate Resolution sponsored by Senator Richard Burr (R-NC) and Senator Jon Tester (D-MT). This document recognizes “that the collection and restoration of historic and classic cars is an important part of preserving the technological achievements and cultural heritage of the United States.”

With the continued growth of our hobby’s

“holiday,” lawmakers in states, provinces, countries and local areas all over the United States and Canada are issuing their own resolutions to mark the day’s significance in raising awareness of the vital role the automotive pastime plays in our society.

A detailed CCAD summary and photo gallery is available on the SEMA Action Network’s website at [www.semaSAN.com/CCAD](http://www.semaSAN.com/CCAD). Special thanks to everyone who made this year’s celebration a memorable one. Stay tuned for the announcement of next year’s CCAD!



## CAUCUS CONNECTION

# Four-Wheeled Family Legacy

## Missouri Representative Tracy McCreery Undertakes a Labor of Love

**M**issouri State Representative Tracy McCreery has always sought to put people first, both professionally and as a community volunteer. Her background as a businesswoman and in state government gives her a unique perspective. Early in her career she held sales representative, trainer and management positions for consumer healthcare and telecommunication firms. More recently she worked as the district aide to state Senator Joan Bray and in Governor Bob Holden's administration.

Tracy was elected to the Missouri House of Representatives in 2011 and serves as the state representative for the 88th district. She is member of the SAN-supported State Automotive Enthusiast Leadership Caucus and is alert to legislative efforts that will affect the enjoyment of the automotive hobby. "I am a new legislator and will keep my eyes and ears open for opportunities to educate my colleagues. This Caucus is a great reminder that much of what we do is truly non-partisan," Tracy said.

In 1994, her brother-in-law, John Wham, purchased a '73 Datsun 240Z. A fan of racing, John's goal was to create a performance Z car. As an aviation "skin man" in the U.S. Air Force and, later, a mechanic in California, he knew bodywork and automotive repair well. Time and money were his challenge. Being a husband, raising two daughters, attending college and working full time left little time for the renovation. Yet, for 15 years and through three moves, this car was always with him and one of many passions. "To our great sadness, we lost John to cancer in 2009," Tracy recalls. "So with the Datsun sitting in our barn, slowly fading away, my husband decided that the renovation would be a good way to honor John's memory. With the support of John's wife, Kathy, we purchased the vehicle and began the restoration process."

The renovation has become a family affair with her father, Ron McCreery, adding his expertise. He was a Chevy mechanic for 20+ years and then a Mac Tools salesman until retirement. He recently came to St. Louis to help with the final engine assembly. To date, the suspension, drivetrain, and braking system have been completely redone (powdercoated, new poly bushings, new bearings and struts). The engine has now been rebuilt with new pistons, carburetors (vintage '72 SU carbs), and a simplified exhaust system. The restoration team is now onto the body work with plenty of rust repair ahead.

"All in all, it has been a great learning experience and has brought me even closer to my husband and his family."



*Missouri Representative Tracy McCreery (left) and husband Thom are restoring this 1973 Datsun 240Z. The top photo shows the car's condition when purchased by Tracy's brother-in-law, John Wham, in 1994.*



# “Yeah, Baby!”: Massachusetts Representative Steve Howitt Is a Fan of Classic Brits

**M**assachusetts State Representative Steven S. Howitt is full-fledged car enthusiast. “I have had many vehicles over time,” he says. “My first car was a bright yellow ’70 Plymouth 340 ’Cuda. Over the years, I have also owned an Orange ’74 BMW 2002, a ’70 Porsche 914 and a ’69 911T as well as a ’62 Morgan, a ’62 MGA Deluxe and 2 MGTFs, a ’54 and ’55. Presently, I own two Triumph TR6s, a ’74 and ’76, as well as an ’80 Triumph TR8 convertible with 6100 original miles.” In fact, a number of his cars have been used in films. The ’74 TR6 and ’80 TR8 were used recently in the movie production of *Black Mass*, while other cars were used in background roles in *27 Dresses* (Silver Mercedes 2000 CLK430 Cabriolet) and *Company Men* (Silver Mercedes 2005 SL500). His weekend car is a black ’11 Porsche 911S coupe.

Representative Howitt is a dedicated public servant, advocate for accountability, business owner and third-generation resident of Seekonk, Massachusetts, with more than 30 years of public service to the community and to the Commonwealth. A member of the SAN-supported State Automotive Enthusiast Leadership Caucus, he began serving in the Massachusetts State Legislature in 2011 and

currently serves on the Joint Transportation Committee as ranking member. In the legislature, he uses his knowledge of automobiles to help educate his non-auto enthusiast colleagues on the pros and cons of numerous bills affecting the hobby. For several legislative sessions, certain members of the legislature have attempted to ban the “use and sale of any exhaust pipe that increases the sound emission of any vehicle...”

These efforts, opposed successfully by the SAN, have not supplied law enforcement a clear standard to enforce for motor vehicles, allowing them to make subjective judgments on whether a modified exhaust system is in violation. Representative Howitt has been a leading advocate in helping kill these bills.

“I am also in favor of year of manufacturer antique license plates for vintage vehicles,” Howitt adds. “I would also like to see some option, whether it is a windshield sticker or a front plate decal, that could be used instead of



Massachusetts Representative Steve Howitt takes his '74 Pimento Red TR6 for a spin.

a front license plate. Nothing looks worse than to have holes drilled into the front bumper of some of the newer classics, such as a Corvette or a Porsche.” The most recent bill in Massachusetts to provide for the issuance of a single registration plate died when the legislature adjourned in 2015.

“I have always been involved in public service,” Howitt concludes. “My father instilled in me the desire to not watch from the sidelines, but be involved in one’s community as he was.”

## WEB RESERVES

### New Monthly E-Newsletter Focused on Off-Road Issues



**G**iven the mounting threats to off-roading, the SEMA Action Network (SAN) is expanding its commitment to off-highway vehicle (OHV) recreation. Unreasonable government actions limiting motorized recreation have long been a problem. Unfortunately, restrictive land-use designations still threaten thousands of miles of roads and trails across the nation.

Wilderness areas, where no motorized access is allowed, currently encompasses more than 109 million acres, representing 16% of the United States. National Monument designations, which prohibit new roads and trails and require new land management plans, also pose a significant threat to motorized recreation. To date, President Obama has established or expanded 19 national monuments covering more than 260 million acres of land and water. In California alone, motorized access to the backcountry deserts has shrunk from 50% open use on public lands in 1976 to 12.5% in 2007. Phrased differently, only 2% of the California desert is currently open to OHVs.

Politicians and regulators are being lobbied from many different directions on how to manage millions of acres of federal public lands. The SAN is at the table as an advocate for motorized recreation.

To enhance this effort, our website includes a dedicated section for off-road issues and news, which can be found at [www.semaSAN.com/OffRoad](http://www.semaSAN.com/OffRoad). The SAN will begin sending out a new monthly newsletter via email, *The Navigator*, which is focused on keeping you informed on key legislative and regulatory issues impacting the OHV community.

The SAN is committed to keeping roads and trails open. Staying united, informed and engaged is crucial. You can help. Please feel free to forward *The Navigator* and enlist others to join the SAN—it’s easy and free.

## LEGISLATIVE FRONT LINES

# Hitting the Jackpot in Nevada

**A**s many of you are aware, this year Nevada introduced legislation that would have altered the requirements for vehicles eligible for registration as classic vehicles, old timers, street rods and classic rods so that only vehicles manufactured prior to '96 would be eligible. Unfortunately, the odds were clearly stacked against the enthusiast community as both the House and Senate quickly passed the measure and sent it the governor for his signature and enactment into law. You may also be aware that the SAN never quits even when the odds are low.

A last-minute outreach to the governor's office and sympathetic lawmakers, including Assemblyman Paul Anderson, resulted in a huge, unexpected victory for the hobby. Citing the opposition of the SEMA Action Network, Nevada Governor Brian Sandoval vetoed the legislation. In his statement rejecting the bill, the governor noted that it "...unnecessarily penalizes true Nevada car enthusiasts who might seek one of these plates for proper reasons." While claiming to be targeted at current "abusers" of specialty plates who registered their vehicles under these designations to avoid emissions testing and fees, the bill instead targeted owners of 1996 and newer cars that are not even currently eligible for classic status.

## FEDERAL UPDATE

**Racing Threatened at Bonneville Salt Flats (BSF):** This year's Speed Week was cancelled at the BSF due to deteriorating conditions and wet weather. Begun in 1949, Speed Week is the BSF's largest annual racing event, with hundreds of teams racing every type of vehicle, from



hot rods, roadsters and belly tankers to motorcycles, lakesters and streamliners. Despite a rich history of racing for over a century, the salt flats have significantly decreased in size, strength and thickness over a number

of decades as salt brine has been channeled away from the area. The BSF's international track once measured 13 miles long but has been reduced to 8 miles or less. The land has been managed by the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) since 1946. The SAN, along with other organizations and companies comprising the Save the Salt Coalition, has been working for years to help save the BSF. The Coalition is now proposing an advanced reclamation program beyond the salt brine pumping program developed in 1997 between the racing community and the potash mine owner. Elements could include more dry and wet salt returns and a protective salt berm around the racing area.

**National Monuments:** President Obama has designated three more national monuments, including the 700,000-plus acre Basin and Range National Monument in Eastern Nevada and the 330,000 acre Berryessa Snow Mountain Monument in Northern California. The administration has now designated 19 national monuments since 2009. The SAN opposes the designations since they automatically prohibit new roads or trails for motorized vehicles and require a new land management plan be drafted that can lead to more road closures. The SAN supports legislation in the U.S. Congress to curtail the President's power to uni-



*Nevada Assemblyman Paul Anderson (right), pictured with Governor Brian Sandoval, was instrumental in helping defeat the state's classic vehicle proposal.*

In seeking the veto, the SAN committed to working with the Legislature toward enacting fair legislation that will target the real offenders and not true collector car owners who had done nothing to deserve this heavy-handed approach.

Congratulations to those in the Silver State and special thanks to those who stepped up to fight this important battle!

laterally designate national monuments by requiring their approval by Congress and the impacted states.

**Turn-Key Replica Cars:** At the SAN's request, a bill has been introduced in the U.S. Congress that would enable low volume car manufacturers to produce up to 500 turn-key replica vehicles a year for customers nationwide. These cars resemble vehicles manufactured at least 25 years ago. Very few completed low production vehicles are currently built in the United States. Most on the road today began life as a kit car—an incomplete vehicle or collection of parts sold without an engine/transmission. The states have categories for these cars and many have enacted SAN-model legislation which allows these cars to be titled and registered according to the model year that they most closely resemble (e.g., '32 hot rod, '63 Cobra). Replica vehicles participate in car shows, exhibitions and are driven primarily on the weekends. These collector cars are not used as daily drivers. The bill does not impact hobbyists who prefer to assemble their own vehicle and install the engine of their choice. The legislation simply provides the option for an individual to purchase a turn-key vehicle.

**Ethanol:** The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently announced proposed annual targets under the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS) for the amount of ethanol that is required to be blended into gasoline in 2014, 2015 and 2016. While the targets have been revised down, they still rely on expanded sales of E15 (gas that is 15% ethanol). Ethanol, especially higher concentrations such as E15, can cause metal corrosion and dissolve certain plastics and rubbers in automobiles produced before 2001 that were not constructed with ethanol-resistant materials. The SAN has urged the EPA to support legislation in the U.S. Congress to eliminate the corn-based RFS mandates which is driving the push for E15 sales. The SAN has joined with more than 50 other organizations from the auto, boat, food and energy industries to support passage. The bill is currently awaiting consideration by the House Energy and Power Subcommittee.

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**ANNOUNCEMENT**

# And the Winner Is...*Driving Force!*

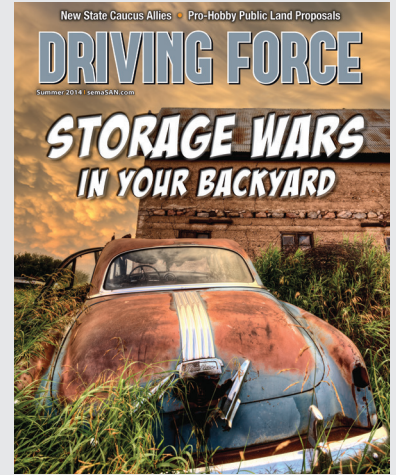
## SAN Newsletter Earns Top Honors in International Competition

**T**he SEMA Action Network's (SAN) *Driving Force* newsletter received the highest recognition at the 24th International Automotive Media Awards in Plymouth, Michigan. In addition



SAN Director Colby Martin accepted the awards from Chief Judge Louise Ann Noeth (right).

to the gold medallion in the "Best Single Issue: Newsletter" category for its Summer 2014 edition, the publication also took "Best of Newsletters"—a first for *Driving Force*. SAN Director Colby Martin accepted the awards from Chief Judge Louise Ann Noeth. The International Automotive Media Competition (IAMC), a function of the International Society for Vehicle Preservation, is a peer-judged awards program that recognizes excellence in all forms of automotive media. Newsletter staff and the entire SAN force are honored by these prestigious honors.



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