



# NEWS

## RESCUED GM MOTORAMA CONCEPT CARS TO BE SHOWCASED AT 2008 PEBBLE BEACH CONCOURS d'ELEGANCE

*The latest discoveries by Auto Archeologist Joe Bortz will be among the many historic GM Motorama "Dream Cars" on display*

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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*Images can be found at:*

<http://media.pcgcampbell.com/pebblebeachconcourselegance/HighResImages/Photography/index.html>  
*Pictures of Bortz' Motorama cars must be credited to Bortz Auto Collection Archives.*

PEBBLE BEACH, Calif. (April 22, 2008) — Fifty-three years ago, the LaSalle II Roadster and the Chevrolet Biscayne were among the concepts that showcased General Motors' vision of the future in its traveling Motorama. After the debut of this automotive eye candy, these cars were not only discarded but destroyed.

Joe Bortz, who was a young boy when he saw these "dream cars" at the 1955 Chicago Auto Show, found their remains decades later in a Detroit-area junkyard and worked laboriously to resurrect them. Now Bortz will bring these rescued vehicles to the Aug. 17 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance as part of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of GM.

Throughout the 1950s, the General Motors Motorama took concept cars on tour to cities throughout the United States, inviting the public to enter the future by stepping through the doors of a GM automobile. After each cross-country show was concluded, these futuristic cars were relegated to the trash heap. In fact, since most of these vehicles had not been road tested, GM often ordered their total destruction to prevent legal problems.

"A GM executive was required to watch each of the dream cars get cut into pieces and crushed," said Bortz, who is retired and living in suburban Chicago. "The GM exec took the LaSalle Roadster and Biscayne to the junkyard, and he figured the guys at the junkyard would finish the job properly, so he took off early to go Christmas shopping. The junkyard workers never crushed the LaSalle, instead leaving it in many pieces."

The Biscayne's chassis was crushed, but the junkyard owner managed to save all the pieces of the original body. "I felt like an automotive archeologist," said Bortz, who first showed some of his concept cars on the upper lawn at Pebble Beach in 1989 and 1990, drawing a crowd that couldn't believe any of the cars still existed. "I had to dig pieces out of the ground. The body of the car was fiberglass, so it didn't oxidize, but other remaining parts were almost hopeless. The body had to be glued back together from all the bits and pieces; it was like resurrecting a dinosaur.

## Chevrolet Biscayne and LaSalle II Rescued for Pebble Beach 2-2-2

“I’ve been doing this since ’78 – being a treasure hunter and restoring concept cars. These cars are a treat for the eyes and a study in history, and I’m excited to bring several of these gems to Pebble Beach.”

“These and other historical treasures from Motorama demonstrate the forward-thinking that led GM to the front of the pack,” said Sandra Kasky Button, Chairman of the Concours. “Joe Bortz has somehow managed to rescue and resurrect concept cars from that era, allowing us to see the sometimes-radical GM designs that influenced industry styling for decades.”

General Motors will also be bringing nearly a dozen dream cars that the company itself has saved, and these cars will join the Bortz Collection and Motorama treasures owned by other collectors during the Concours’ celebration of the General Motors Centennial. “These Motorama cars fit perfectly with Pebble Beach’s history of showing only the rarest vehicles and they allow us to emphasize the importance of preserving our automotive history,” said Button.

Lines from the 1955 LaSalle II Roadster can be found in such icons as the ’56 and ’57 Corvette, while lines from the 1955 Chevrolet Biscayne are visible in the 1960 Corvair.

The Chevrolet Biscayne was considered “one of the most desirable and beautiful concept cars of all-time,” said Bortz, who’s restoring all aspects of the Biscayne in collaboration with Kerry Hopperstadt and Fran Roxas. “It was called the ‘Miracle Car’ inside General Motors because it drew the largest crowds of any of the concepts shown in Motorama.

“Pebble Beach will be the first time the Biscayne will be shown publicly since 1955. Since the windows weren’t flat, we had to create a wraparound windshield. And the door mechanisms are made with the help of Swiss clockmakers. It’s not fully restored. It’s still a work in progress.”

The “junkyard fresh” LaSalle II Roadster has been seen in public only a couple of times since 1955. In addition to the Harley Earl-led stylists, GM engineers got involved in creating this car. The LaSalle II was equipped with an aluminum-block, lightweight V-6, double overhead cam, fuel-injected engine and independent rear suspension. While innovations of this type were features that would appear in European cars in the ’50s and ’60s, GM would not incorporate them for decades.

The Motorama cars that will be appearing at Pebble Beach will be joined by a rare assortment of GM Woodies, Cadillac V-16s and GM-powered sports cars. Other featured marques for 2008 include Lancia and Lamborghini.

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First conducted in 1950, the Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance® ([pebblebeachconcours.com](http://pebblebeachconcours.com)) has grown to become the world’s premier celebration of the automobile. Only the most beautiful and rare cars are invited to appear on the famed 18th fairway of Pebble Beach Golf Links®, and connoisseurs of art and style flock to see these masterpieces. Charitable donations raised by the Pebble Beach Concours d’Elegance® now total over \$10 million. Related events include the Pebble Beach Tour d’Elegance™ presented by Rolex, Pebble Beach RetroAuto™, and the Pebble Beach® Auction presented by Gooding & Company.

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## Chevrolet Biscayne and LaSalle II Rescued for Pebble Beach 3-3-3

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