



# Yesterday's Chevrolet San Fernando Valley Region



EDITOR: Steve Rosenberg

November 2021

[www.sfvregionvcca.com](http://www.sfvregionvcca.com)

**November Meeting 11/4** ..... It will be a Zoom meeting again. I ask you to attend as our car show is 10 days after the meeting. Zoom invite will come by separate email.

**Car show** ..... **11/14 @ Community Chevrolet.** Pre-registration has been strong.

**To our members** ..... Please revue our regions website ([sfvregionvcca.com](http://sfvregionvcca.com)) to the members cars section. Do we have a picture of your car on display? If not, send me a picture, as an attachment, and Jim Karras will get it on the website.

**Rich LaGrasta**, a multi attendee at our shows was an employee at the Van Nuys plant for many years. His job was one that most car guys would dream about. In emails back and forth he simply told me he worked at the Van Nuys plant back in the day. I asked him, "what did you do?" He told me and I asked "was it fun to go to work every day ..... His reply

**Yes sir**, I most certainly did...the biggest fun time of all, was being able to actually "build your own car" right off the assembly line! You just placed your order back in the day at the front office and then like kid waiting for Santa to arrive on Christmas Eve, they'd let you know when your car was to be built, and you'd get a production build sheet number, then the fun began as you'd wander over to the Frame/Chassis Line and watch your drivetrain be built up for you with exactly the engine, trans and rear end you'd specify, then the suspension components was readied for the arrival of the frame (always F-41 Ride and Handling Package

with disc brakes) and the biggest engine, heavy duty tranny, prop shaft and differential were set aside and installed. 'Ya got to be lov'in it...then you'd wander over to the Body Shop to watch your chosen body style being welded together, after that, the paint department was your next place of visitation making sure that the chosen paint scheme was applied and then later that day or next day you have to visit the "hard and soft trim departments" to watch your chosen interior be built and installed in your car, and sometimes if you were friends with any of the assembly line workers, and they knew it was your car passing by them, usually they'd go out of their way to make sure everything was done just right...later you'd drop by and buy them a lunch at the plants cafeteria or a cup of coffee and a doughnut, whatever they wanted...some really great folks to work with, always willing to be of help.

Anyway, after all of those parts were ready and assembled for you, you headed downstairs to the Chassis Line where the body and frames were joined (married?), then the wheels, tires, gas, and other small things were added and at the end of the "Final Process Line" your new car, chosen and made just for you was started up for the first and driven off of the assembly line and made ready for the DVT (Dynamic Vehicle Test) procedure, that's when I'd jump into my own car for the first time and take the steering wheel and test my own car in the rollers, if I was happy with everything, then it was taken over to the "Final Wax and Inspection Line", where the headlights were aimed, various glovebox books and papers were added and then the MSRP window sticker was added and if the car passed that process, next step was PMT...Pacific Motor Transport where your car was either sent by train or truck to it's dealer destination, which in

my case was usually Ranch Chevrolet In Reseda, just 7 miles away.

Oh yeah, forgot to mention, you got a GM Employee Discount if you went through this process, sometimes it could be between 10% to 15% depending on options.

So here are a but a few of the cars that I had built for myself over the years.... wish I had kept them now, but you know what they say about "hindsight", right? 1962 Impala 409 dual quads 4 speed, 1967 Camaro SS 396/325 HP Auto Trans, 1969 El Camino 396/375 HP L78 4 Speed Trans. 1967 Firebird 326-285 HP 4 Speed Trans, 1972 Chevelle SS 350 Auto Trans, 1975 Nova SS 350 (9C1) Auto Trans.

Each has a unique history with various GM Drivetrain Parts, were all Van Nuys Los Angeles Plant built.... especially the '75 Nova SS 350 which was made using 9C1 Police Car Chassis and Drivetrain components and later had a 350 LT1 engine added using all Factor GM components...twice a Class Winner At Super Chevy at Fontana Raceway and featured in Hemmings Muscle Car Review November 2007 as "The Nova Buffett" article.

Editor's comment ..... **WOW!** I asked him this question ..... I heard back in the day, if the assembly line knew it was an employee's car being built, the trunk would have some "gifts" in it. True or false? His reply.

There will always be "tall tales" about the Van Nuys Assembly Plant, and while I suppose you can say that "tall tales always have a beginning", I personally never saw such things happen. Not saying they didn't, but in truth, if you got caught or were seen doing things like that, you risked being fired by security, and most level headed workers there didn't want to lose a good paying job with great benefits, especially if you were supporting a wife and kids. So, I'd have to go with "False", but we heard "stories" of someone trying something illicit, but again, I personally never saw anything like that happen.

## Our morning at Carmin's garage



Everyone looking @ Carmine as he shares is restoring stories.



Some of the 16 attending the garage tour and short meeting at Gloria & Carmines home.



And my favorite member 😊



HAHA

**Next meeting @ Balboa Sports center**

**To be determined**

*17015 Burbank Blvd., Encino, CA 91316  
7:30 – 9:00 PM*