



FLYER

June 2026

Vol. XLVIII, No. 6

President's Message

June is Pride Month

West Coast Meet in Review

Orphan's Corner

Welcome New Members

Calendar of Events



President's Message

Dear Freewheelers,

What can one possibly say after a weekend like West Coast Meet XL: Imperial Rome? My gratitude is truly boundless for the incredible volunteers who produced such a spectacular event, and for the attendees who showed up ready to embrace every glorious moment of it. It was campy, creative, theatrical, laugh-filled, stylish, and delightfully over-the-top in all the best ways imaginable — a true camp-o-rama from beginning to end. But underneath the togas, tunics, cocktails, costumes, chrome, and comedy was something even more meaningful: the genuine bonhomie of shared community.

And speaking of community... now we turn our attention to one of the most joyful and important times of the year: Pride Month! By the time you're reading this, a proud contingent of Freewheelers will already have participated in the Clayton Pride Parade and Festival on May 31. A million thanks to everyone who signed up, showed up, decorated cars, waved flags, and represented our club so beautifully. Supporting our larger LGBTQ+ community matters deeply, and seeing Freewheelers out there in all our glittering automotive glory fills my heart with pride.

And thankfully, the celebrations are only just beginning...the first weekend of June brings Pride events to Concord, Mill Valley, Pacifica, Richmond, Sonoma County (Santa Rosa), Palo Alto, and Santa Cruz. The second weekend sees festivities in Sacramento, Half Moon Bay, San Mateo, and Sunnyvale. On the third weekend, Napa Pride hosts its always-fabulous evening Pride Car Cruise and afterparty — which sounds suspiciously like exactly our kind of thing. And then, of course, the fourth weekend brings the enormous and iconic San Francisco Pride Parade and Festival, one of the grandest celebrations anywhere.

With so many wonderful Pride events happening throughout the Bay Area and Central Valley this month, we made the decision to forego a formal Freewheelers event for June. Instead, we encourage you to get out there, fly your Pride flags proudly, support your local communities, and celebrate wherever your rainbow-colored road may lead.

Thank you all for helping make this club such a vibrant, welcoming, and joyful community. Whether we gather around cars, parades, or cocktails, what matters most is that we continue showing up for one another. Enjoy every moment of Pride Month, and then we'll see each other again at our July Freewheelers event, ready for another summer adventure together.

Happy Pride, my friends — and as always, drive proudly.

Warmly,

Eric Whitney

President, Freewheelers Car Club



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Advertising
As a benefit of membership, Members may run classified ads (for sale) in the Flyer/on the website at no charge. Send information to the Newsletter Editor. For rates for non-members and business solicitations, see the schedule below. To place an ad, please contact one of the Board Members.

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Articles and/or photographs related to club events and/or vintage car happenings may be emailed to and used at the discretion of the Newsletter Editor. Submissions should reach the Newsletter Editor by the 20th of the month prior to publication.

Contributors to this Issue: Eric, Whitney, Marty Hanson, and Bill Hall. Event photos courtesy of Eric Whitney, Bill Peachee, Brian McCann, Marty Hanson, Mason Nakamura, and Matthias Rezzato.

Printed copies of the newsletter, courtesy of Tim Finnegan.

Cover: Bill Peachee's 1958 Imperial Custom Sedan

Advertising in the Flyer

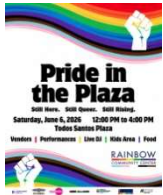
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|-----------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Ad for car, equipment, etc. | 3 for Free, then | \$20 per insertion | n/a | n/a |
| Business Card Size | \$10/insertion | n/a | \$30 per insertion, \$250/yr. (12 issues) | \$35 per insertion, \$300/year |
| Quarter Page Size | n/a | n/a | \$60 per insertion, \$500/yr. (12 issues) | \$70 per insertion, \$600/year |

UPCOMING EVENTS

June is Pride Month!

In lieu of a Freewheelers-specific event in June, we encourage you to support your local Pride Events!

CONCORD



Pride in the Plaza 2026 – Still Here. Still Queer. Still Rising.

Join Rainbow Community Center and our community for an afternoon of pride, visibility, celebration, and resilience in the heart of Concord. 📅 Saturday, **June 6, 2026**, 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM, at the Todos Santos Plaza – Concord, CA. Enjoy: Live Performances, DJs, Community Vendors, Food, Kids Area, Community Resources, Free HIV/STI Testing. Come celebrate love, authenticity, and the power of community as we continue to rise together. For more information, visit <https://rainbowcc.org/>

SACRAMENTO



Sacramento Pride 2026 takes place the weekend of **June 13–14, 2026**. Presented by the Sacramento LGBT Community Center, the weekend features the famous Pride March and a massive, multi-stage festival packed with live music, vendors, and community programming. Pride Festival – Saturday, June 13 (1:00 PM to 7:00 PM) and Sunday, June 14 (12:00 PM to 5:00 PM). Pride March – Sunday, June 14, starting at 11:00 AM beginning at Southside Park and marches down to the festival entrance on Capitol Mall. For more information, visit <https://sacramentopride.org/>

SAN FRANCISCO



The 56th Annual San Francisco Pride Celebration and Parade will take place the weekend of **June 27–28, 2026**, centering around the theme "Resistance in Action." The weekend features a massive two-day Civic Center Plaza festival and a legendary 1.6-mile parade marching down Market Street. The world-renowned parade begins at 10:30 AM on Sunday, June 28. Marchers step off from Market and Steuart streets near the Embarcadero and travel 1.6 miles to the Main Stage at Civic Center Plaza. The Civic Center Celebration takes place on both Saturday (June 27) and Sunday (June 28), the plaza will host multiple community stages, vendors, and the 18+ Root of Pride adults-only area. For more information, visit <https://sfpride.org/>



July Freewheelers Event



Join your fellow Freewheelers on Sunday, July 19th – we’re planning Jelly Belly drive tour then lunch and touring at Jelly Belly factory in Fairfield. Details to follow in next month’s Flyer!



UPCOMING EVENTS

WEST COAST MEET 2026



West Coast Meet XL was Regal Fun!

– by Marty Hanson

Friends, Romans, Countrymen...bring me your vehicles. At the behest of Emperor Maximum Wheelbase, members of the Freewheelers of Northern California, Great Autos of Southern California, and a multitude of car enthusiasts from up and down the coast and across the country gathered once more in Atascadero for the 40th Annual West Coast Meet – West Coast Meet XL!

This year, the Freewheelers hosted “Imperial Rome” with the theme featuring Imperials (Chrysler and otherwise), Italian cars and scooters, and cars with roman numerals in their names...although all cars were welcome to be a part of the car show held on Saturday, May 9. Many travelers arrived as early as the Wednesday before to beat the rush as well as to deck the halls of the Springhill Suites with a Roman flavor...many thanks to Freewheelers Scott Mikkleson, Todd Darling, and Bill Neill, as well as to The Imperial Club and all who helped set up.

Registration for event guests officially opened on Thursday afternoon for all the early-birds, and was followed by an informal meet-and-greet in the bar area. Afterwards, folks ventured out to explore local dining opportunities or just dined in at the hotel. Others explored the fascinating “Sensorio” light display experience and exhibit located in nearby Paso Robles. Later in the evening, back at the hotel, guests were entertained by a showing of Monte Python’s “Life of Brian” on the outdoor big screen, featuring its satiric take on the Roman Empire. The hotel provided snacks and munchies appropriate for movie watching.

Friday was a jam-packed and fun-filled day for those who signed up for the activities...starting with a leisurely morning drive tour through the winding hills of the Atascadero area and featuring a brief photo op stop at the Romanesque Atascadero City Hall where photos were taken of the cars on the tour in front of the structure – accompanied by hunky gladiator Pectoralis Maximus aka Jhony Guardado.

Next stop on the day’s activities was the Estrella Warbirds Museum in Paso Robles where lunch was ready to be served (Caesar Salad wraps of course!) with comfortable indoor seating to boot. While gathered for lunch, Freewheelers President Eric Whitney took the opportunity to welcome everyone at the lunch and provided some details about the collection and the day’s activities. The grounds included several buildings with various collections as well as actual vintage aircraft parked out and about. Cars on the tour had privileged parking among the aircraft. After lunch, we toured the various museums and collections on site and even gathered for a group photo in front of the planes. Many thanks to Eric Whitney for making this event happen! And afterwards, it was just a short freeway jaunt back to the hotel.

(continued on next page)



But wait...it's not over yet...no sirree bob! Friday afternoon featured a toga tutorial hosted by The Oracle at Delco/Chlamydeous Maximus (aka Peter Anning) where you could learn the proper and ancient art of toga draping. Scott and Todd were again on hand to provide various fabrics for those interested in draping and donning their own togas. Others came prepared with their own fabrics. A good time was had by all and was followed by a cocktails-in-togas party...some of which were selected by Emperor Wheelbase Maximus himself for consideration and presentation at the Friday dinner.

Bacchus' Buffet Banquet was the theme for Friday dinner featuring a bounty of sumptuous Italian cuisine, followed by a tasty dessert of Tiramisu. During dinner, the big screens in the Grand Ballroom aired a slide show of the many cars from the drive tour that stopped at the Atascadero City Hall. As diners settled in, Emperor Maximus Wheelbase (aka event chair Clint Moore) took the stage to welcome everyone to the event and to express thanks to the hotel and all involved in putting the event together.

Immediately following, he was joined on stage by The Oracle at Delco and Maximus Venomous (Scott Parker) to assemble on stage the chosen ones from the toga tutorial for adjudication.

Ten were selected for review by his Imperialness – all shapes and sizes in various forms of toga attire – and each was presented to the audience for consideration. The plebian receiving maximus applause had his life spared and won the favor of the emperor as well as the coveted "Best in Toga" trophy. Congratulations to Eddie Puss (aka Eric Whitney) and his "who shot the couch" toga upon receiving this great honor! Honorable Mention goes to Freewheeler Tom Ortiz who arrived as a walking-talking bottle of Caesar Salad Dressing!





Group Picture at the Estrella Warbirds Museum

To wrap up Friday activities, our sister club Great Autos of Southern California hosted an outdoor ice cream social. It was a delightful way to end a day full of fun and frolic.

Saturday was the much-anticipated “Iron Chariots” car show. The weather was perfect and owners were out early to position and polish their dream machines. Running from 10 am to 2 pm, folks made the rounds admiring the shining beauties and casting votes for their favorites. Lunch was served in the hotel restaurant area around noon, including sandwiches, snacks and beverages. Many thanks go to Bob Zapotosky and Glen Taber for managing the car show parking layout and arrangements, and to Keith Cambra and Sueko Takahashi-Gilbert for their dedicated counting of ballots during the car show.


As the car show wound down, guests used the time to relax and enjoy the hotel amenities before getting ready for the Saturday cocktail hour, prior to dinner, where more costumes were donned, including Roman Senators, Gladiators, “Daddy-ators”, Imperial guards, and Christians being thrown to the lions (thanks to Dave and Marilyn Chiotti)!



The Festivus Prima Mensa sit-down dinner immediately followed the cocktail party and included salad, and fish, chicken, or vegetarian entrée options. After the feast, dinner guests then exited the Grand Ballroom for dessert served outdoors, as the ballroom was reset for the forthcoming awards show.

After dessert, guests were seated and settled into the reconfigured ballroom as the “Circus Maximus of Awards” commenced...starting with a “Peabody and Sherman” cartoon opening sequence and followed by a hilarious re-imagined live-action processional featuring the cast of the show. Velourus Interium (yours truly) then opened the show with a campy sing-a-long of “Atsa West Coast” to the tune of “That’s Amore.” Emperor Maximus Wheelbase and his financial advisor Mediocrates then took the stage to begin the acknowledgements.

Car Show Awards were given, interspersed with entertaining video clips and more song parodies including “She’s a Fiat” sung to the tune of “She’s a Lady”, “Cars-o Italiano” (ala “Mambo Italiano”), and “Imperial” featuring the return of Venomous Maximus and sung to the tune of “Popular” from “Wicked”. Legacy Awards were also presented including the Freewheelers’ Lavender Dipstick and Spirit of West Coast Meet Awards, and Great Autos’ Founders and Lifetime Achievement Awards. A full list of award winners can be found on page 8. The Awards Show then wrapped up with Great Autos revealing their theme for West Coast Meet 2027 as we take a ticket back to the ‘90s...” As If!”

It was a fun-filled weekend of events that could only be made possible by an outstanding cast of volunteers from both the Freewheelers and Great Autos. Kudos to Clint Moore, Bob Zapotosky, and Scott Parker for making this long-anticipated vision of Imperial Rome to life! I had a blast and I hope all who attended did as well. In the words of the late, great Larry Salvador “To those of you who missed the West Coast Meet, well, you blew it.” 

WEST COAST MEET 2026

WEST COAST MEET XL AWARD WINNERS

CLASS A: Domestic 1941-1957

1st Place: 1941 Cadillac Series 62 Convertible, Bob Zapotosky
2nd Place: 1950 Packard Super 8 DeLuxe Victoria, Doug Moore
3rd Place: 1950 Nash Ambassador Coupe, AJ Chier

CLASS B: Domestic 1958-1970

1st Place: 1959 Buick Le Sabre Station Wagon, Ken Zander & Tim Taylor
2nd Place: 1964 Lincoln Continental 4-Door Sedan, Giulio Marcelino
3rd Place: 1958 Edsel Villager Station Wagon, Ted Downer & Marc Williamson

CLASS C: Domestic 1971-Newer

1st Place: 1981 Cadillac Fleetwood Sedan, Brian McCann
2nd Place: 1987 Buick Riviera T Type Coupe, Chris Green
3rd Place: 1987 Chevrolet Corvette Convertible, Richard Stanley

CLASS D: Foreign (Italian)

1st Place: 1972 De Tomaso Pantera - L Coupe, Tom & Terry Machado
2nd Place: 1981 Fiat 124 Spider Convertible, David Felderstein & Dan Hoody
3rd Place: 1991 Chrysler TC by Maserati Coupe/Convertible, Stu Suede

CLASS E: Foreign (non-Italian) 1964-1990

1st Place: 1964 Jaguar E-type Coupe, Cedric Chew
2nd Place: 1973 Jaguar E-Type Roadster, Calvin Craig
3rd Place: 1986 Mercedes-Benz 560SL Roadster, Eric Whitney & Richard Bae

CLASS F: Foreign (non-Italian) 1991-Newer

1st Place: 1991 Nissan Figaro Cabriolet, Todd Darling & Scott Mikkelsen (no 2nd or 3rd Place)

CLASS G: Imperial 1951-1962

1st Place: 1951 Chrysler Imperial Convertible, Larry Camuso & Kirk Wentland
2nd Place: 1962 Imperial Crown Southampton Coupe, Roger E. Irland
3rd Place: 1958 Imperial Custom 4-Door Sedan, Bill Peachee

CLASS H: Imperial 1963-Newer

1st Place: 1967 Imperial Crown 4-Door Hardtop, Christopher Hoffman
2nd Place: 1967 Imperial Crown Coupe Mobile Director, Michael Amoldt & Jay Remick
3rd Place: 1966 Imperial LeBaron 4-Door Hardtop, Gary Carr

Freewheelers Flyer

CLASS I: Roman Numeraled 1950-60

1st Place: 1958 Lincoln Continental Mark III Coupe, Chris Menrad
2nd Place: 1959 Jaguar Mark IX Saloon, Dave Weisbart
3rd Place: 1959 Studebaker Lark VIII 4-Door Sedan, Michael Merchant and Sid Haskin

CLASS J: Roman Numeraled 1961-78

1st Place: 1962 Studebaker Lark VIII Convertible, Bing Kunzig
2nd Place: 1975 Lincoln Continental Mark IV Coupe, Kirk Wentland & Larry Camuso
3rd Place: 1971 Lincoln Continental Mark III Coupe, Jesse & Terry Turner

CLASS K: Roman Numeraled 1979-Newer

1st Place: 1979 Lincoln Continental Mark V Collector's Series, Alex Hart & Mason Nakamura
2nd Place: 1979 Lincoln Continental Mark V Luxury Group Option, Boss and Mike Khwanchan-Klyde
3rd Place: 1986 Lincoln Continental Mark VII LSC Coupe, Bruce Jungk

BEST IN SHOW: 1960 Imperial Crown Southampton Coupe, Darryl Green

BEST COLOR: 1973 Imperial LeBaron 4 Door, Kent Robbins

BEST INTERIOR: 1978 Ford Mustang II King Cobra 2-Door Fastback, Mike Parente

BEST DISPLAY: 2012 Fiat 500 Prima Edizione 2-Door Hatchback, Tom Ortiz

BEST ORIGINAL/UNRESTORED: 1964 Lincoln Continental 4-Door Sedan, Giulio Marcelino

MOST POTENTIAL: 1958 Imperial Crown 4-Door Sedan, John Jung

HARD LUCK AWARD: 1985 Cadillac Eldorado Biarritz Coupe, Bill Schoemann

HOTEL'S CHOICE AWARD: 1978 Ford Mustang II King Cobra 2-Door Fastback, Mike Parente

LEGACY AWARDS:

Freewheelers Lavender Dipstick Award: 1966 Ford Mustang Coupe, Andrew Wallace

Freewheelers Spirit of West Coast Meet Award: Christopher Slater

Great Autos Founder's Award: 1941 Cadillac Series 62 Convertible, Bob Zapotosky

Great Auto Lifetime Achievement Award: Clint Moore

WEST COAST MEET 2026



BEST IN SHOW: Darryl Green's 1960 Imperial Crown Southampton Coupe

Best in Class:



WEST COAST MEET 2026



Best Interior



Best Color



Best Display



WEST COAST MEET 2026



WEST COAST MEET 2026

ORPHAN'S CORNER

Last month we looked at the regal Imperial but for this month let's switch it up to a hybrid of sorts that was and wasn't an import. Confused yet? Stay tuned.....



By the mid 1980's, American luxury was defined by floaty, oversized, velour-lined vehicles however, a growing demographic of younger, affluent buyers began turning toward the athletic handling and minimalist aesthetics of European imports like BMW, Volvo, Saab and Audi. The Japanese also started to develop luxury-oriented brands designed for the North

American market with some potential and initial success. Looking to capture this shifting market and fresh off the reasonably successful German-imported Mercury Capri, Ford made what was considered to be a bold move by creating an entirely new brand to add to its Lincoln-Mercury portfolio for the 1985 model year. Rather than developing all-new products, Ford decided to adapt its highly praised European vehicles to meet higher American safety and emissions regulations by introducing the lux entry-level Merkur. Roughly 800 Lincoln-Mercury dealers signed on to represent the brand with advertising and PR materials emphasizing its German heritage and highlighted manufacture by Ford Werke AG.

The initial launch was the XR4Ti, a sporty three-door hatchback based on the European Sierra which stood out immediately due to its aerodynamic, grille-less front fascia and a quirky 'bi-plane' rear spoiler. To give it American muscle, Ford replaced the European V6 with a 2.3-litre turbocharged four-cylinder engine used in the Mustang SVO producing 175 horsepower and somewhat respectable fuel economy. Three years later, Merkur introduced the European Scorpio as a midsize, executive five-door luxury hatchback. Boasting high-end amenities like power reclining seats, power moon roof and standard anti-lock brakes, it was powered by a smooth 2.0-litre German V6. To attract buyers, a Guaranteed Resale Value Program was offered which pegged Merkur trade-in value, as a percentage of its purchase price to that of the Mercedes 190 when traded in for another Lincoln-Mercury vehicle two to four years after purchase.



Initially projected to sell 15,000 to 20,000 vehicles annually, only 26,000 Merkur XR4Ti's were sold in the first two years and declined further to just over 13,000 units for the 1987 model year. On average, L-M dealers sold only a couple Merkurs each year with less than 70,000 vehicles sold for the entire life of the brand.

Despite rave reviews from automotive journalists who praised the XR4Ti's sharp independent suspension and road handling, the Merkur brand ultimately never caught on. Several fatal flaws doomed the experiment with the first being the name itself because it confused consumers and selling a nimble sports coupe next to massive, traditional Lincoln Town Cars created confusion and an identity crisis in showrooms. Secondly, economic factors intervened with a volatile exchange rate between the USD and the West German Deutsche Mark causing Merkur prices to skyrocket. By 1989, a Scorpio cost nearly as much as a Lincoln flagship while visually resembling the much cheaper domestic Mercury Sable.



Finally, impending 1990 US safety mandates required the addition of passive restraints such as airbags or automatic seatbelts. Facing dismal sales with only 64,000 total cars delivered over four years, Ford decided the re-engineering costs were unjustifiable and officially pulled the plug on Merkur in September 1989 making it one of the shortest-lived post-war brands produced. Today, Merkur is remembered as a fascinating, short-lived footnote in automotive history—a precursor to the Japanese luxury brands that would successfully

conquer the US market in just a few years. One of the shortest-lived vehicles ever produced by Ford Motor Company, the brand was discontinued at the end of the 1989 model year marking the end of the Merkur marque and its entry into the orphan kingdom of what if.....?

— Bill Hall

ORPHAN'S CORNER

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Brendan Herger
San Francisco, CA

Brian Gregorio
San Jose, CA

2000 BMW 323i Touring Wagon
1974 Datsun 26-0Z Coupe

Earl Rynerson & Michael Shroyer
Rancho Mirage, CA
1987 Mercedes-Benz 560 Roadster

Jeffrey Adamsky & Brian Scott
Port Richey, FL

Thomas Kiefer
Grass Valley, CA
1948 Chrysler New Yorker Club Coupe
2011 Cadillac DTS Sedan



CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE 2026 – June is PRIDE Month

Sunday, June 6th – Pride in the Plaza in Concord. Visit <https://rainbowcc.org/>

Saturday, June 13th – Sunday, June 14th – Sacramento Pride Weekend. Visit <https://sacramentopride.org/>

Saturday, June 27th – Sunday, June 28th – San Francisco Pride Weekend. Visit <https://sfpride.org/>

JULY 2026

Sunday, July 19th – Jelly Belly Drive & Factory Tour in Fairfield – details to follow.

AUGUST 2026

Sunday, August 23rd – the “Donna Reed” South Bay Drive Tour – details to follow.

SEPTEMBER 2026

Saturday, September 5th – the USS Potomac Tour in Oakland – details to follow.

OCTOBER 2026

Sunday, October 25th – Benefit Car Show at the California Auto Museum in Sacramento – details to follow.

NOVEMBER 2026

Saturday, November 14th – the 3rd Annual Car Hop & New Members Lunch – details to follow.

DECEMBER 2026

Sunday, December 13th – Freewheelers Annual Holiday Party in Concord – details to follow.

NOTE: Event dates and times subject to change.

CLASSIFIED

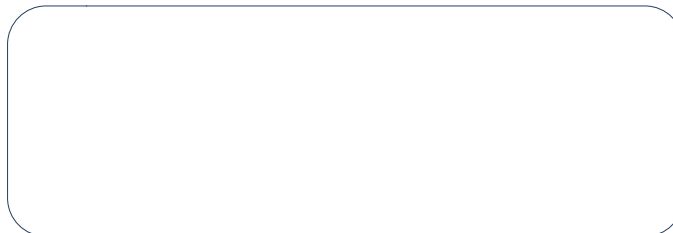
ATTENTION: Special Rate for Club Members!

Safe, reasonable, secure storage in Concord. Insulated, fire suppression sprinklers, stays warm in winter and cool in summer and available for long-term storage. Many amenities, such as in and out privileges, lifts available, electrical outlets for charging, clubhouse, kitchen, ceiling fans, vented, and service tools for simple needs. \$195/month. For further details, please call: Richard Fredrick, 925-212-0931 or Gregg Cannella, 925-899-5167





Freewheelers Car Club/San Francisco Historical Automobile Society c/o 1588 Willow Oaks Drive San Jose, CA
95125-4452



**9 FROM
THE '90S**

Is it too early to start thinking about West Coast Meet 2027?