



"Stand up to an obstacle. Just stand up to it, that's all, and don't give way under it, and it will finally break."

Norman Vincent Peale, author, Bellefontaine High School class of 1916

Subscriber's Sneak Peak

Head Over Wheels - Video #1

Newsletter readers get the story (actually, video) first, because you've been showing up and this is one way we say thank you for that. Last issue you read about how Eric Zwart's 1970 Datsun 1600 Roadster shouldn't be a car that stops everybody. Except it does, every single time. The video is below. We think you'll enjoy hearing it in his own words.

As always, scroll down to the end of the newsletter to find a list of upcoming events. We don't want you left out!



Feature Article

Eight years up Corkscrew Hill: The 2026 Bellefontaine Hillclimb Revival

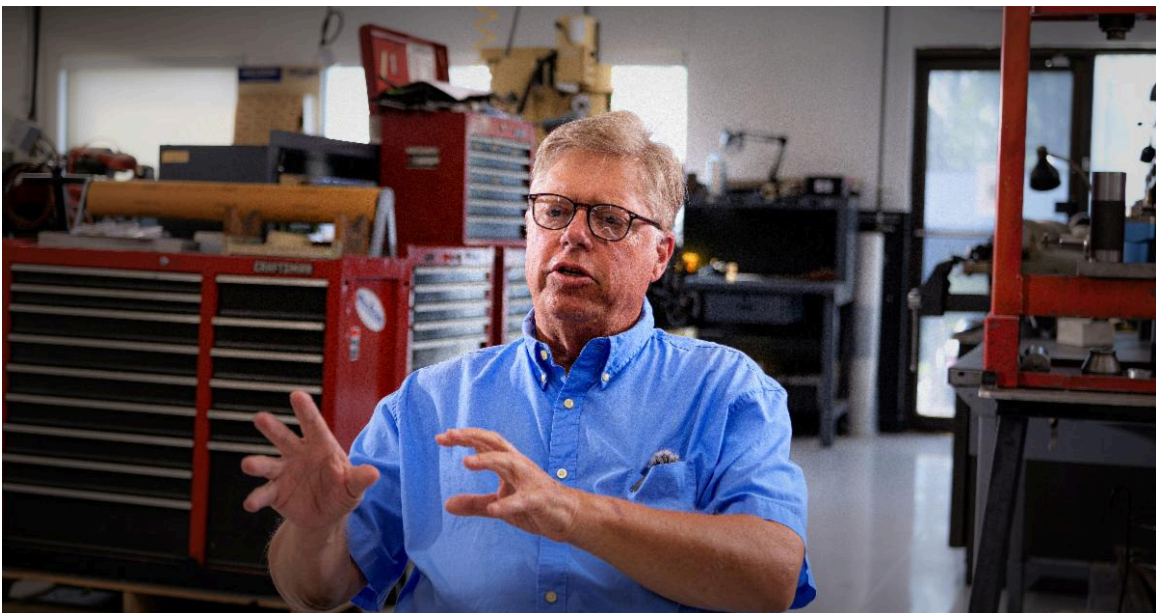
On Saturday, August 22, more than 110 participants and 40 volunteers gathered with event founder Kurt Niemeyer at the bottom of Corkscrew Hill in Zanesfield, Ohio, for the eighth running of the Bellefontaine Hillclimb Revival. The hillclimbs 390 feet in seven-tenths of a mile, rumored to be the steepest course the Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) ever sanctioned in its 1950s and '60s heyday. Drivers ran roughly 415 combined laps over the course of the day without incident. Safety is paramount and none of them went off course. For the seventh year out of eight, Zakira's Garage volunteered for tech inspections to ensure drivers get up the hill safely.



Car #55 | Mike Foster | 1969 MGB GT

The original Bellefontaine Hillclimb ran from 1953 to 1974 and is recognized as Ohio's longest-running public road racing competition. Kurt grew up hearing about it without ever seeing it. His dad and his uncle Bob raced a Morris Minor convertible up the hill around 1961, then brought their Alfa Romeo race cars in later years. Their sister, Kurt's aunt Jean, became race chairman around 1963 and ran it with her husband for five years. "I always heard about the Bellefontaine Hillclimb, and we always went racing as a family, but we did not go to Bellefontaine as a family," Kurt says. "I never saw the hillclimb. I always heard about it."

The idea to bring it back started as a roadside question. In 2012, Kurt and some friends were driving through Bellefontaine on their way to a vintage race reunion at Put-in-Bay. He asked a fellow racer, Bill Porter, whether he'd ever run the old hillclimb. Porter told him his car wasn't finished until 1974, the year it ended. That sent Kurt looking. A call to a longtime SCCA friend in Dayton turned up a map to the original site, and a visit to the local Chamber of Commerce turned up a staffer who'd watched the hillclimb as a kid and wanted it back. Getting there took seven years of insurance and logistics work before the first revival ran in August 2019



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What it became is deliberately low-key. Kurt will happily tell you, "There's nothing professional that goes on there," and as chairman, he wants to keep it that way. "The only reason we're there is to have a good time with old friends and old cars, and then to meet new friends," he says. Entrants have come from as far as Georgia, volunteers from Virginia, and a group of Bellefontaine locals in their twenties, the Peak Motorsports Group, show up as interested in the old cars' history as they are in modifying their own. This year Peak Motorsports stepped up to run course marshal duty on the return roads, among them the Slone sisters, who kept traffic and spirits moving on the Tour d'Township loop. Everyone gets timed, but Kurt draws a clear line between that and the point of the day. "It's a success because you made it here today," he says. "You've got your car running. Everything's in order. Now you can go try a new discipline."

Zakira's role sits on the practical end of that promise. Getting a car onto Corkscrew Hill takes a safety inspection first, and this year that job was shared between Zakira's and the Austin-Healey Club of America, whose members bring their own timing equipment along with the technical know-how, with final approval on each car signed off to take on Corkscrew Hill. The standard is close to an autocross tech check rather than the roll-cage and driver-suit requirements of a sanctioned hillclimb series, because a lot of the field is older European cars that were never built to modern safety standards.

The inspectors check the brakes closely, tolerate a slow leak but not a real one and ask every driver to carry a fire extinguisher, since long stretches of the return road sit outside the course with no safety crew nearby. Safety coverage along the hill itself came from a mix of SCCA, WERA and LEC volunteers on the radios. Kurt says the day's safety record, zero incidents across roughly 415 laps, is one few motorsports events anywhere can match.



Zakira's Garage and the Austin-Healey Club of America Provide Safety Inspections

The event runs on a wide bench of local partners, including Zakira's Garage, Brewfontaine, Solomon's Garage, LeVans Body Shop, Six Hundred Downtown, Swervin Automotive, Sports Car Preservation, Euroclassics and Mehaffies Pies.

The Logan County Sheriff's Office, the Logan County Engineer's Office, the City of Bellefontaine and Tri-Valley EMS Fire & Rescue all support the event directly, something Kurt says the revival simply couldn't run without.

America's Packard Museum, a major sponsor, drove two of its own classics up from Dayton to pace the event this year, a 1951 Pininfarina-bodied Packard and a 1953 Carrera Panamericana entry. The museum also awards its Goddess of Speed trophy to the fastest pre-1958 car, a nod to 1958 being the year the last Packard rolled off the line. This year's winner was Robert Mason, driving his 1957 MG-A.

The Ferrari Club of America's Ohio chapter runs the grid and start box. The Porsche Club of America's Ohio Valley Region handles timing and scoring. The British Car Club of Greater Cincinnati covers much of the hospitality and brings a strong showing of cars. And the Goshen Friends Church, whose pastor Kurt describes simply as "the happiest man on the planet," handles breakfast and lunch for the weekend and donates the leftovers to its own community food bank.



Car #48 | Stu Morris | 1953 Carrera Panamericana Packard

"Racing is a family sport. Everybody has something to do."

Old friends and families are what carry the event's tone and generational appeal. Scene legend, Dick Weiss won the F-production class in his Porsche Speedster the week after he earned his SCCA competition license at Mid-Ohio in 1962, then won again in 2021, fifty-nine years later. Jim Siegel and his son John both ran this year, Jim in the family's fully original 1969 Mercedes-Benz 280SL, a perennial winner in the whitewall class, and John in his own Porsche 944. John's first year on the car was as crew, not driver, and the only prep he did was pull the hubcaps off before the run. Del Border's 1962 Austin-Healey 3000 has become a family car as much as a race car, and the Scovanner siblings, John and Melissa, have twice beaten their father, Lee, driving their own Alfa Romeos. Kurt himself ran the hill in the family's Alfa. "Racing is a great family sport," he says. "Everybody has something to do."



Kurt is candid that the event's future is a work in progress. He and his wife, Laura, run it with a handful of close friends, and he's actively building a succession plan with the museum and club partners who already do so much of the work, because he wants it handed to people who love the sport rather than folded into a general community events calendar. For now, the invitation stands the way it has since 2019. Bring a street car if that's what you have. Bring bug spray and sunscreen and, since it's Ohio in August, maybe winter clothing too. As Kurt tells every driver at the meeting before the first run: nobody is there to judge you. Keep it on the course, and if you clip a cone, just take the rerun.

Zakira's is proud to keep showing up for this one. The ninth running of the Bellefontaine Hillclimb Revival is already on the calendar for August 21, 2027. Watch our newsletter and Facebook page for details as the date gets closer and for more on the event itself, visit [Sports Car Preservation Ltd](#) or the [Bellefontaine Hillclimb Revival](#) page on Facebook.

What's on the Calendar

British Car Day – September 13 | 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

- Village Green Park - Fairfield, OH

We're proud to sponsor the 2026 Aubrey Rose Foundation British Car Day, presented by Cincinnati MINI. Celebrate 25 years of the modern MINI alongside a full field of British cars. Free to attend for anyone who wants to come look, eat and listen to some music. For more information including how to register a vehicle [visit here](#).

Zakira's Cars 'n' Coffee – September 19 | 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM

- Back lot of Zakira's Garage - Blue Ash, OH

September marks our last Cars 'n' Coffee before fall officially hits and our October Open House closes out the driving season. The service entrance will be open for coffee and restrooms — one important note, we're cutting back on shop tours until our open house. Come for the coffee and conversation. It's always a great mix of vehicles at Zakira's.

Fall Classic Driving Tour – October 10 | 9:30 AM – 5:00 PM

- Sports Car Preservation HQ - Milford, Ohio - [Register Here](#)

Zakira's Fall Open House – October 17 | 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

- Back lot of Zakira's Garage - Blue Ash, OH

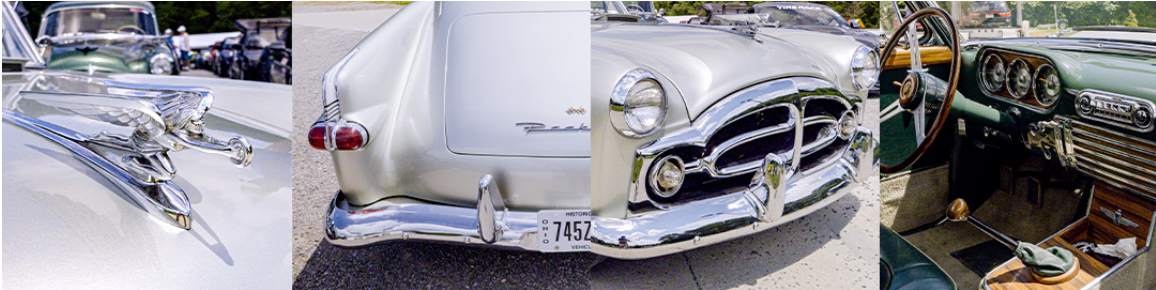
Our Fall Open House doubles as the final Cars 'n' Coffee of 2026. Join us for European Café coffee and sweet treats (while they last). The whole garage will be open for tours, cars and good conversation. The whole Zakira's team will be on hand all morning. Don't forget to ask about any of your car needs before it goes into storage or takes on the next Cincinnati winter.

Stop by and enter for a chance to win at this year's raffle table, including prizes from Mota Car Club, Eclipse Window Tinting, Würth, European Café and a few surprises. Fill out an entry slip and drop it in the box. We'll draw winners around 12:00 PM. Must be present to win.

All makes and models welcome. Family- and dog-friendly as always — please keep pups leashed and out of the shop. Rain or shine (we're always hoping for shine), and we'll post any weather updates on our social channels ahead of time.

Please be respectful of the neighborhood. No burnouts, racing or excessive revving. Look, don't touch, unless invited by the owner. No bicycles, scooters or powered ride on toys in the shop.

Bring a friend, bring the family, bring a camera and come enjoy a good Saturday morning with Cincinnati's car community. We'd love to see you here to close out another great season together.



The Final Pylon...

Fall is almost upon us and the roads are still good, the air is starting to cooperate and there's more on the calendar before we call it a year than most people realize. One more Cars 'n' Coffee, a few more great local shows, a driving tour down to the river and a Fall Open House to close things out properly. We're not done yet — and we'd love to see you for the rest of it.



As always, if you need anything automotive, please call us at **(513) 272-2229**, email us at info@zakiras.com, check out www.zakiras.com or just stop by the shop 9 AM - 5 PM Monday through Friday in Blue Ash at 4480 Lake Forest Dr., #314, Cincinnati, OH 45242.

***We thank you for your continued business
and we'll see you on the road!!***

Regards,
your Team at Zakira's