

on the go

**More Than Just A
Car Show**

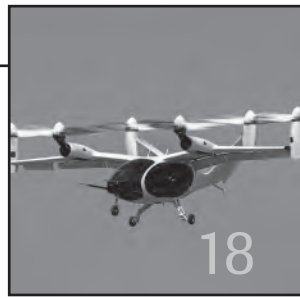
**Weird & Unusual
US Festivals**



**May
June
2026**

PERIODICAL

In This Issue



6 More Than Just A Car Show

If you've never been to an In-Vette-Tational show, this is the year to go - cars, food, much more

12 Weird & Unusual US Festivals

Read about some weird US festivals and unusual events that are humorous and often charming

16 Celebrate America's 250th

Join the Wyomissing Band as they celebrate America's 250th birthday sponsored by AAA

Departments

- 2 PRESIDENT'S NOTE
- 4 CLUB UPDATE
- 11 ASK ED
- 18 ON THE ROAD
- 20 CAR CARE MONTH



Cover

The 46th Annual Skyline Drive Corvette Club In-Vette-Tational Car and Truck Show, held on Saturday, July 18, 2026 at the Oley Fire Company Fairgrounds, promises to be over-the-top. Enjoy the living history re-enactment by the First Pennsylvania Regiment of the Continental Line. Family games, delicious food, and of course amazing show-stopping cars and trucks galore! More on pg 6.

NOTICE - SPECIAL OFFICE HOURS:

Our office will be closed for the following observances - *Monday, May 25 Memorial Day; Friday, July 3 Independence Day Observed*

On The Go

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OFFICE HOURS

Current Hours

Office M-F 9am-5pm

License Services M-F 9am-3pm

Closed Saturday and Sunday

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Travel 610.374.5600

Roadside Assistance

In Berks: 610.374.7433

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Peter J. Armstrong
President/CEO

“...research reveals a growing crisis on America’s roads ...”

Fatal Hit-and-Run Crashes Reach Record High, Hit Home

Imagine you’re crossing the street when everything goes dark. When you come to, you’re lying in the road, in pain, unsure what happened—except for the red taillights disappearing into the night. No driver. No help. No one calling 911.

Scenes like this are becoming increasingly common. New research from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety finds that 15% of all police-reported crashes in 2023 involved a driver who fled the scene, the highest percentage recorded in any recent year. The new research reveals a growing crisis on America’s roads, one that leaves injured people alone, without help, and too often spares the offending driver from appropriate accountability.

On November 25, 2025, a vehicle bearing Texas plates was involved in a hit-and-run crash in the 1400 block of Green Hills Road in Robeson Township. This past February, three people fled the scene of a multi-vehicle crash on Route 222 in Maxatawny and were later apprehended.

Pedestrians and cyclists are especially vulnerable. In fact, one in four pedestrians and nearly as many cyclists killed in crashes in 2023 were hit by a driver who fled the scene. They are frequently struck in darkness during late-night or early morning hours, when visibility is low, witnesses are few, and there may be no one nearby to call for help.

A fatal hit-and-run on September 20, 2023 involved a Lancaster County man who struck and killed a 23-year-old cyclist on Route 222 near Fleetwood and fled the scene. The driver was convicted on charges of accidents involving death or personal injury and five summary offenses. The jury was hung on a charge of homicide by vehicle.

A Berks County woman was working as an overnight construction zone flagger in Harrisburg in November 2024 when she was struck by a vehicle whose driver fled the scene. After almost a year and

a half, a Cumberland County man was charged with three summary traffic violations and a first degree misdemeanor for the hit-and-run.

Just last month, Walnuttown Fire Company suffered a tragic loss when an impaired driver struck and killed Fire Chief Jeffory L. Buck and Assistant Fire Chief Robert R. Shick, Jr. The driver fled the scene but was apprehended and is facing charges.

Roadside service providers who work just feet from moving traffic, often in dangerous conditions, are at risk as well. Tragically, fifteen of them were struck and killed at the roadside last year, based on AAA’s tracking of reported roadside worker fatalities. At least six of those fifteen were killed by a driver who fled the scene.

What does a driver who flees a crash scene look like? Data shows that 40% did not have a driver’s license, and more than half were driving vehicles not registered in their name. The majority were young, male, and crashed close to home.

The reason a driver leaves a crash scene may vary from case to case, but the result is the same and severe. When a driver flees the scene, victims may be left without immediate help, delaying emergency response and care.

Three short years ago saw more than 240,000 hit-and-run injuries and 2,872 deaths. This is a growing, preventable threat to public safety and health.

This problem demands public awareness and education. The AAA Foundation’s research identifies practical solutions that can save lives, such as automatic crash notifications through vehicles and smartphones, safer road designs that protect people walking and biking, and accountability measures including clear legal consequences and consistent enforcement that make fleeing the scene less likely. These measures can work together to change behavior, make a real difference, and save lives.

AAA Tips for Saving Money When Renting a Car

Save your travel money for the fun stuff!

Use your AAA membership

AAA members qualify for special car rental deals through our travel discount partners, Hertz, Thrifty, and Dollar.

Compare your options before you buy

When booking a rental car, you can either book it directly through the company or an aggregator site like Priceline or Booking.com. While comparing prices using an aggregator site might be easier, always check the rental company's website directly. They may be offering a more significant discount (especially if you also do a quick Google search for coupon codes), and aggregator sites may charge additional service fees.

AAA simplifies comparing rental car options, letting you filter your search by rental car company, fuel types, car types and passenger capacity. You'll also be able to see your AAA savings rate while browsing your options at AAA.com.

Never pick up your car at the airport

When you arrive in a new city via airplane, you will need transportation to your final destination in the city. Your options are limited, and rental car companies know it. So, while picking up a rental car at the airport is convenient, many companies will take advantage of your limited options by charging extra fees or a slightly higher rental rate than if you picked your car up at a rental facility off-site.

Instead, get a rideshare or take public transportation to a rental car facility. You'll save money if the rideshare is cheaper than the extra fees you'd pay at the airport rental facility.

Drive stick (if you can)

Driving a stick shift is becoming a lost art. Depending on where you are, you may be able to rent a car with a manual transmission at a cheaper price than renting an automatic one. This is especially true when you travel to other parts of the world, such as Europe, where manual cars are the norm.

However, as rental car companies replace manual transmission fleet cars with automatic transmissions, requesting a stick shift may actually cost you more because it's seen as an upscale amenity for a sports car. Check with the rental company to be sure.

Use your own insurance

Many insurance companies will cover you even if you're driving a rental car, but most car rental agreements include additional insurance through the rental company. As long as you can prove you have your own auto insurance, you can decline the rental com-

pany's insurance. Some credit cards also offer rental car insurance if you pay for your rental with the card.

Rent by the week instead of by the day

Just like renting a hotel by the week costs you less per day than a single-night rental, renting a car by the week may be cheaper than for a few days. If you only need the car for five days, but renting for a full week is cheaper, opt for the weeklong rental. As long as the company doesn't charge you a fee for early returns, you'll save money in the long run.

For example, according to Hertz, renting a small sedan costs \$132.05 per day and \$424.49 per week. But the weekly rate comes out to \$60.64 per day, which is an over 50 percent price break. Keep in mind that these figures will vary depending on your location and specific dates.

Go economy

Sometimes, the type of car you rent adds to the experience. Renting a convertible definitely makes a summer road trip to the beach more fun than driving a four-door sedan.

While renting a car with all the bells and whistles is nice, it's best to go with the smallest, simplest car that fits your needs. The savings are impressive: An economy car averages \$77.70 per day (\$50 below the average car rental price of \$128.56), while an SUV averages \$172.49 a day.

Fill up the tank

Most rental car companies require you to return the car with a full gas tank. If you don't, they'll fill it up for you on-site and charge you more than you'd pay at a gas station. To avoid their surcharge, fill up the tank at a gas station before you return it.

For added savings, consider joining the Shell Fuel Rewards® program to save 5 cents per gallon.

Have only one driver

Rental car companies frequently add additional daily fees averaging about \$10 for extra drivers. They'll sometimes waive that fee for a spouse (make sure your addresses match on your driver's licenses) or if you join their loyalty program. If you can safely get by with one driver, do it and save a few bucks. However, if you are driving long distances, the benefit of having two or more drivers outweighs saving the daily fee.

Pay in advance

If your travel plans are set in stone, consider paying for your rental car upfront. Some companies offer up to a 15 percent discount for prepaid reservations. Keep in mind that you'll incur fees if you do end up needing to cancel.

Renew Your Membership at AAA.com

Club Update

8-hour First Time Participant:

Boyertown* - May 13 & 20 9:00am-1pm *must attend both days*

AAA Reading-Berks - May 27 9am-6pm w/lunch *one day*

4-hour Refresher Classes at AAA 9am-1pm:

May 19 or May 26 for those who last took the class in May 2023

June 30 for those who last took the class in June 2023

...to continue insurance discount from three years ago

AAA RoadWise Driver

Available in-person/online. Call 484-987-7025 for details including required fees.

*Boyertown Multi-Services Center, Spring Street



**TAKE THE COURSE
GET THE DISCOUNT**

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Registration required prior to use. May be used 24 hours after registration on PA Turnpike, and 48 hours after registration on all other toll roads and bridges. Limit one (1) E-ZPass Go Pak transponder per person.

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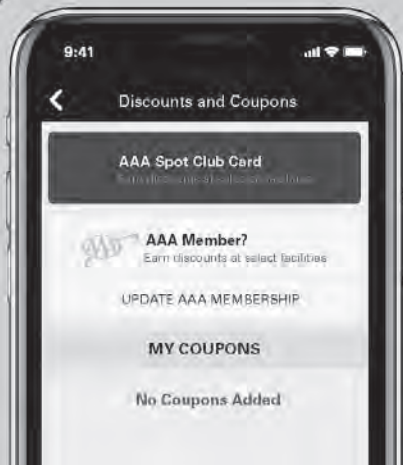


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Offer is valid for mobile application downloads beginning Sept. 2, 2019. The \$10 in Spot Club points will appear as 350 Spot Club points and must be redeemed through your online account prior to your stay. Spot Club points will appear in your Spot Club account within 10 business days of signing up via the mobile app and adding your AAA member number to your account. ©2019 TPS Parking Management, LLC.

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Increase your understanding of dementia and learn about the small things you can do to make a difference for people living with dementia.

MONDAY MAY 11 4:00-5:00PM

**AAA Reading-Berks
920 Van Reed Rd, Wyomissing**

lower level - please use side entrance

R.S.V.P. 610-741-5810, Victoria.Griffis@berkscomfortkeepers.com or online:
<https://www.dementiafriendspa.org/eventdetail/1205>



First Pennsylvania Regiment Re-enactors

more than just a car show



While many of us were still taking down holiday lights, putting away decorations, and worrying about the winter weather yet to come, members of the Skyline Drive Corvette Club were already focused on planning another unique community event. The Annual In-Vette-Tational has become “more than just a car show”, and in 2026 will again offer something a bit out of the ordinary.

The In-Vette-Tational is a unique car show you won't want to miss. The 9:30 a.m. opening ceremony will start the show with a bang, literally! Keep reading...

How many other car shows have a theme? The 46th In-Vette-Tational is “Celebrating the 250th Anniversary of our Nation's Declaration of Independence.” Ok, so that might not be a unique idea for 2026. But what other car show offers you the opportunity to see “soldiers” dressed in the uniforms of General George Washington's Pennsylvania Riflemen? Set at a historically accurate military camp, Washington's troops tell stories of America's fight for liberty through the battles of the First Pennsylvania Regiment of the Continental Line, originally known as the “Pennsylvania Rifle Regiment”. More information about this organization at www.firstpa.org.

The opening ceremony, honoring our country's veterans and active military, will feature a presentation by the First Pennsylvania Regiment and will include the firing of long guns. Music of the Revolutionary era will be played by the Brandywine Colonials Fife and Drum Corps, and the singing of our National Anthem will be performed by Vocalist Deanna Witzel.

While you're there, be sure to say “hi” to this year's special guest, Bryce Burklow, President/CEO of the National Corvette Museum in Bowling Green, Kentucky - the home of the Corvette!

So, come early, bring your children (the re-enactors are planning something special just for them) and stay all day. It promises to be exciting, interesting, educational and fun.

SDCC makes a difference and so can you. A portion of the proceeds from the In-Vette-Tational is dedicated to the SDCC Scholarship Fund. Every year, up to six youth from Berks County's three vo-tech schools planning to pursue higher education in the automotive field are awarded scholarships during a special ceremony at the



L-R: 2025 SDCC Scholarship recipients Estiven Gonzalez Rodriguez, Keith Becker, and the parents of Tyler Dilbeck, Chris and Brigitte, and John Secoges, SDCC Scholarship Liaison.

show. To date, more than \$45,000 has been presented to deserving young men and women. The recipients design and build unique trophies which they present to the lucky owners of the vehicles they select.

The In-Vette-Tational is SDCC'S only fund-raising event. Your attendance and/or donation to the Scholarship Fund enables the club to continue to support local youth, veterans' organizations and charities. Corporate, personal, or memorial donations to the SDCC Scholarship Fund will be accepted at the Club Table during the show. For information on making a donation in advance of the In-Vette-Tational, email aladon83@comcast.net or bobmessner1@gmail.com.

The more typical, but still really cool, car-show stuff...

The Oley Fairgrounds' sprawling fourteen acres provides ample space for the hundreds of cars and trucks that attend the In-Vette-Tational every year. Even in the heat of mid-July, walking on grass and stopping under shade trees or pavilions sure beats looking at hot cars on even hotter macadam!

Registration for the show is from 9 a.m. to noon. Pre-register by July 15th for only \$15 or register at the show

“...come early, bring
your children...
stay all day...”

for \$20. More details and pre-registration information can be found at www.skylinedrivecorvettes.org/in-vette-tational or visit the Skyline Drive Corvette Club on Facebook.

All makes and models of cars and trucks are encouraged to participate, including antiques, customs, classics, street rods and rat rods. Register your vehicle(s) for a chance to win one or more of the fifty trophies. Vehicles will be chosen by people's choice popular vote. SDCC members do not vote for Corvettes.

If your car isn't particularly fast, the “Slow Drag Race” might be for you. Finishing last will finally win a special trophy! If the roar of engines gives you goose bumps, be sure to be at the show at 12:00 noon when everyone will be asked to start their engine at the same time as a tribute to our great nation and anyone who has ever served it.

Lovers of old cars will be especially excited that the Antique Automobile Club of America is returning to the In-Vette-Tational with a stunning 1932 Studebaker Model 55 Saint Regis Brougham. This beauty was donated to the ACCA Museum in Hershey by SDCC's very own Messner family!

Food, prepared by the Oley Fire Company, and drinks



Skyline Drive Corvette Club members at the William Penn Memorial Tower.

are available throughout the day, and well-maintained restrooms are never far away while you're checking out the 30+ vendors and exhibits. Whether you are a diehard motorhead, into the arts, enjoy visiting local veterans' displays, or your interests lie somewhere in between, there will be something at the In-Vette-Tational you'll be sure to like. Take a chance on raffles for the Wheelbarrow of Cheer and 50/50 tickets, enter the Tricky Tray Auction, or browse the on-site book sale. There will be a lot to see and do.

If you own a Corvette, or just really like them...

Consider joining SDCC, an active and fun-loving group that shares a love of Corvettes. Established in 1964 as a “social club”, having fun with friends is still a priority. Whether staying close to home (explore nearby car museums, attend a hockey game, cheer on the Reading Phillies', tour a haunted inn or have ice cream with the gang) or caravanning to more distant places (Florida Keys, Bar Harbor, the National Corvette Museum, the Indy 500, just to name a few) you're always sure to have a great time. New members with fresh ideas are welcome and needed to help SDCC continue to thrive! Joining is also a great way to connect with individuals and businesses that will be happy to answer your car-related questions and help with issues that may arise.

For questions about the In-Vette-Tational, contact Committee Chairman Bob Messner at bobmessner1@gmail.com. To become a vendor or set up a display, contact Donna Baumener at aladon83@comcast.net. Information about joining SDCC can be found at www.skylinedrivecorvettes.org or visit the Club Table at the show.

Key E-Bike Safety Info for Pennsylvania

Electric bicycles, known as e-bikes, are gaining popularity as a convenient, eco-friendly, and fun way to get around. In 2022, over 1.1 million e-bikes were sold in the U.S., with an anticipated annual growth of 10%. However, e-bikes also come with risks. Each year, more than 20,000 people are injured while riding e-bikes, with about 3,000 requiring hospitalizations—experts believe these numbers might be low.



Why E-Bike Injuries Can Be Serious

Injuries from e-bikes tend to be more serious than those from regular bicycles, with head injuries being the most common. Shockingly, only around one-third of injured riders say they were wearing helmets. Standard bike helmets are designed for speeds up to 20 mph, while high-speed helmets approved by the Department of Transportation are recommended for faster rides.

E-bikes are divided into three categories:

- Class 1 & 2: Pedal and/or throttle assist up to 20 mph
- Class 3: Pedal and/or throttle assist up to 28 mph

Follow the Law

Your safety and how others view

cyclists depend on your behavior. You have the same rights and responsibilities as drivers. Obey traffic signals and stop signs. Ride with traffic and use the rightmost lane in the direction you are going.

Be Predictable

Clearly show your intentions to others on the road using direct communication. Ride in a straight line, single file, and avoid weaving between parked cars. Signal your turns and look behind you well before changing lanes or turning.

Be Conspicuous

For more safe e-bike practices, check out www.ebikesmart.org, created by PeopleForBikes, the League of American Bicyclists, and Bicycle Colorado, which educates riders of all ages on safe e-bike practices.

The Car Can Be The Cure

One of the most effective ways to stop impaired driving is simple: prevent a drunk driver from operating the car in the first place.

That's the goal behind emerging vehicle alcohol-detection technology—and it's a focus area for the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS). Recently, IIHS hosted AAA and Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) at its Charlottesville, Virginia, facility to showcase its impaired driving-related technology and to discuss additional needed research in this space.

AAA CEO Gene Boehm and Automotive and Public Affairs leaders joined MADD CEO Stacey Stewart for the visit, where IIHS shared how it's working to incorporate impairment-detection technology into its Top

Safety Pick Plus award criteria.

According to IIHS analysis, technology that prevents impaired motorists from driving could save more than 10,000 lives each year in the U.S.

AAA and MADD are also advocating for full implementation of the HALT Law, which would require alcohol-detection technology in new vehicles.

Per a MADD fact sheet, since 2019, drunk driving deaths in the U.S. have skyrocketed by 22%, with more than 12,000 people killed and nearly 400,000 injured each year.

The HALT (Honoring the Abbas Family Legacy to Terminate) Drunk Driving Act, passed in 2021 as part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, mandates that all new passenger vehicles must be equipped with passive, advanced alcohol-detection tech-

nology by approximately 2026-2027.

This technology, which operates without driver interaction to prevent the vehicle from moving if the driver is impaired, is expected to save over 10,000 lives annually.

The HALT Drunk Driving Law does not mandate one specific type of tech to satisfy the requirement. Anti-drunk driving technology is not a breathalyzer or ignition interlock device. The tech is "passive" which means it allows a normal driving experience unless the driver is attempting to operate a vehicle while drunk.

Technologies in development by auto suppliers include breath-based, touch-based, and those that monitor eye movement for alcohol impairment, all of which would take action to prevent a crash if the driver is intoxicated.

Lancaster's Best New Place to Stay

Turn your magical day into an unforgettable night at the new Dutch Wonderland Inn. Enjoy an enchanted stay right next door to a local family favorite, Dutch Wonderland.

The new Dutch Wonderland Inn is royal fun for everyone with exciting dining, an expanded arcade, a super cool pool and dreamy accommodations for a perfect night's sleep.

Just steps away is the World's Best Family Park, Dutch Wonderland. For over sixty years, Dutch Wonderland has created magical moments for parents and kids to experience together. Spin, swing and soar on more than thirty family-friendly rides of all sizes. Enjoy entertaining puppet shows and daring dive shows.

Cool off in Duke's Lagoon waterpark, boasting multiple levels, slides, and interactive spray features that will keep you entertained for hours.

Turn up the water fun thrills with Pipeline Plunge, featuring two large water slides and two levels of intensity! See the path in front of you on the light blue slide, or turn out the lights with their black slide and ride a different path completely - in the dark!

Each day, favorite Dutch Wonderland characters like Duke

the Dragon and Princess Brooke make special appearances at the Inn. Take advantage of great offers when you bundle park tickets with your overnight visit.

You'll eat like royalty at the full-service restaurant, featuring delicious home-cooked dishes and a breakfast buffet. Or stop by the Cafe for grab-and-go snacks, or enjoy a cold treat at the Inn's ice cream bar. Delicious food and thirst quenching drinks await!

When planning your next trip to charming Lancaster County, play, stay and save at Dutch Wonderland and the New Dutch Wonderland Inn.

AAA members save on standard bookings at Dutch Wonderland Inn. Not available for purchase at AAA.



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Steady Does It

Dear Ask Ed:

I've seen you comment about things that will cause a vehicle to fail a safety inspection but I don't remember you addressing an issue that concerns a friend of mine.

He has a classic car and has spent a lot of money on restoring it. He has even named it, which I don't understand but that's how much this car means to him.

He is a good driver but hates all the bad drivers in our area so he recently modified his brake lights so they flash. Is that legal? I don't want to bring it up to him because he's just going to argue with me. Maybe if he reads your reply in your column he'll know what to do before he has to get a safety inspection.

**Thanks for responding.
Bruce**

Dear Bruce,

Thanks for writing in and for your concern for your friend's situation.

I have seen quite a few vehicles with flashing or pulsing brake lights in my travels and am increasingly curious about how they are passing safety inspections.

A PennDOT-authorized safety inspector is bound by PennDOT Publication 45 Vehicle Equipment and Inspection Regulations in order to determine what passes and what fails when inspecting a subject vehicle.

Per the Vehicle Inspection Division Bulletin B118-01 of March 2018, "for safety inspection purposes a stop lamp that is not steady burning would be rejectable under 175.80(a)(9)."

Pulsing or flashing brake lights are also contrary to Federal law. Federal Motor Vehicle Safety Standard No. 108 S5.5.10(d) requires brake lights to be steady-burning with no varying of the brightness of the light, including the third brake light that some aftermarket kits alter to achieve the flashing effect.

There are new vehicles for purchase that can be ordered with circuitry that converts a steady burning stop lamp into one that flashes/pulses, which also are contrary to Federal law,



AskEd@aaardgberks.com

specifically 49 U.S.C. 30112(a) that prohibits a dealer from selling a new vehicle that doesn't comply with all applicable Federal motor vehicle standards and opens the door to the dealer being subject to civil penalties under Standard No. 108.

Federal law also prohibits a dealer from altering a new vehicle with this type of stop lamp alteration after the vehicle is sold. Under 49 U.S.C. 30122, a manufacturer, dealer, distributor, or motor vehicle repair business is forbidden from making inoperative any device or element of design installed on a vehicle relative to a Federal motor vehicle safety standard.

I'm not going to comment on whether or not a vehicle with a pulsing/flashing brake light is a safer vehicle to drive than a vehicle without it because legally it is a mute point. Legislation would have to happen to allow them in order to make them passable during a Pennsylvania safety inspection. End of story.

I hope this information is helpful.
Thanks for writing in. Happy motoring!
Ed

Contact Ed with your automotive question either by email at AskEd@aaardgberks.com or by writing to him at AAA Reading-Berks, 920 Van Reed Road, Wyomissing, PA 19610, Attn: Ask Ed.



Renew Your Membership at AAA.com

weird and unusual u.s. festivals

The Cardboard Sled Race at Winterfest

Grand Haven, MI/January

Wake up on a Saturday and watch children and adults race their cardboard sleds downhill. Cardboard sleds range in size from one person to up to ten people. They can look like cars, ships, food or just about anything; there seems to be no end to the racers' imaginations. Some make it down the hill, and some fall apart before the finish line. The races are entertaining and are sure to make spectators laugh on a cold snowy day.

Prizes include Top O' the Hill Award for the most attractive sled, the Vogue Award for the most detailed sled, the Spirit Award for the most spirited or best-organized team and Go Fast Awards for the fastest finishers in each class.

Art Car Parade

Houston, TX/April

The Art Car Parade can trace its origins back to the 1980s and has grown to more than 250 parade entries and 200,000 to 300,000 spectators. It is now the biggest free event in Houston.

So what – you may wonder – is an art car? They are cars that are modified, built, painted or otherwise decorated in any way that makes the car exterior unique and not look like a car driven off a dealer's lot.

The art cars in the parade range from the cute and beautiful to the truly bizarre. Past parade entries include cars in the shape of a banana and a shoe. Cars are decorated in themes such as space, animals, monsters, movies and pop culture, with some even resembling Mad Max-esque hot rods. Anyone can make an art car and apply for entry in the parade. Local school groups participate, and artists from around the world come to show off their designs.

Corgi Beach Day

Huntington Beach, CA/Biannually in April and October

Corgi Beach Day is hands down the most adorable event on this list, and Corgi lovers will be delighted to see thousands of corgis and their loving owners descend on Huntington Beach, only 40 miles south of Los Angeles and 20 miles from Anaheim. Whether you have a corgi of

your own, loved Queen Elizabeth II's pack of short-legged puppies or remember Ein from the anime series "Cowboy Bebop," you are welcome at Corgi Beach Day. Organizers even note on the event website that non-corgi breeds are welcome, too.

The day includes food trucks, vendors, contests and giveaways. Bring a reusable tote bag with you; many vendors give out samples and swag. Vendors also sell an assortment of corgi-related gifts, accessories, art, toys and treats that will bring joy to you and your corgi companion.

If you bring your dog with you, have a tag with your contact info on your furry friend's collar and dress them up in some special attire (bow tie, hat, shirt or whatever article of clothing your dog is comfortable with) to make them distinguishable from the many other corgis playing on the seashore. Most events and contests are free to participate, but some may have a fee. Plan ahead and sign up early to avoid waiting in long lines.





UFO Festival

Roswell, NM/July

Every year in Roswell, the UFO Festival commemorates the Roswell Incident of 1947. Some residents are said to have seen a UFO and what they believed to be alien bodies that were later recovered by the military. The U.S. Air Force released a report in 1994 saying the UFO, or UAP (unidentified aerial phenomena) as they are now called by the U.S. military, was indeed a high-altitude research balloon, not a spaceship, and the “aliens” weren’t aliens at all but rather test dummies. While some people accept this explanation, others continue to believe the UFO was of extraterrestrial origins. Whether or not you believe aliens have visited Roswell or Earth at all, the UFO Festival is a fun time for everyone.

Entertainment stages feature bands, fire dancers, acrobats and drone light shows. Over at the convention center, enthusiasts can participate in Galicticon where a vendor hall features sci-fi and fantasy art, jewelry, crafts and more and a kids' zone for children to play in themed areas that include bounce houses and other fun activities. Adults may do the Alien Crawl, a self-guided tour of local restaurants serving alien-themed cocktails for purchase, while all ages are welcome to enjoy the pet costume contest. The Robert H. Goddard Planetarium features laser shows set to music from bands like the Grateful Dead and Pink Floyd, and the International UFO Museum Research Center hosts lectures from UFO researchers.

Underwater Music Festival

Lower Keys, FL/July

This unusual event, near Key West, started in 1984. It's sponsored by the Lower Keys Chamber of Commerce, and its purpose is to bring awareness to the coral and promote conservation. The event takes place over two days. On the first day, the folks at Mote's Elizabeth Moore International Center for Coral Reef Research &

Restoration host tours of the facility and teach visitors about the reef restoration efforts in the Florida Keys.

On the second day, festivalgoers head out on their boats or with a local dive shop to spend four hours listening to music underwater. The music is played through underwater speakers, and you'll hear a mix of songs that likely include “Yellow Submarine” and songs from “The Little Mermaid.” People dressed as mermaids mime playing fantastical instruments that look like fish and other aquatic creatures. Many of the spectators wear costumes and bring instruments of their own. In addition to seeing the mermaids and fellow costumed attendees, divers and snorkelers can spot tropical fish and admire the coral. If you are in the area and unable to attend the festival, the soundtrack is broadcast live on the local radio station 104.1 FM.

Twins Days Festival

Twinsburg, OH/August

Located in Twinsburg, Ohio, about 25 miles from Cleveland, the Twins Days Festival is an event that celebrates twins and other sets of multiples (like triplets). The festival attracts twins from around the world and is the largest annual gathering of twins, according to the Guinness World Records. Everyone, twin or not, may attend, but twins are encouraged to register in order to participate in events. There is a Double Take Parade, volleyball and cornhole tournaments, a group photo and a fireworks show. There's also a research area where people like behavioral scientists, universities and manufacturing company representatives come to conduct research. Participation is completely optional, but twins and multiples may choose to engage in activities that range from having a photo taken to providing a DNA sample, often in exchange for a gift bag or money.

Every year the festival has a theme. Past themes include Shiver Me Twinbers, The Roaring Twinties, Two-Player Mode, and Twinfinity and Beyond. There are contests for twins who are most alike and least alike, as well as twins with the best-themed outfit/costume. Participants range from babies to adults – some having come to the festival annually for most of their lives.

North American Wife Carrying Championship

Newry, ME/October

This event – requiring teams of two – started in Finland, and in fact, the winners of Maine's race may compete in the World Championship in Finland. One runner carries their teammate across a 278-yard course traversing two dry obstacles and one water obstacle along the way.

Spectators line the course cheering and encouraging the duos running through the obstacles at the Sunday River Resort, where the races take place. After all the hilarity and competition, the winning team gets the carried person's weight in beer and five times that person's weight in cash – a suitably amusing prize for this weird event.

Recognizing Outstanding Service

In 1920, the Chicago Motor Club launched a simple idea in Illinois - empower students to help keep their classmates safe. Armed with bright sashes, silver badges and a sense of purpose, schoolchildren became School Safety Patrollers, helping their peers arrive at school safely each day.

One hundred sixty years later, the AAA School Safety Patrol is recognized as the world's largest school-based safety program. Millions of boys and girls have honorably served their classmates. Interest in the program has spread around the world; at least thirty other countries, including New Zealand, the Netherlands, England, Germany, and France, have emulated the AAA School Safety Patrol program. The experience is the same - a reduction in traffic death rates.

Beyond helping keep kids safe, the program helps students build confidence and learn responsibility. It's one of the clearest examples of AAA's long-standing commitment to traffic safety.

Former AAA School Safety Patrollers include U.S. Presidents Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, George W. Bush, and Joe Biden, alongside several Supreme Court Justices such as Warren Burger, Anthony Kennedy, Stephen Breyer, Clarence Thomas, and William Brennan Jr.

Athletes and Olympians who were Patrollers include Caitlyn Jenner, Eric Heiden, Edwin Moses, Lynette Woodard, and Mike Ramsey. Other notable figures include Jeff Kinney, Lee Iacocca, Dr. Gary Becker, and Joe Garagiola.

Twenty-one former patrol members have gone into space, including astronauts Norman Thagard and Robert Cabana.

Locally, each year AAA treats



Berks County safety patrollers to a night with the Reading Fightin Phils. Typically an April home game, the stands become filled with a sea of orange and lime-green as students cheer on their home team.

In the March/April 2026 issue of this publication, we asked our readers to contact us if they had been a safety patrol member prior to the year 1970. We have enjoyed a wonderful response!

Forty-seven percent of the respondents were safety patrollers during the 1960s. Another forty-seven percent served during the 1950s. And four of those who contacted us were patrollers during the 1940s!

Francis Turner - "Ducky" to his friends at the Reading Fightin Phils stadium where he worked for a time and is now a volunteer greeter - was a school safety patrol member when he was in the fifth grade at Millmont Elementary. His post was at the corner of Belvedere and Summit Avenues. He and his fellow patrollers were treated to a movie and snack at the old Strand Theatre in Reading at the end of the school year as a reward for their hard work.

Lois Marquardt and William Smith served as patrollers during the 1947/1948 school year. William was a student at the Charles S. Foos

Elementary School. His post was at McKnight and W. Douglass Streets. He also remembers being treated to an outing at the Strand as a reward to the patrollers for a job well done.

Lois remembered fondly her days at the Trostle's school in Brecknock Township, when Brecknock had their own school system prior to becoming part of the Governor Mifflin School District. The school is now a private residence. Lois enjoys pleasant memories of her school days, her time as a patrol member while in the third grade, and mentioned warmly one teacher in particular - Mrs. Heck.

Frank Keener was a patroller at Strausstown Elementary in 1949 while he was a sixth grader and enjoyed going to the Strand as a reward for his fine contribution to the safety of his fellow students.

Lois, William, Francis, and Frank were publicly recognized for their dedication to the safety of their fellow students during last month's AAA School Safety Patrol Night with the Reading Fightin Phils on Thursday, April 23.

It is our pleasure to support past, present and future AAA School Safety Patrollers. We also want to thank the Berks teachers who serve as Safety Patrol Program Supervisors. Their guidance inspires leadership, empathy and community involvement.

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Destinations & Diversions

Celebrate America's 250th with AAA and the Wyomissing Band

There have been community bands in the U.S. for centuries. Military field music - picture the famous painting *The Spirit of '76* by Ohio artist Archibald M. Willard - gave rise to groups such as the Continental Army's fife and drum corps and militia bands.

In a much less formal setting, popular tunes such as "Yankee Doodle" could be heard emanating from rowdy taverns in the 1760s - 1780s. Other common songs of the times were "The World Turned Upside Down", reported to have been played during the British surrender in Yorktown, and "Chester", a popular patriotic song composed by William Billings.

During the Revolutionary War, "Bands of Musick" emerged - organized military ensembles hired by officers for concerts, social dances, and parades and featured wind, brass, and percussion instruments.

American community bands were birthed in the early 19th century, influenced by the traditions brought to America's shores by European immigrants. Peaking in the late 19th century, the "Golden Age of Bands" featured volunteer musicians and served as the main source of public music through concerts, parades, and holidays.

Prominent bandleaders of the time were John Philip Sousa, Frederick



Innes, Alessandro Liberati, Patrick Conway, and Thomas Preston Brooke.

Musical bands in Pennsylvania during the 19th century were influenced by German Moravian immigrants' practice of organizing brass bands for both secular and religious community functions. The Allentown Band is generally recognized as the oldest continuously active civilian concert band in the country, performing since at least July 4, 1828.

Even more locally, the Wyomissing Band, Inc. was formed in 1923 by two of the founders of Wyomissing, Ferdinand Thun and Henry Janssen. The Band has a great history, from playing concerts in Wyomissing to marching in Firemen's Parades with the Hampden Firemen.

While the Wyomissing Band no longer marches in parades, it continues the tradition of playing concerts in the Berks County community for civic events, church picnics, public events and church services.

The Wyomissing Band plays a variety of music,

from marches to Broadway, sacred music to TV show theme music - there's something for everyone!

AAA Reading-Berks is proud to sponsor the Wyomissing Band's Summer Concert on Sunday, August 9, 2026 from 3:30pm-6:00pm. We invite you to attend as the band plays at the Mohnton Borough Playground on Walnut Street, celebrating America's 250th birthday. Food trucks will be available from 3:00pm to 7:00pm.

Learn more about the Wyomissing Band at www.wyobandinc.com and www.facebook.com/share/1ECwQ45tnV/



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And, Apparently, In the Sky

It's not a bird. Or a plane. Or even Superman. As early as next month, that odd-looking object coursing across the blue could be a sample of Next-Gen aircraft.

This past March, U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Sean P. Duffy posted "Next-gen aircraft will refine how people and products move...and they are coming soon."

Duffy went on to share that the selected eight pilot programs "will allow partners to test their innovative tech in the real world".

According to Ethan Klein, U.S. Chief Technology Officer, the eight projects span twenty-six states and will explore the application of this new tech to the development of urban air taxis, emergency response vehicles, autonomous flight, energy-sector transport and more.

The selected proposals are part of the newly-formed Advanced Air Mobility and Electric Vertical Takeoff and Landing (eVTOL) Integration Pilot Program (eIPP). Leading aircraft manufacturers and operators have been given the USDOT nod to push ahead into this new aeronautical arena.

Kyle Clark, Founder and CEO of BETA Technologies, was quoted in the U.S. DOT's e-newsletter, *Driving the News*, as saying, "The eVTOL Integration Pilot Program (eIPP) shows what's possible when regulators and industry work together to accelerate the path to safe and reliable advanced air mobility.

"We are eager to join forces with our government and operator partners to put this technology to work. Together, we will fly critical cargo and medical missions, prove the model, and showcase how electric

aviation can reliably serve communities across the country, including rural and underserved areas. With the eIPP, we can now bring these aircraft into commercial operations and establish a blueprint for scaling advanced air mobility into the future."

BETA Technologies manufacturers aircraft such as the ALIA VTOL, a vertical takeoff and landing all-electric aircraft, and the ALIA CTOL, a conventional takeoff and landing all-electric aircraft.

In addition to BETA Tech, a post on the company's website reported that the eight pilot programs will also involve Archer Aviation, Joby Aviation, and Wisk "to start widespread electric aircraft testing as early as this summer."

JoeBen Bevirt, Founder and CEO of Joby Aviation, was quoted on the U.S. DOT's e-newsletter as saying, "Today marks the culmination of nearly a decade of collaboration between Joby and the FAA to bring a new class of aircraft safely to market."

After confirming his company's commitment to this new enterprise, he went on to say, "Joby has spent years preparing for this day, and we are ready to deliver for the American people."

The company's website, jobyaviation.com, claims that their eVTOL aircraft are "quiet by design" for city-friendly travel, have "zero operating emissions", and that their craft's ability to vertically take off and land provides "fast, flexible travel".

Vertical Take-off and Landing (VTOL) aircraft provide drastic, door-



to-door time savings by bypassing ground congestion and eliminating the need for traditional airport infrastructure. Key benefits include rapid urban mobility, lower operating costs, reduced carbon footprints, and the ability to land on rooftops or small, remote spaces.

A statement issued by Greg Pecoraro, President and CEO of the National Association of State Aviation Officials, related, "We are especially pleased at the selection of the proposal led by the Pennsylvania DOT's Bureau of Aviation on behalf of several states participating in NASAO's AAM Multistate Collaborative.

"We are excited to watch as all these projects move forward to help Advanced Air Mobility begin achieving its potential to increase access to the nation's aviation system."

The key testing areas for this project include Florida, New York, Texas, Utah, Pennsylvania, Louisiana, New Jersey and Oklahoma, focusing on passenger, cargo, and medical transport.

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Gettysburg Highlights

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Funny Farm Rescue and Historic Smithville

Tuesday August 25, 2026 \$149 pp

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Whodunit...the Musical

Thursday October 8, 2026 \$159 pp

- Matinee Show Ticket, Lunch from Salad to Dessert, Admission to America on Wheels. If you enjoyed Clue, the Musical, you'll love Whodunit! See what critics call "A musical comedy to die for!"

Philly Food and Ghost Tour

Thursday October 22, 2026 \$249 pp

- Flavors of Philly Driving Dine Around and Ghostly Adventures. Includes food, sightseeing, admission tickets to Halloween themed Museum and Ghost tour.

Historic Bethlehem Moravian Traditions

Thursday December 17, 2026 \$185 pp

- Free time at Christkindlmarkt, Lunch at Luckenbach Mill, Trees of Historic Bethlehem, Bethlehem by Night Tour, Moravian Putz.

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