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May 2026

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The Chicago Scene is an official publication of PCA-Chicago Region.
The magazine is published bimonthly.

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The Chicago Scene (ISSN 10564195) (USPS 0006-381) is the bi-monthly publication of the Porsche Club of America (PCA)-Chicago Region, printed at Presstech, 959 Lee Street, Des Plaines, IL 60016-6545. Periodic Rate Postage paid at Des Plaines, IL. PCA dues are \$46 annually, which includes a subscription to *The Chicago Scene*. PCA-Chicago Region is not responsible for any services or products advertised herein. Statements appearing in *The Chicago Scene* are those of the authors and do not constitute an opinion of the PCA-Chicago Region or its Board of Directors. Articles submitted for publication are subject to approval by the President and Editor. If published, the Editor reserves the right to edit articles for clarity, grammar, accuracy of content, and available space.

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Many more photos from our events are available online:

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Chicago Region Theme Parks

Last month my wife and I spent a week in Orlando taking our three- and five-year-old nephews and their families to Disney World. We're talking Magic Kingdom, EPCOT, Hollywood Studios, Animal Kingdom, Fast Passes, Lightning Lanes, Magic Bands, all the stuff. I may never recover physically or financially 😓...

Anyway, it got me thinking that we here in PCA-Chicago are running our own version of all that; except for adults, with the added benefit that no one needs any of those Lightning Lanes or Fast Passes; we all get to go the front of the line, no extra charge (above the entry fee, that is.)

We have two main parks, Driving Land and The Non-Driving World Showcase, as well as the special, extreme park, called Club Racing Kingdom. Each has their own set of unique attractions.

In Driving Land, we have Driver's Ed and Autocross which are certainly more fun than Test Track and the myriads of roller coasters; although, truth be told, Ratatouille is really great, especially the first time you are rat-sized. It also has Driving Tours, Rallye, and Street Survival; each providing their own unique way to experience driving. All way better than anything in Orlando.

The Non-Driving World Showcase has Concours, Tech, and Social and where you go to meet up with like-minded members to learn about your cars, how to maintain your cars, and how to restore and show your cars. It is also where you go to eat, drink, and be merry. You might also learn how to cook, paint, or who know what else; just remember, it will all be Porsche-themed.

And then there's Club Racing Kingdom, where small fortunes are made from large ones and the competition is greater than what's needed to get on Rise of the Resistance. Only those prepared for an extreme experience should go on the rides in this park. Everyone else should come to the park and watch; it really is great fun.

So come on out to one of our parks, there are still forty more events this season and you don't need an app or anything else to figure out when to go. Just find what you want to do, register, and go.

Dana Comolli
President, Chicago Region



“

...there are still forty more events this season and you don't need an app or anything else to figure out when to go.

”



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First Women Under the Hood Event Begs an Encore

by Cynthia-Val Chapman



The engines were off, but the energy was unmistakable.

Dozens of women owners of machines as sleek and varied as Panameras, Macans, Cayennes, Boxsters, and vintage 911s gathered on an unseasonably warm March Saturday not just to admire our cars, but to understand them. Some arrived confident and full of knowledge, others curious, a few of us admitting we knew “a little” or “nothing at all” about what lived beneath the hood.

We were attending PCA-Chicago’s first ever Women Under the Hood event co-sponsored and hosted by Porsche of Orland Park. It was PCA-Chicago’s first collaboration with the dealership, and by the end of the workshop, we knew we were onto something.

continued

photo: Jeff Brown

Photos by Derek Chen (except as credited otherwise)

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photo: Jeff Brown

It wasn't just about learning where the battery sat, or that you had to inflate the hidden spare to use it. Nor was it just about service schedules, or the key fob's constant interaction with the vehicle when left too close to it. It was conceived to provide real, practical knowledge such as what you can handle yourself and when to call a certified Porsche technician.

The day was divided between two workshops: one focused on the mechanical side, the other on



photo: Jeff Brown

“

The best part of the experience was being in a room filled with other women who loved what they drove.

technology. And while there was lots of enthusiasm for the concept, we felt the content delivery could be improved. We got great feedback from event attendees that will be incorporated into future events. The key takeaway was less passive listening and more hands-on engagement like checking the oil, reading a dashboard warning, and using a tire compressor. And, although the event was designed for, and

continued on page 10

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First Women Under the Hood... *continued*



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targeted to, women, a half dozen guys showed up. That would have been fine, had not the males in attendance won all the major raffle prizes offered by the dealership. Another takeaway is that males at future women focussed events like these should be excluded from participating in raffles.

That's the bar for next time. And that is reason enough for an encore, because the best part of the experience was being in a room filled with other women who loved what they drove. 🍷



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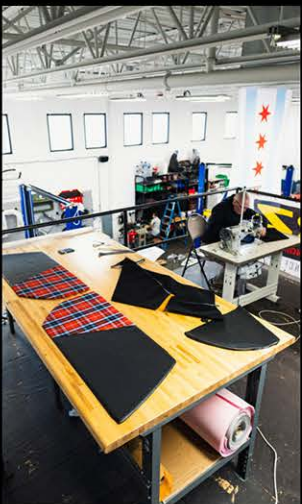
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The Torch Has Passed

by Chris Winslow

It began at the Nürburgring in the mid-sixties, where all great driving stories start. There, a young GI named John Ruther stationed in Frankfurt would spend his weekends tearing up The Ring in a friend's Porsche 911. His daily driver in Germany was the only thing he could afford: a 1952 Volkswagen split window with a canvas top that he bought for \$25 from a GI returning home. The seller claimed it needed a new transmission since it was making all kinds of racket, not knowing VWs didn't have synchromesh transmissions. The gearbox was fine and John double-clutched his way across Europe. But it was nothing like his friend's Neunelfer. Things must have gone pretty well at the track because within three years he landed his first competition license.

After returning stateside, John joined the PCA-Milwaukee in 1973 after acquiring a 914 2-liter. At that time, the Club had a deal with Cliff Tuft, who founded Road America. In the spring, members would mow the grass and paint trash barrels in Porsche Park outside Turn 5 in exchange for track time Saturday afternoon and Sunday. "No corner workers, EMTs, or tow trucks, so you had to behave," John recalled. "Anything stupid was on you."



His early experiences as a driving instructor in Milwaukee were formative. In those days, there was no formalized instruction program, so he would get in the car with anyone who needed help and work other clubs' events in exchange for free track time. He especially remembers a very large man driving a Dodge Viper. "He scared the hell out of me because he didn't have a clue how to drive that thing," said John. At lunchtime, he suggested his student ride with him in the right seat to show him how to navigate the track. "We went up toward Turn 6 where the car gets really light in the brake zone. I turned the wheel, but with all the weight on the right side, the car just wouldn't turn. It continued absolutely straight. It was just horrible. I finally got it to turn in the grass and pulled back on track."

Another memorable student was a woman from Ohio who used to attend driving programs in Chicago and at Road America. "She was a lovely person but she couldn't remember one corner from the next," said John, "I'd always have to remind her as we were approaching a turn. She'd drive down the middle of the road because she couldn't remember if the next turn was a right or a left. If your student can't remember where the track goes, it gets a little scary."

Despite the occasional harrowing time on track, John continued instructing soon after transferring to the PCA-Chicago region in 1985. He was asked by then-Chief Instructor Gene DeAndre to

continued



Photos from Excellence magazine archives¹ (except as credited otherwise)

¹ Excellence, vol. 68, April 1997, pp. 59-64.

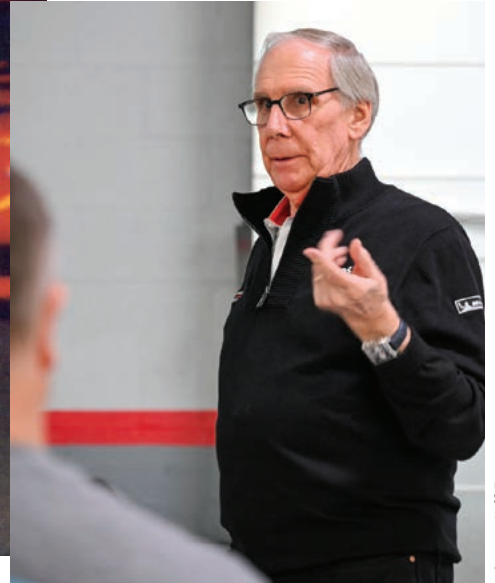


photo: Jeff Brown

assume his role in 1994. Early in his tenure, John assembled a group of fellow instructors and wrote a booklet called *The Fast Guys Handbook – A Guide for the Serious Amateur Auto Racer*. They gave a copy to anyone interested in performance driving. Soon PCA-Chicago instructors were recruited to attend events in other regions and as momentum for a national program for driving instructors increased, PCA-Chicago hosted a national certification program in 2007 and 2013.

While serving as Chief Driving Instructor, John also fueled his passion for racing. He started Club Racing in 1992, and over the next five years logged about 40 days of racing annually. (see photo of his white '95 3.8 RSR) His efforts culminated in 1996 with epic drives in the 24 hours of Daytona finishing fifth in class (GTS-2) and 11th overall, and the Twelve Hours of Sebring. Not bad for a rookie team. (see photos of the black Supercup)

Quite a journey for a man who started as a young GI tearing around Europe in a \$25 Volkswagen, to painting trash barrels and cutting grass for track time, to jumping into cars with the uninitiated. From humble beginnings he built a drivers' education program from scratch, all while racing at premier national events. "I have had great people within the club who helped me early on," said John. "They

“ I have always felt the need to give back to the club that had given me so much over the years. ”

made me a better driver, eventually earning a pro license. I have always felt the need to give back to the club that had given me so much over the years.”

But when the time came, who would succeed him as Chief Instructor? John recalls, "I was also really lucky to find a successor in Dana Comolli, which can be difficult when you've done something as long as I have. How do you find somebody to take over what you've built?" Dana has known John since his first Novice Day in 2009. "The first time he asked me to be an instructor I turned him down." Dana reflects, "But I decided to take the plunge and have never looked back." John and Dana started working on the leadership transition in 2022 with the re-imagining of the High-Performance Drivers' Education (HPDE) Instructor Workshop. Dana said, "Because we share the same passion for instructing and work really well together, folks might not even notice there had been a switch."

PCA's National Drivers' Education Chair, Mia Walsh, said she is indebted to John for his commitment to Chicago's HPDE program. "Long time Region leaders, like John Ruth, are the backbone of our PCA HPDE program," said Walsh. "Though driving skills are important, it's the education piece which separates PCA from other for-profit track organizations. John's 31 years leading Chicago as its Chief Driving Instructor, show his passion and commitment to developing drivers' skills on track."

"His epic 1995 handbook written for the Chicago Region teaches drivers how to be both safe and fast on the racetrack. Many of these concepts are still taught today in PCA's HPDE program. We are grateful to John for sharing his wisdom, which is still relevant after 3 decades of development in the track-driving environment."

We, in PCA-Chicago owe a great debt of gratitude to John Ruth for his 31 years as Chief Driving Instructor, for decades of dedication to the Club, for his unrelenting passion for race craft, and for his ongoing counsel, camaraderie, and friendship. We are here, in no small part, because we are standing on the shoulders of a giant. 🏆



photo: Jeff Brown

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Calling the Ladies of PCA!

by Catherine Fischer



photo: Derek Chen

If you've ever wondered what your car is truly capable of—or what you are capable of behind the wheel—this is your invitation.

The Porsche Club of America - Chicago Region is hosting its **fourth annual Ladies' Day Driver Education event** – this year at Blackhawk Farms Raceway in Beloit, IL. This event is designed by women, for women—creating a welcoming, supportive environment whether you're brand new to performance driving or just starting to explore it.

A Day That Changes How You Drive – Forever

High Performance Driver Education (HPDE) isn't about racing—it's about **confidence, control, and awareness**. It's about learning how your car responds, how to handle it in real-world situations, and how to drive with intention.

You'll get:

- **Plenty of track time** to build confidence at your own pace
- **Classroom instruction** to understand the “why” behind the driving
- **In-car coaching** with an experienced instructor guiding you every step of the way

Even if you've never been on a racetrack before, this day is built for you. In fact, beginners are exactly who it's for.

Come As You Are¹ – Just Bring Your Car

You don't need a race car or years of experience. Bring your Porsche—or another sports car—and get ready to experience it in a completely new way. (*Note: SUVs, electric vehicles, hybrids, and open-wheeled cars are not permitted this year.*)

Before the event, you'll also have access to a **virtual classroom session** to help you feel fully prepared and confident heading into your track day.

More Than Driving – It's an Experience

This isn't just about time on the track. It's about community, connection, and fun.

With support from Mobil 1 and Women in Motorsports North America, you'll enjoy:

- Lunch and dinner provided at the track
- A full day surrounded by like-minded women
- An atmosphere that's encouraging, energizing, and genuinely fun

¹ Your car must be professionally teched prior to the event, so advanced prep may be necessary. In particular, brake pad inspection and brake fluid flush required.

And When You're Not Ready to Leave...

Here's the part you'll want to plan for:

Most women finish the day thinking, “*I want more.*”

So why stop?

If you fall in love with the experience (and chances are, you will), you're invited to come back the very next day for **Blackhawk II** — another full day of track time, instruction, and skill-building.

Ladies' Day participants receive a \$60 discount for Blackhawk II.

It's the perfect way to:

- Reinforce what you learned
- Build *even more* confidence
- Get *even more* time doing something you didn't know you'd love this much

Make It a Getaway

For those traveling in, consider staying nearby at the Best Western Legacy Inn & Suites Beloit/South Beloit (ask for the Blackhawk Farms rate). Turn it into a mini getaway – one that just happens to include high-speed corners and unforgettable moments. 🏡



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photo: Jeff Brown



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New Concours School Update¹

by John Moore

Every Porsche enthusiast looks forward to spring

and that first drive of the year. This year, spring sprung on March 20, and the New Concours School and Car Care Seminar followed two days later.

Spring is a time for new beginnings and this year, Body Builders Auto (BBA) in Rolling Meadows served as our new partner and host. BBA is one of five Porsche Certified Collision Repair and Services Shops in Illinois. Achieving Porsche certification reflects commitment to the highest standards of automotive excellence. Their expertise not only preserves the originality and value of your Porsche but also provides peace of mind that your car is in the hands of technicians recognized for their skill and integrity.

This seemed like a natural fit since the focus of the Concours School is preserving the originality, beauty, and value of your car. Seventy-five people attended this year's event, two-thirds of



photo: Jeff Brown



whom were first-timers. The purpose of this seminar was to introduce new car care polymer technology using hands-on demonstrations on detailing the exterior, interior and storage compartments of cars.

The sessions on exterior paint repair and protection were outstanding. BBA's brightly lit booth facilitated demonstrations of paint chip repair by Pat Yanahan and paint correction by Henrique Regina. Techniques for lifting contaminants from paint and removing swirls and scratches with polish and power buffing were reviewed. Given the interest, this session may be expanded next year.

¹ In the last issue of *The Chicago Scene*, we profiled Concourse winner Hank Bernbaum. Do you have what it takes to Concourse? This seminar can help you "be like Hank."

continued



photo: Jeff Brown

Many owners neglect detailing their car's interior. But maintaining the interior of your car is vital for preserving resale value and is a must if you want to compete at any level in Concours. There are several different surfaces to clean inside the car and knowing the proper product to use is important to achieving the best result. Ron Bean and Don Janes illustrated techniques for detailing the interior and storage compartments.

Jim Dorfman and Jim Kutill led a session on preparing for a Concours event covering registration, preparation of car upon arrival, and the score sheet used to review the entrant. Arriving a little early for the event provides a valuable opportunity to take advantage of on-site coaching and last-minute car preparation. This coaching and time spent with a judges will teach you best practices and ensure a competitive entry. This open forum was well received as the two Jims explained Concours with candor, reflecting their personal experiences from years of competing and judging in regional and national shows as well as in Porsche Parade. Their introduction to Concours encouraged a lively exchange of information among attendees.

Concours is a great way to learn how to maintain your Porsche. It is also a socially engaging and fun way to enter a competition based on cleanliness and condition. You can learn the ins and outs of class competition from our award-winning judges.



photo: Jeff Brown



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We are grateful to Joe Phillipi and Maria Quintero, co-owners of BBA for hosting Concours School 2026. And we extend a big thank you to our session presenters Michael Grove, Pat Yanahan, Henrique Regina, Ron Bean, Don Janes, Jim Dorfman and Jim Kutill.

This event was followed by the Concours Judges School on Sunday April 19th at Midwest Performance Cars in Westmont. Michael Grove, the National Concours Parade Chairman led this presentation. If you would like to learn more about how a car is judged in a class or wish to become a judge, consider this for next year. Enjoy coffee and donuts upon arrival, and pizza for lunch. Register for this event



photo: Jeff Brown

and gain an understanding of the process. We hope to see you next year at Judges School. 🍷



photo: Jeff Brown

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That Old Black Magic Continues

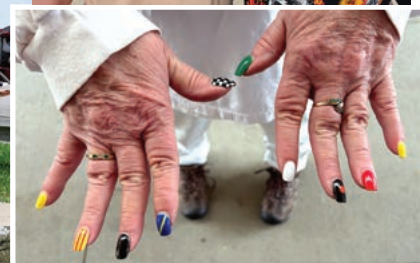
by Chris Winslow

On April 24th, 44 novice drivers, including 38 first-time track drivers, got to experience that old black magic: *Blackhawk* Farms Raceway (BHFR) with a freshly paved *black* top. It was the perfect start to the 57th season of PCA-Chicago at BHFR. The threat of rain never materialized and morning clouds gave way to afternoon sunshine. An ideal spring day!



continued

That Old Black Magic Continues continued



Char, always appropriately accessorized, (see manicure photo, above right) was at the helm as Track Control. She and her crew of corner workers ran the track with precision while Chief Driving Instructor Dana Comolli and Pete Hefner led two hour-long classroom sessions.



“I really enjoyed being able to get to explore my car’s limits in a very constructive, friendly, and safe environment. I was surprised how fast the time passed – track time seemed to quickly evaporate.”

— Mike Nebel

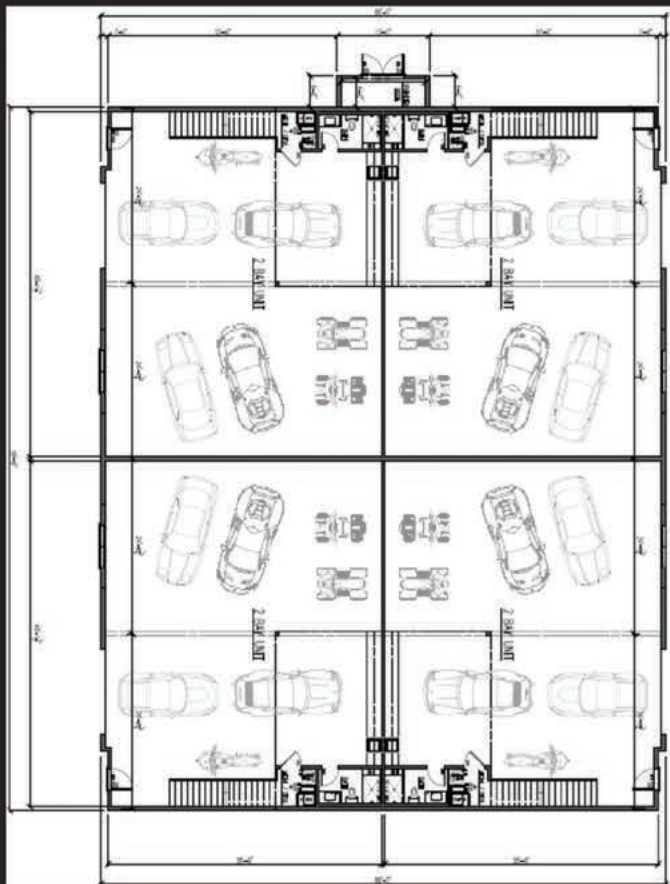


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— Stephen Schlesinger



After the track closed, all gathered for pizza and beer to reflect on the day. Thanks to all the Driving Instructors who shared their time and expertise. 🍕



“This was my very first track experience. I bought myself a cool car because I wanted a cool car that was capable. And this is my first attempt time to really get the most out of it, to explore its performance possibilities.”

— Shane Conklin



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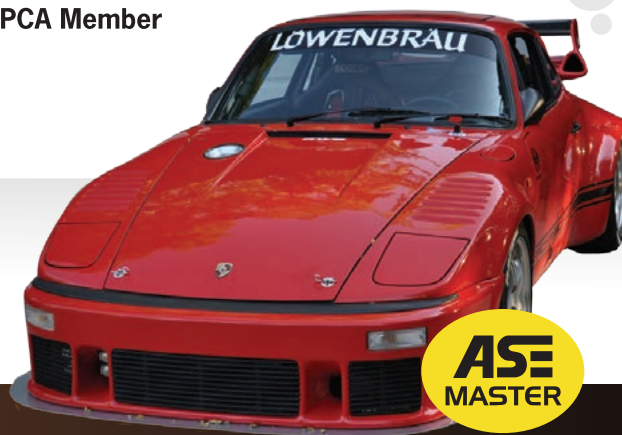
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2026 EVENT CALENDAR

*Preliminary Calendar of Events. Event details are subject to change and several dates and venues are to be determined.
Please refer to the Club's website for updated information.*

MAY

- 2** Porsches & Pastries and Concours 1, Show & Shine 1, Labriola
- 3** Rallye School, Euroquipe
- 6** Board Meeting
- 16** AX 1, Wintrust Field
- 21-24** RADE, Road America
- 30** Street Survival, Teen Defensive Driving School, Autobahn

JUNE

- 3** Board Meeting
- 6** Porsches & Pastries 3, Show & Shine 2 Concours 2, Bolingbrook
- 7** Rallye 1, Huntley
- 11** Driven Women, Blackhawk
- 12** Blackhawk 2
- 14-20** Porsche Parade, Lake Placid
- 20** Barnaba Block Party
- 27** AX 2, Wintrust Field

JULY

- 8** Board Meeting
- 12** Rallye 2, TBD
- 14** Blackhawk 3
- 18** Potter's Picnic, Show & Shine 3, Concours 3
- 19** AX 3, Tire Rack
- 28** Autobahn South Track

AUGUST

- 2** Porsches & Pastries, Big Boost
- 2** Weiners & Wheels, Superdawg
- 5** Board Meeting
- 7-9** Gingerman
- 15** AX 4, Wintrust Field
- 16** Rallye 3, TBD
- 23** Geneva Concours d'Elegance

SEPTEMBER

- 4-7** TRAC, Road America
- 9** Board Meeting
- 12** AX 5, Wintrust Field
- 13** Feel Good Sunday
- 19** Oktoberfest Social, Concours 4, Show & Shine 4
- 20** Rallye 4, TBD
- 26-27** Oktoberfest Blackhawk

OCTOBER

- 3** Porsches & Pilsners, Two Brothers
- 7** Board Meeting
- 10** AX 6, Wintrust Field
- 16-18** Fall Driving Tour, Traverse City, MI
- 25** Rallye 5, TBD

NOVEMBER

- 4** Board Meeting
- 8** Fall Tech Session
- 14** Porsches & Pastries / Toys for Tots, Labriola

DECEMBER

- 12** Dinner Dance, TBD



For up-to-date details, please check:
<https://pca-chicago.org/event-schedule/>



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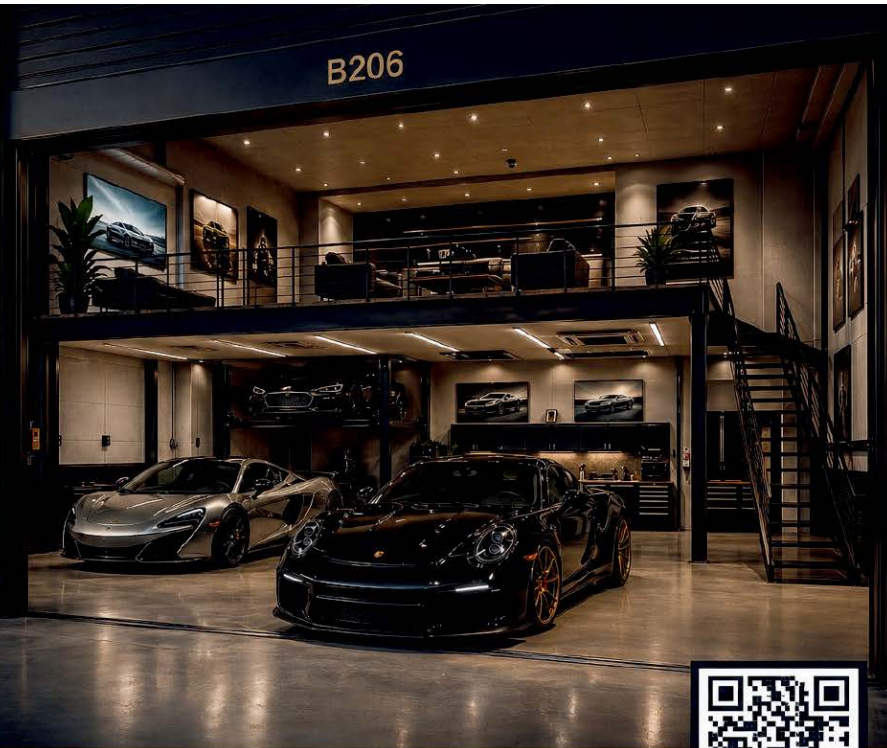
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