



Santa Clara Valley Model T Ford Club 55th Annual Endurance Run & Lowland Tour
June 6-7, 2026

Saturday, June 6, 2026

The setup crew arrived at Bertolotti's Garage in Santa Clara, California, at 9:00 AM on Saturday, June 6th, with banners, pop ups, tables, clip boards, sign up sheets, and well, you get the picture. Dan Erceg had already been preparing the grounds and John Bertolotti's vintage car collection for guests weeks before. I brought 2 dozen doughnuts to fuel the crew.

Speedsters started rolling in around 10:00 AM, and at 11:00 AM our crack team of technicians got started inspecting them. Meanwhile, marches from John Phillip Sousa and numerous marching bands played over the loudspeakers, while drivers and riding mechanics checked in, grabbed a snack and met up with old friends and made some new ones. Families and friends from the lowland tour joined us around 4:00PM when Maria Jorgensen and her crew served up delicious Texas style BBQ from Armadillo Willy's.

As dessert rolled out, I took the microphone to say a few words about this year's event. "Does anyone remember the song by Sammy Hagar from the early 80's; I Can't Drive 55?" As expected, many raised their hands. "Well, yes you can, and yes you will! Welcome to the Santa Clara Valley Model T Ford Club 55th Annual Endurance Run & Lowland Tour!" With that, I gave a brief history of the origin of our annual endurance run and recognized two people who are still participating today, Ed Archer and Mike Batteate.

Sunday, June 7, 2026

Who gets up at 4:00 AM on a Sunday morning?!? The chairperson of the endurance run and so did Rob and Pam Caldeira who came over to put my 1914 Model T Ford Touring on their trailer to take it to the Veterans Appreciation Car Show. Little did I know, my cell phone was sitting on the front seat of my Ford, heading down Highway 101. With nothing left to do but hope it made it's destination, I picked up my buddy, Bryan Anderson, and headed over to the VA Medical Center in Palo Alto. Believe me, I was very relieved when I found it right where I left it.

Ever notice how fast time goes when you've got 100 things to do before guests come? I thought you would, so we'll fast forward and get to the good stuff.

Speedsters arrived and were greeted by Becky Harrison, got their official photo taken, checked in, lined up according to pole position, drivers and mechanics attended the Driver's Meeting and proceeded to the start line led by Lynn Alens and his 1925 Ford TT Fire Engine. At the same time, the Lowland Tour vehicles arrived, lined up in their staging area and joined the spectators for the Opening Ceremony.

At the Opening Ceremony, I thanked our Veterans for their service, recognizing that we all enjoy the freedom that their service and commitment provides us. I also thanked the Veteran Affairs

Health Care System for inviting us back to their beautiful campus in Palo Alto. After announcing the drivers and mechanics and their cars, the Welcome Home Doughboys, led by Ed Archer, marched to the front of the start line and presented our flag, followed by the singing of our National Anthem, led by Shay Azevedo.

At last, the moment arrived and I shouted "Drivers, start your engines!" Dan Erceg stood in front of the growling machines, holding the green flag high for all to see. With a leap and a flourish, they were off! I'll never grow tired of hearing these speedsters roar to life and seeing them take off.

The speedsters headed up Page Mill Road, across Skyline Blvd. and down Alpine West toward Loma Mar. Meanwhile, Bill and Pat Bratt were setting up coffee and doughnuts at Checkpoint #1 at Harley Farms in Pescadero where 180 baby goats would soon meet our speedster drivers and riding mechanics. Guests and staff at Harley Farms arrived early to catch a glimpse of the speedsters before shifting their attention to the baby goats and goat cheese in the farm store.

With little time to linger, the speedsters took a lap through downtown Pescadero and headed south on Cloverdale Rd. Rolling hills turned into expansive coastal views of beaches and cliffs and white caps in the distance.

Along the way our speedsters encountered a cyclist that had just crashed and was lying face down on the asphalt, with severe road rash. Stephen Hite and Jeff Neilsen in car #77, Gary Bausch and Frank Schembri in car #80, and Rob and Pam Caldeira in a Trouble Trailer, stopped to provide aid to the cyclist and call 911. After about 40 minutes, the emergency vehicles arrived and took over from there. Needless to say, when it comes to helping others in need, the endurance run could wait.

Just like clockwork, the Lowland Tour started rolling into Roaring Camp Railroad around 10:50AM. Roaring Camp Railroad is nestled among the Redwoods near Henry Cowell Redwood State Park in Felton. Roaring Camp maintains a number of narrow gauge steam locomotives from the 1890s that were used to haul giant redwood logs out of the mountains. They welcome guests to their "Old West" town, giving rides from Felton through the redwoods or to the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk.

Around 11:30, the speedsters arrived and took their place in the open meadow with the Lowland cars. It wasn't long after we had the majority of speedsters lined up when the Dixiana Shay Steam Engine #1 came chugging around the bend behind the meadow. Built by Lima Locomotive Works, Shop No. 2593, on October 12, 1912, the Dixiana Shay was the first locomotive acquired by founder F. Norman Clark, who inaugurated steam train service from Roaring Camp on April 6, 1963. It was the perfect addition to our group photo of Model T-era speedsters and pre-war automobiles.

By 1:00 PM, just about everyone was back on the road for the second half of their journey. On the way back to Palo Alto, I received word of an accident on Hwy 9, and that a section of Hwy 9 and possibly Skyline Blvd., was closed to through traffic. The Lowland Tour was diverted to Bear Creek Road, which happened to be the path the speedsters were taking. For a short while we didn't know if the speedsters would be able to complete the run on their given route.

Thanks to our Lowland Tour leaders, David and Becky Harrison, and all of our checkpoint and support team, we were able to determine that the original route was clear for the speedsters. But the challenges weren't over yet. We passed 2 accidents on Hwy 9 off of Skyline Blvd,

heading into Saratoga. The road was still open, so we continued as planned. We later learned that the Saratoga side of Hwy 9 was also closed. Fortunately, all of our speedsters made it through before the road was closed. Whew!

Back at the VA Medical Center, the Veterans Appreciation Car Show was wrapping up. It was a wonderful day for the Veterans, their families, friends and staff. We served 150 hotdogs, while guests enjoyed live music, snacks and beverages, and conversations with those displaying their cars. Laura Hutcheson, Chief of Public Affairs and Jaime Betancur, Outreach Coordinator, stopped by to thank us for another wonderful event.

After 3:30PM, the speedsters started rolling across the finish line to the wave of the checkered flag until all were accounted for. Out of 27 speedsters, 3 did not start and 6 did not finish. Although it would be great to have everyone start and finish the run, the fact is that with cars over 100 years old, anything can happen at any time. As for the 18 that finished the endurance run, congratulations! You did "Drive 55!"

We are grateful to all who participated in our 55th Annual Endurance Run & Lowland Tour, and Veterans Appreciation Car Show. Thank you to all of our volunteers who work hard to make it look easy. Thanks to all our supporters, including Veteran Affairs Palo Alto Health Care Systems, Edges Electrical Group, Lord & Sons, Inc., Roaring Camp Railroad, Haley Farms, Byington Vineyard & Winery, Lang's Old Car Parts, Bay Area Horseless Carriage Club, Santa Clara Valley Model A Club, and Mid Peninsula Antique Car Club.

And now, the reason you skipped most of the article and turned to this page!

Winners of the SCVMTFC 55th Annual Endurance Run & Lowland Tour are:

1st	Car #729	Clay and Michaelynn Ryan	1913 Ford Speedster
2nd	Car #26	Greg & Julie Cosner	1926 Ford Speedster
3rd	Car #11	Peder & Maria Jorgensen	1926 Ford Speedster
Rookie of the year:		Clay & Michaelynn Ryan	Car #729
Youngest Driver:		Fiona Ryan	Car #467
Oldest Driver:		Ed Archer	Car #4
Farthest Traveled:		Stanley & Jerry Yeadon	Car #61
Hard Luck Trophy:		Jeffrey Cooper & James Fuller	Car #8

Winner of the Veterans Appreciation Car Show People's Choice Award:

Bob & Mary Beaman	1930 Model A Coupe
------------------------------	---------------------------

Photos provided by Chris Bhirido:

[Endurance Run & Lowland tour part 1](#)

[Endurance Run & Lowland tour part 2](#)