

# Three of a Kind

*AVX Reunion:*

*Together Again after 18 Years*

The recently concluded Avanti Fest held in Jacksonville, Fla., featured a probable onc-in-a-lifetime event. Steve James, owner of AVX Number Two, a convertible, contacted AOA president Dale Sexton, owner of AVX Number One, a coupe, and AOA member David Walker, owner of AVX Number Three, a t-top model. James invited them to bring their unique cars to the Avanti Fest in Jacksonville, Florida in early March.

These three unique cars represent the total production of AVX, Inc. Fortunately for the Fest attendees, each was gracious and had their cars in Jacksonville on Friday of the event. I had talked to all the owners and with *Avanti Magazine* editor Lew Schucart to

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By John Hull  
Avanti Magazine Contributing Editor

Photos by Lewis Schucart

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make sure this event was captured on film.

AVX Number One, a coupe, was built by New Cumberland, Penn., custom car builder Bill Lang for AOA member and Avanti enthusiast Jim Bunting, owner and CEO of AVX Cars, Inc.

This car demonstrated the evolution of the Avanti design as envisioned by Tom Kellogg, one of the four original Studebaker Avanti team members. Jim Bunting started the ball rolling by asking Tom for his views on how the Avanti would have evolved if it had remained in production.

AVX Number One's Certificate of Origin was completed and the car delivered to Jim on June 6, 1997.

Bunting drove and displayed AVX Number One from 1997 until he sold the car to Dale Sexton during September of 2014.

AVX Number Two, a convertible, was also built by Bill Lang for Barry Lee of South Bend, Indiana. The convertible was the second car constructed by AVX but was not completed until after the T-Top coupe car number three.

The first two AVX automobiles were built using the chassis and running gear of General Motor's F-Body, particularly the Pontiac Firebird. The convertible is the only AVX not on a Pontiac Firebird chassis. Its donor base was a Chevrolet Camaro which led to its extended development time.

Barry Lee passed away May 6, 2014 and his car was

ABOVE RIGHT: Interior of David Walker's AVX t-top. AT RIGHT: The inside of Dale Sexton's AVX coupe.



Three AVX automobiles and their owners, from left, David Walker and his AVX Number Three, a t-top; Steve James and his AVX Number Two, a convertible; and Dale Sexton with AVX Number One, a coupe. The three cars were together for the first time, March 4, 5, and 6 at Avanti Fest in Jacksonville, Florida.

## Avanti Fest 2016 Begins as First New Regional Meet

By Tom Pinnel  
AOAI Florida Chapter President

At the 2014 International Meet in Dover Delaware, a discussion took place about the possibility of more regional Avanti Meets. Regional Meets would provide more Avanti owners the opportunity to participate with each other in ways not otherwise possible. At the meeting, Dale Sexton coined the phrase, Avanti Fests.

Following the International Meet the AOA Board took up the task of writing guidelines for chapters who might want to plan a future Avanti Fest. Those guidelines were approved and sent to chapter presidents.

The Avanti Club of Florida, the John Ebstein Chapter of AOA, took up the challenge and began planning the first AOA endorsed "Avanti Fest." The planning and preparation took eight months and a core team of 12 ACOF members. Jacksonville, Florida was the chosen location, because there was easy access of interstate highways for members in the southeast region of the U.S.

The meet hotel was the Crowne Plaza, chosen because of its facilities including meeting rooms, banquet room, and space for the car show. The Chapter planned a Thursday through Sunday, four day event, with activities beginning on Friday morning. The "Fest" included two side excursions, one on Friday and the second on Saturday. Event plans included, two informational seminars, a free Friday night welcoming reception, the car show on Saturday with Avanti drive thru judging and an Awards Banquet on Saturday

night. On Sunday there was a scenic farewell cruise to Amelia Island with lunch on the beach.

The 2016 Avanti Fest registered 94 guests, from 14 different states and two from Canada, there were 32 Avantis, and 81 who attended the awards banquet.

The keynote speaker at the banquet was Dave Kinney, a well known Avanti enthusiast and owner of Avanti #1002, which won best in class at Amelia Island in 2014.



The receipts for the "Fest" amounted to \$5,697.50 and the expenses were, \$5,563.90, showing a surplus of \$133.60.

Among those who registered, were three past presidents of AOA and seven AOA board members, including our current president, Dale Sexton. Their support was greatly appreciated. The accommodations, the location, the amenities, the planned events, all met with great enthusiasm and appreciation. Attendees were asking when the next Avanti Fest would take place. They promised to attend.

purchased by Steve James later that year.

AVX Number Two Certificate of Origin was completed and the car was delivered to Barry Lee on November 27, 1998.

AVX Number Three, a T-top coupe, was the second AVX completed, and was the final offering of the three basic body style crafted by Bill Lang. It was built for Mr. David Walker of Chesnee, South Carolina. David is the original owner and still enjoys his car.

AVX Number Three Certificate of Origin was completed and the car was delivered to David on May 22, 1998.

Jim Bunting, Tom Kellogg, and Bill Lang believed the Avanti should survive and evolve. The AVX started as a prototype exercise displayed at the York Swap Meet. The prototype no longer exists. Their collective vision resulted in three totally unique Avantis and became the basis for the relaunch of Avanti in Villa Rica, Georgia.



Interior of Steve James' AVX convertible, the second of three models built by Bill Lang.