

# Hagerty inspires 100 new auto enthusiasts

Photos: Sunnie Schwartz

Arizona Auction Week attracts car lovers to town from all over the world, a perfect time for Hagerty to host its annual Test Garage, during which they teach local kids what all the excitement is about, in a hands-on day.

This year's event at Tavan Elementary in Phoenix provided an opportunity for some 100 fifth graders to tinker with classic cars themselves and learn the ins and outs—and the magic—of a variety of historical rides.

Enthusiast experts in the field led students through a variety of automotive activities—from slot car racing, to highlights of automotive history, to fun and exciting rides in a variety of very cool collector cars courtesy of the Automotive Restoration Club of Sun City West, including:

- 1901 Oldsmobile Curved Dash
- 1972 Buick Skylark

- 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air 4-door sedan
- 1953 Mercury Monterey convertible
- 1962 Chevrolet Corvette convertible

Additional awe-inspiring cars—used to explain automotive history, for photography, and for general overall fun and learning—included an early racing Bugatti, a 1981 Ferrari and a 1994 Dodge Viper.

“Hagerty has brought Test Garage to Tavan Elementary for four years now,” says Rachel Ventimiglia, Hagerty Assistant Manager of Car Culture.

“Our students today were in second grade during the program's first year, and they have been waiting for this day ever since. We gained 100 new automotive enthusiasts today, and we can't wait to see these kids get their driver's license in four more years!”

Students and staff at Tavan Elementary were just as excited and motivated:

“When I hear the word driving, I think of traveling and wonder,” says Alexander Mendez, age 11. “Driving is important to me because I can explore the world and it will be fun.”

“Driving is so important, and my dream car would have many cool features,” notes Madison Benedict, age 11. Features might include “a lot of leg room, the wheels can turn 90 degrees and become hover boards, and the doors would open upward. There would be a hand scanner and lots of other cool features.”

Fifth grade teacher Shelly Rose says, “Tavan Elementary is so excited our fifth grade students got to participate in Hagerty Test Garage for the fourth year in a row. Most of our students would never dream of seeing classic cars up close, let alone being able to sit in one. This is the highlight of their year.” ■

