

THE POWER OUTLET

SEPTEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER of the SEATTLE ELECTRIC VEHICLE ASSOCIATION

"Education, demonstration, proliferation"

Since 1980



Seattle Electric Vehicle Association

SeattleEVA.org



The Power Outlet is a monthly update about electric vehicle activities in Seattle and around the State of Washington

*The Seattle Electric Vehicle Association (SEVA) is a non-profit organization of volunteers serving the Puget Sound region in Washington State since 1979. SEVA's mission is to **educate, demonstrate and proliferate the adoption of electric vehicles**. Monthly meetings are free and open to anyone interested in electric vehicles, and paid memberships are encouraged.*

SEVA has a [Facebook](#) page, too! Please like and follow us for up-to-the-minute updates.

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NEWS



Yakima Valley Trolley Update

Stephen Johnsen reported that the fate of the historic Yakima Valley Trolley line is still undecided and the city is waiting to make a decision until after the city council election in November. The country's last historic, intact electric interurban rail line is threatened by the city's plan to pave over tracks. The organization is still trying to get national historic designation. Learn more about the effort and how you can help at Savethetrolleys.com.

Photo by Stephen Johnsen

Eco Auto NW opening soon

After months of planning and waiting, Eco Auto NW announced they have received their dealership license and expect to begin operating in October. The independent EV dealer will offer all makes of used electric vehicles as well as a repair and maintenance shop at its Renton location at 805 SW 10th St. Tesla veterans Genny Carter and Shannon Golbienko are partnering at this one-stop shop that they said will be the first location in Washington where drivers can compare features and test drive different EV models at the same place. They also are acquiring inventory currently and would like to hear from anyone interested in selling their EV. More details are available [here](#).



Genny Carter (left) and Shannon Golbienko of Eco Auto NW.

Submitted photo

SPOTLIGHT – Summer Road Trips

Epic coast-to-coast EV camping trip

Mark and Susan Schnell have an epic story to tell about what they did last summer. Their brand new 2025 GMC Sierra Denali EV got a test run on a coast-to-coast trip: more than 13,000 miles, pulling a 7,000-pound trailer, and covering 30 states in 80 days.

“We had to figure out in advance the next place we were going and how far it was” to plan charging stops, said Mark, a member of the Seattle Electric Vehicle Association. The vehicle has a 205kW battery with an EPA rated range of 460 miles. But hauling the Grand Design Imagine trailer cut the range of the truck about in half, depending on the terrain and the weather.



They drove at speeds of 65-70 mph on freeway, following a route that made a loop around the country. The journey started by heading south through Oregon and California, then crossing east through Arizona, New Mexico and Texas.

It was in rural east Texas that they faced the biggest challenge of the trip. They ran into a 50-mph headwind that reduced the range of the truck by about 40 percent. With about five miles left on the gauge, they realized they weren't going to make it to the next charging station in 10 miles. They ended up unhitching the trailer and leaving it on the side of the road, with Susan and the family dog attending the trailer while Mark continued in the truck – and then had enough range to make it to the charging station. When he returned, he found his wife talking to a state trooper and explaining why the trailer was sitting alone beside the highway.



Throughout the trip, the Schnells mainly used Electrify America charging stations, but also took advantage of other networks. In Florida, they found charging stations everywhere, especially along the coast. The truck/trailer rig averaged power usage of about 1 kW per mile, so they stopped to charge every 160-200 miles. Usually, they charged the battery up to 90 percent at DC fast chargers, because the last 10 percent of charging was so slow. They did try level 2 charging

at campsites, but because of the large power draw, it would sometimes pop the breaker, so they stuck to DC fast charging.

Another challenge they encountered was that many charging stations did not accommodate vehicles with trailers and they had to block some parking spaces in order to plug in. They also had a NACS adapter to use at Tesla Superchargers. But the fast-charging prices came with a bit of sticker shock. For instance, when they stopped at the enormous Harris Ranch Supercharger between San Francisco and Los Angeles, they paid 83 cents/kWh, charging at a rate of 250kW/hour. The whole trip cost about \$4,000 for electricity.

After stopping at several campgrounds to plug in the trailer overnight, they realized they didn't need to hook up to shore power. They were successful at plugging the trailer into the truck battery, which ran everything, including microwave, without using too much battery capacity.

Continuing north up the East Coast, and then back west through the Midwest, they learned that the worst places for charging were Texas, Arizona and Alabama, where a lot of the Electrify America plugs out of service. They didn't find any vandalized stations, but some were not maintained and old ones needed new software.

On the east coast, GM and EVGo are partnering with Flying J on pull-through stations. Another partnership is converting gas stations to electric. Costco is adding charging stations, too. So far two are in Washington. Walmart also is planning to install 16,000 units across the country.

They also learned that the most reliable charging stations were the newest and fastest: Rivian. They plugged into one Rivian 400kW charging station, for a cost of 65 cents/kW, and they were able to charge at more than 380kW/hour.

Solar-powered camping trip



Chad Schwitters recently shared details of his summer road trip in a new 2025 Brightdrop EV camper. His vehicle includes 1 kW of solar cells on top, which charge up the 20-kWh house battery, a separate system from the drive battery pack. He picked up the new vehicle in Detroit, then drove 2,400 miles in six days back to Washington. He used Tesla Superchargers the whole way and spent \$504 on charging. Chad said he maintained an average speed of 60-67 mph, and was able to get 625 Whr/mile. They did hit 80 mph at one point. Chad added that,

following the trip, his Brightdrop needed to go back to the factory, so at the August SEVA meeting, he showed a demo unit given to him while his vehicle is in the shop.

EVENTS

National Drive Electric Month –Presented by Plug-In America. Learn more and sign up [here](#).



- Tri-Cities Reach Museum on Sept. 20
- Drive Electric Yakima on Sept. 28
- Plug-In North Central Washington - Wenatchee Cars and Coffee on Oct. 5
- Everett Community College on Oct. 10

In August, SEVA members joined the Burien Solar Punk festival with half a dozen EVs on display. The Ionic 5 showed off its ability to power appliances from an onboard outlet.



EVs for Everyone

Many SEVA members attended General Motors' EVs for Everyone Event at the Museum of Pop Culture (MoPop) at Seattle Center in June. Featured new EVs from GM included the ultra luxurious Cadillac Celestiq sedan (upper right) and the enormous Escalade EV with a 460-mile range (left).

Photos by Stephen Johnsen



Electrify Expo - Several SEVA members exhibited their vehicles at the annual Electrify Expo on July 12 at Marymoor Park in Redmond. At left is former SEVA President Jay Donnaway's Ford Ranger EV getting a charge from SEVA President Stephen Johnsen's Ford Lightning pickup. At right are Jay, Dan Davids of Plug-In America, and Stephen.

Photos by Stephen Johnsen



21 Acres farm truck on parade

This all-electric 1954 GMC flatbed farm truck, converted by SEVA's Stephen Johnsen for 21 Acres Farm, was featured in the annual Woodinville Parade on Aug. 9. The truck was loaded up with fresh flowers, fruit and produce from local farms, and accompanied by Tom Quigley of Sammamish Valley Grange and Stephen.

Photos by Stephen Johnsen



Burien Solar Punk Festival

SEVA members also exhibited a variety of electric vehicles at the annual Burien Solar Punk Festival on Aug. 16.

Photos by Stephen Johnsen

CHARGING NEWS

Powered trailer changes the towing equation

Students from the University of Washington showed their Element Trailer conversion at the Aug. 12 SEVA meeting. The goal is to extend the range of an EV tow vehicle and trailer combination by adding electric propulsion to the trailer. They have installed a control system that senses forces at the hitch, driving the trailer wheels to reduce drag or using regen during deceleration, transferring energy to the trailer battery.



CLUB NEWS

Summer Potluck with EVs! – Many thanks to Kent Bakke for hosting SEVA's summer potluck event on Aug. 12 at the Bowman building in Ballard, which houses part of his EV collection. Notable vehicles include a VW Beetle conversion, originally powered by lead-acid batteries with a 25-50-mile range and one of the first lithium conversions of the club. Kent's collection also features a gray 1961 Cleveland Electric Vehicle Company van with a fiberglass body, a red 2008 Tesla Roadster and a 2011 Meyers Manx 2.0.



Seattle Electric Vehicle Association meets at 7 p.m. the second Tuesday of every month at rotating locations. The next meeting is on Tuesday, Oct. 14 University Village in Seattle on the top floor of the west parking garage. Gather to share cars at 6:30 p.m. Bring a chair. Open to everyone! At the July meeting, (left) the Ford Lightning battery power was used to run the laptop, projector and sound equipment.

Please share your club news as well as your personal journey into the world of electric driving, along with photos. SEVA would like to spotlight profiles of EV pioneers in our newsletter. Please send your stories and photos to gvreamer@gmail.com

CONVERSION CORNER

Updating a 70-year-old truck to the 21st century

It might take five years or more to complete the conversion, but for Mark Shaw, his 1952 International is not just any old truck. It was used on his grandparents' farm in northern Illinois, and he learned to drive in it. He drove it through high school and college, but then moved on and left the truck behind in the corn bin at the farm in 1992.

During the pandemic, Mark, a SEVA member who drives a Chevy Blazer EV, got the idea to try to convert the truck to electric using parts from a wrecked Tesla Model 3. He turned the barn at his Ames Lake place near Carnation into a shop. In 2022, he started prowling car auctions and bought a crashed dual-motor Model 3 with a long-range battery that could be salvaged.

In a photo presentation for SEVA, he explained that he started out by removing the battery from the Model 3 chassis, then the drive units. He was able to salvage and sell a lot of other parts from the Model 3. After that close-up look at the technology under the body, he said, "I am super impressed with the engineering behind this car."

The next step was getting a new chassis custom built to accommodate the battery by a new company, German Motors in Lexington, KY. He now has the battery and drive units installed in the chassis. The most difficult task so far, he said, was getting the cab off the truck and extricating it from the steering column, but he had a friend to help him.

Then, he was able to repurpose the rear mounts from a 1980 Ford and got help from a welder to install them. Front mounts will be next, then when the chassis and body are assembled, the electronics, power steering, brakes, headlights, heater, AC and more will follow. He said he plans to do all the body work himself.

One of the lessons Mark learned during the past three years, he said, was that he should have registered the Model 3 with Tesla so he could get parts from the company. He also recommended that lots of data and resources can be found on DIYelectricar.com.





A vintage Fiat is undergoing an electric conversion at Kent Bakke's shop. Photos by Stephen Johnsen



Charlie Tsai's converted BMW Z3 convertible has been a popular draw at many car shows and events this summer.

SUPPORT

Please support SEVA and its outreach and advocacy activities with a donation. Your financial donation will help us reach more policymakers, funders and drivers statewide to advocate electric mobility, and will support expansion of our online resources. SEVA is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization, and any contribution you make is fully tax-deductible. Here are four ways you can help:

1. Make a one-time online donation through PayPal at [DONATE](#).
2. You also can make a direct contribution by check. The check should be made out to SEVA and mailed to our SEVA Treasurer at: P.O. Box 92, Renton, WA 98057-0092.
3. Register and contribute annual dues as a member of SEVA at [MEMBERSHIP](#).
4. Join us! Bring yourself, your EV and your enthusiasm for driving electric to our monthly meetings, events and car shows and share your knowledge and passion.

RESOURCES

SEVA aims to maintain a comprehensive list of the EV advocacy efforts ongoing in Washington, so we count on you to keep our lists and our website updated with the most current information. Following are the organizations and efforts we have compiled so far in Washington that have a presence online and on social media:

Websites:

- Drive Electric Washington – DriveElectricWA.org
- Seattle Electric Vehicle Association - SeattleEVA.org
- Plug-In America - PlugInAmerica.org
- Electric Auto Association - ElectricAuto.org
- Forth - ForthMobility.org
- Plugshare - Plugshare.com
- National Drive Electric Week - DriveElectricWeek.org
- Drive Electric Earth Day - DriveElectricEarthDay.org
- Plug In North Central Washington - PlugInNCW.com
- Coltura – Coltura.org
- Thurston Climate Action Team - ThurstonClimateAction.org
- Tesla Owners of Washington - TeslaOwnersWA.org

Social Media:

- [Northwest Tesla Owners](#)
- [Seattle Nissan Leaf Owners](#)
- [Seattle Tesla Model 3 Owners](#)
- [Seattle Electric Vehicle Association](#)
- [Seattle Tesla Model Y Owners](#)
- [Pierce County Electric Vehicle Information Exchange](#)
- [Spokane/Coeur d'Alene Tesla Club](#)
- [Inland NW Tesla Owners Group](#)
- [PNW Tesla](#)
- [Central Washington University EV Club](#)
- [Seattle Chevy Bolt/Bolt EUV Owners](#)
- [San Juan Islands Electric Vehicles](#)
- [Mid-Columbia Electric Vehicle Association](#)

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