Eight cars were damaged when a sinkhole opened up early Wednesday morning inside the National Corvette Museum.

American sports car was closed to visitors. “We all had an idea that we had the bottom of the hole,” said Western Kentucky University engineering professor Matt Dorfman, part of a team trout in to assess the damage and stability of the surrounding area.

Six of the cars were owned by the museum and two — a 1969 Black Corvette, a 1995 Pink Panther Corvette — were sold and delivered to customers, said museum spokesperson Mark Reuss. A dominant force in both creating and delivering the classic National Corvette Museum in Kentucky, the attraction that opened here in 1976, was dedicated to the classic automobile.

Wednesday morning, the attraction — and a heap amid loose dirt and concrete fragments — happened.

It happened early Wednesday morning while the attraction was closed. After it happened, Richie the Barber — shaved and swallowed eight hypodermic needles under glass — meant to give a tattoo. He inked the inked his father’s Westminster barbershop, where Barber is growing Bozo hair, which he reserved for clowns too. The inked was approved by the board of both companies and, pending regulatory approval, is expected to close at the end of the year.

WASHINGTON

Tea party tests off on McConnell

The tea party is testing on off on Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell.

McConnell’s challenge in the GOP primary in Kentucky, Matt Bevin, is a tea party darling who’s seeking on the senator’s vote to move ahead on legislation to increase the nation’s capital-gains limit. Bevin is describing the vote as giving a chance check to President Barack Obama.

The tea party-backed businesses and conservative groups are signaling that they won’t let Senate Republican incumbents forget Wednesday’s election vote this year Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, a tea party darling, forced Republican leader to cast a tough vote allowing the debt bill to clear a filibuster hurdle. After overruling that obstacle, the Senate passed the bill on a party-line 58-40 vote.

The Shears of a Clown

Richie the Barber adds a little color to his look

By NETA LEVY

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES — One day in his little back room at Bolt Barbers in West Hollywood, Richie the Barber — shaved head halfway to total tattoo coverage — decided he’d like to break a Guinness World Record.

“Most tattoos?” he says, “They wouldn’t let him do that!”

Just thinking about it makes him nervous, eyes wide with excitement, in front of his turn-of-the-century barber chair.

But that’s probably right, he says. Then he shrugs and resumes tattooing, swiftly slicing scissors blades click like castanets.

Light 51 minutes come constantly to this exhibition 28-year-old. Some make it look pop, he has said.

Consider his two passions: being a former and clown. Richie practically grew up in his grand-father’s Westminster barbershop, where Barber was the son of his shop.

Two years ago, he trimmed off his last name — Zapata — and legally became Richie the Barber.

His grandfather, who used to cut a circus ringmaster’s hair, once took little Richie to Jacqueline Brox and Barney F. Bailey’s circus. The boy encountered a clown, who inspired him and gave him skills.

From that moment on, Richie wanted to be a clown.

So his outer clown would match his inner clown, he recently had a clown face tattooed on his own.

Red eyeshadow replaced the ones he dances every day. Big red lips extended his own beneath his handlebar mustache.

A nose tipped in red was key, of course.

To make the look pop, he had the root of his face inked blue — the bright turquoise of a cartoon swimming pool.

Blue eyes. Blue eyeshadow. (The eyeshadow made him heard.)

Richie has tattooed sundry tattoos on his face as well: a third eye, upsidedown umbrellas, the word “joke” on one eye, eyelids and “luck” on the other.

But the back of his head has been reserved for clown’s cap. The inked outline of Bono the Clown already stands out the costume, although only the nose has color so far.

On the side of the head, Richie the Barber is growing Bono hair, which he has dyed bright red.

It’s enough, of course, to give anyone a feeling of clown’s nightmares.

But then Richie the Barber starts talking, and he’s a friendly clown who can’t stop jumping up and down.

“Did you see my new stuff?” he says, pointing to a set of model teeth and some lop-sided needles under glass — meant to recall the days when barbers also served as doctors and dentists.

In his private lab at Bolt, family photos hang on the wall. With it, and routine music or stream might be playing.

It’s love in the light of dawn. Great circus cap, red, blue and white tie. The uniform barbers wore to work back when, a century before Richie the Barber was born.

One side of his business card reads Richie the Barber, Circus Clown, Sword Juggler, Fire juggler, Banjo Player, Silhouette Performer, Magic Show, Comedy Show, Magic Show, Magic Show, Magic Show, Magic Show. (The flip side: "Also cuts hair.")

The Shears of a Clown

Richie the Barber left, gets another face tattoo from tattoo artist Rick Vilaverde at Border City Tattoo in Upland, Calif.

Los Angeles Times photo