

CCND MEMBER OF THE MONTH

LONG "34" YEAR WAIT FOR MY DREAM CAR by Bruce & CiCi Taylor



I worked at an Atlantic Gas Station during my high school years at Conrad. One day in 1967, the mechanic asked me to go pick up some parts for him. I asked him what I should drive, due to walking to work that day. I figured he would tell me to drive one of the customer's cars. Well, to my amazement, he told me to take his new, 1967, yellow Corvette convertible, 4 speed, 427 with side pipes. Of course I said okay almost saying out loud, "You're going to let a 17 year old kid drive your Corvette"? I remember driving the Corvette like an old granny worried sick that I might get into an accident or break something. On the way back I did wind the gears out a little and to this day I still remember the feeling of the 427's brute power and the sound of those side pipes. I never did get the opportunity to drive his Vette again, but I knew that some day I would own a Corvette.

I married my high school sweetheart, CiCi, in 1970 when we were both 19 years old. Our only car was a 1950 Chevy that had belonged to my grandfather. I was getting ready to leave for active duty in the U.S. Navy and didn't want to leave her with an old car. My wife wanted to go to Union Park Pontiac and look at a new Lemans with automatic transmission and air conditioning. I kept thinking about that Corvette, but I knew that this was not the time. As my wife was looking at the Lemans, I spotted a brand new 1970 Verdoro Green GTO parked on the show room floor. My older brother had owned a 4 speed 1966 GTO that I got to drive once or twice. It didn't have the power of that 427 Corvette, but it was a true muscle car and was a lot of fun to drive. Well, we left Union Park that day being the proud owners of a four speed, non-air conditioned, 1970 Pontiac GTO. My wife didn't even know how to drive a standard transmission. It didn't take very long, maybe one clutch, before she was shifting that four speed like a pro.



My wife did a great job of taking care of our GTO while I was gone for two years. We paid the GTO off in three years and then found ourselves right in the middle of the gas crisis of 1974. The price of gas, if you could find it, skyrocketed, and we all know how easy muscle cars are on gas! The next thing we knew, we were out car shopping with all intentions of trading in our beautiful, paid for, GTO. This certainly was not the time to be thinking about buying a Corvette.

You might find this hard to believe, but we found ourselves test driving a Vega GT and a Gremlin X. We planned to buy something easy on gas and still a little sporty, but four cylinders??? The salesman at both dealerships offered us the same deal. They would take our paid for GTO in on trade for either car and we would only have to pay an additional \$1,500.00 to purchase either car!!! I can't repeat what we told both salesman, but I'm sure you can imagine. Needless to say, we walked out of both dealerships telling ourselves that we must be crazy to be thinking about trading in our GTO. We managed to get through the gas crisis, and thank God, we still own our GTO. The GTO has been a great car for the past 32 years. We did a frame on restoration in 1998 and rebuilt the original 400 motor. The rear and transmission are also original and untouched. Well enough about the GTO seeing how this is the Corvette Club of Northern Delaware.



Ever since my initial drive in that 1967 Corvette I have been looking at Corvettes driving up and down the roadways of Delaware. I have always been especially fond of the mid years, especially the 67, but I admire all Corvettes. I'm sure my wife can probably attest to how many times I have said, "Wow, look at that Corvette. Someday I will own one."



Well, 10, 20, 30 years went by and still no Corvette. About a year and a half ago I was at a friend's house working on our GTOs when my long wait came to a sudden end. My friend owned a Marlboro Maroon, four speed, side pipe equipped, 1967 Corvette convertible with the 427-435hp, tri-powered, L71 motor sitting under the hood. The Vette had been restored back in 1988 and had been very well maintained ever since. He had owned the car for fourteen years. As much as I love GTOs, I couldn't keep my eyes off of that Vette every time I went over to his house.

On this one day he told me that he was going to sell one of his cars at the Atlantic City auto auction to make room for a 1967 Ferrari that he was getting ready to acquire. I asked him which GTO he was going to sell, he owned three, and to my astonishment he told me that he was going to sell the Vette. I had never really told him how long I had been dreaming of owning a Corvette, especially one just like his. I thought that it was still years down the road before I might be able to afford the one I really wanted. He told me the price that he would be satisfied with getting for the Vette and the wheels started turning in my head. I told him to forget about going to Atlantic City and I rushed home.

As soon as I arrived home I told my wife about the Vette being for sale. She was a little surprised, but even more shocked when she looked at my facial expression and realized that I had found my dream car at last. I took her out for a ride in the Vette the next day. As soon as I turned the key, the 427 roared to life, the side pipes howled, and it was 1967 all over again. I told my wife that this was the Vette that I had been waiting for, never dreaming that I might own a Vette with all the goodies that this one had. We managed to work out the finances and my long 34-year wait had finally come to an end.

Now that I, we, were the proud owners of a 1967 Corvette, I had to figure out how to put three cars in a two car garage. There was no way that our GTO was going to sit outside, nor was my wife's 300ZX. Easy solution, I would just install a hydraulic lift. My wife looked at me like I was crazy. Well, a month later, with the help of some friends from the GTO Club, we installed the lift. The Corvette and the GTO now sit patiently, one on top of the other, waiting to see which one gets to go out cruising next. Sometimes we take both cars out to a cruise or show. I still haven't figured out how my wife always seems to get to drive the Vette! Now, every time I walk out into my garage and see the Goat and Vette sitting there, I just smile and thank God for our good fortune.



I joined the Corvette Club of Northern Delaware three months ago and have made a lot of new friends. We have been to several events with club members and have really enjoyed ourselves. I never imagined that we would get to drive our Corvette around inside the Concord Mall like we did several weeks ago for the Corvette display. Now that's what I call window-shopping. Happy motoring.

Bruce, you certainly have two of the most desirable muscle cars ever made. Besides, how many of us still have the car that we first impressed our high school sweetheart with? Imagine... if I still had my old '70' Z28 I'd burn some rubber in front of my old high school again....oops that's how I lost it in the first place.... Joe DeSanta

