



VETTE GAZETTE

Volume 6 Issue 3

September 2008

**Inside this
issue:**

Chairman's Corner with Larry Linder

In case you have not noticed summer is almost gone and fall will start in a few days. As usual I am the big hold up in the publication of the Vette-Gazette. Where did the summer go. Judging meet, cruise-in's clean and polish the car for next week. Work on interesting cars. We had a couple of Saturday Tech sessions where we built a set of trailing arms for Jim Stukenborg and installed them. We have one more project for his car and that is to rebuild the differential. Same light assembly work and a mild custom 65 couple will be back on the road after 16 years of being in the air.

This car may have more total hours in the air than our Treasure - you know as Greg Gorniak. We rebuilt the trailing arms on one Saturday Morning, took a lunch break and pulled the body off Tony's 54. If you like to work on cars, share good times with other NCRS members, and enjoy a nice lunch - Then these

little studies are for you. Be prepared to get your hands dirty and have a good time.

Carlisle was fun - we had enough members there to have our August meeting there. The supply of mid-year parts is getting thinner. The only down side of the Carlisle was that some No-good-Nick. was helping him self to early gas caps. These are special and sell for \$700 - \$800. There were enough lifted that if the perpetrator is ever caught in the act - he may never walk the same again.

There is always someone out for a fast buck and makes the car hobby un pleasant for the good guys.

The charity cruise for the Girl Scouts was successful - these young ladies could charm a penny out of Scrooge.

The top flight chapter awards are now more reasonable and the only outstanding thing was a Charity event. Terry Buchanan is in charge of the topflight endeavor and has done an

excellent job. I guess my complaints about the top flight chapter paper work

were taken to hart as the new rules are the same but most of the ridiculous paper shuffle is gone.

Hopefully the weather will cooperate with us for Jeff's



Fall Color Tour. Bring a friend and enjoy the trip.

Elections for board

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Her Corvette Story By Jeff Bernhardt

This is a little different twist to the "Featured Car" segment of the Vette Gazette, in that it is certainly about a Corvette owned by a member of the club, but it is more of a story about how she came to own it, as told by member Jeff Bernhardt.

My wife Karren and I have basically been together since the 9th grade, and to say that she knows me pretty well is definitely an understatement. She knew from a very young age that I picked from a gene pool that had a strong predilection to the automotive arts, the four-wheeled fire-breathing rubber burning chariots that twist pavement and command attention at the local Burger Barn with open headers and lumpy cams.

How some people can think of these engineering marvels as simple transportation is beyond me. Karren knew early on that I'm the kind of guy that doesn't mind dirt on his clothes and grease under his fingernails. It'll wash.

When we dated in high school, my cars were always tuned, washed and waxed before we went out - sometimes delaying our date. If it rained that weekend, they got washed and waxed after the rain - again. We went off to college together to become edjumas, and I parked my muscle car and drove a beater to school - a '67 Renault R10 that Karren's dad had given to me. It was a car that was left in his gas station lot that the bill wasn't paid on. The deal was, if I could get the title from the owner and get it running, I could have it. I got the title, installed a timing chain and drove it up to school. Since Karren's dad was in the gas station business, she was used to the smell of grease -

My typical day was spent at the station during the day, and in my garage at night. When my day came to an end, I would turn out the lights and walk out the door of my garage around 5am and greet my neighbor next door as he was walking out his back door to go to his garage

something that certainly helped my case.

Anyway, Karren accepted me as I am, agreed to be my wife,

raised two wonderful daughters with me and stood by me while I made a career for myself with a wrench in one hand and a paint gun in the

other. It's funny how things work out, but we bought the gas station from Karren's mom after her dad passed, which was something we later found out was what he had in mind all along. My typical day was spent at the station during the day, and in my garage at night. When my day came to an end, I would turn out the lights and walk out the door of my garage around 5am and greet my neighbor next door as he was walking out his back door to go to his garage. I'd go in and get around 4 hours of sleep and start the cycle all over again.

Karren stood by me as a Corvette widow while I worked on cars at the station all day and restored them in my garage at night. She would see me bring hulks of broken fiberglass piled on incomplete chassis' into the garage, pull the door down, and drive out a finished Corvette 6 months later. This process went on and on until I bought a '61 silver on red 230 horse 4-speed that really caught her eye. I told her when this car is finished, it'll be her car. It didn't work out that way because with our

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Her Corvette Story (con't) By Jeff Bernhardt

Continued from page 2

family expenses, I needed the money from the sale of that car to keep the restoration process going. Understanding and always forgiving as my wife is, it was no big deal to her, but it never set well with me.

Fast forward to 25 years of marriage, the kids are a little older, finances are (a little) better, I'm no longer in the gas station business, but the Corvette restoration business. Karren has been the ever-patient wife, always supportive and never complaining - is always happy as long as I'm happy, and has never had a Corvette to call her own. Our 25th wedding anniversary is coming up in December, and I think the 25th is a milestone - pretty important from what I'm told. At least by all the women. Guys put it right up there with a free bag of fertilizer when you buy three, but the women think it's pretty big. I'm driving a '92 Corvette coupe as a daily driver, with a '75 Top Flight convertible in the garage that's for sale. I have two Corvettes and Karren has none. Doesn't seem right. Now, somebody somewhere has labeled the 25th wedding anniversary as the Silver anniversary. I don't

know why they did or when it started, but I'm usually one to play by the rules. The one Corvette that I ever owned that really caught Karren's eye was the '61 silver with red interior. Silver car, Silver anniversary. I think I'm seeing a pattern here. I've got an idea. The '75 in the garage is silver - hey, that might work.

Well, two things won't work about that logic. One: Handing your spouse the keys to a car you've owned and calling it an anniversary gift would go down in the family annals as the tackiest thing you could ever have done, making you the butt of the joke brought up at every family event and rehashed for generations to come. I'm already trying to live down the Mother's day gift of a Sears wood chipper I had given her one year. Ask her about it. Two: It was the red interior with the silver paint on the '61 that made it so special, not black like the '75 has. Dang. Well, I'm on a quest.

Again, it's funny how things work out, as the '75 sold just weeks before our anniversary to a guy in California. I've got a little mad money plus the cash from the sale of the '75, so now I'm ready to go shopping for

the car for her. I've had time to really think this through, and the best Corvette for Karren is one that she can get in, turn the key, put it in Drive and go. I don't want her to have to worry about setting the choke or flooding it, so it needs to be fuel injected. If it's hot out, she can turn on the AC and be comfortable. She's a convertible gal, so the top needs to come down. And, it needs to be silver with a red interior. It also should be one that washes itself, but they haven't invented that one yet. I just sold a '75, so it can't be a million dollars either. Plug all this into your search engine and see what you come up with.

For me, the answer was a silver '96 LT-1 automatic Collector Edition convertible with torch red interior.



One small hitch: They only made 73 of them with the torch red interior. Rut roh. A persistent internet search netted just two for sale in

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Her Corvette Story (con't) By Jeff Bernhardt

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the weeks before our anniversary. One in Arizona, and one in.....Columbus Ohio! Corvette dealers have both of them, and it turns out that the owner in Columbus is selling a one-owner car that belonged to his accountant, and was bought new in Indianapolis. I drove my rollback up to Columbus the same day, and was immediately impressed with the test drive of this car, as well as the level of detail. I made the deal and loaded

it up. As I'm hauling this car home, I'm trying to figure out what I'm going to do with it before

our anniversary. It's two weeks off, and I can't just pull into the driveway with it now. I don't have

room for it at the shop, and Karren may see it there anyway. A call to my friend John down the street was the answer. He hid Karren's car in his garage until our day, while I made all the covert plans for the special evening.

That December night was cold and dry, a very lucky combination considering our climate here in the Miami Valley. Karren and I drove my '92 coupe to Carver's while listening to the Trans Siberian Orchestra on tape. We walked into Carver's and stood in line as the maitre d' told customers with

reservations one-by-one that it would be 20 minutes or so. When my turn came and I told her "Bernhardt for two", she replied "yes sir, right this way please". She

later told me she was already impressed with me at this point.

Everyone that worked in the restaurant was privy to what was to transpire that evening, and I would notice glances every now and again from servers and managers. We had the best service ever, as our server barely let the level in Karren's glass drop, and did everything but sit down next to her and

feed her himself. At the end of our dinner, we picked up a mint from the dish at the maitre d's desk, I got another glance from the hosts, and Karren and I walked out the front door. As we walked hand-in-hand beneath the grape arbor, I told Karren her anniversary gift was a little too big for me to wrap. She replied "what do you mean"? I told her to look to her left, and there, front and center in the parking area just off of the main entrance, was her '96 Collector Edition Corvette, silver with red interior, top down and a big red bow on the hood.



Was I the man! Karren later told me she was already impressed with me at this point. Everyone that worked in the restaurant was privy to what was to transpire that evening, and I would notice glances every now and again from servers and managers. We had the best service ever, as our server barely let the level in Karren's glass drop, and did everything but sit down next to her and

Our friends who had brought the car over had remained hidden in the bar until this moment, when they came out with cameras, laughing and cheering. Employees followed to see the look on Karren's face as she became the very next Corvette

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Saturday Tech Sessions



The one thing I really like about the Miami Valley Chapter of NCRS is the knowledgeable members in the club. I have yet to hear of a Corvette problem that a fellow chapter member has that someone in the chapter doesn't have the answer!



Much of this is attributable to our Saturday tech sessions. These are generally outstanding tech sessions and the one at Jim Stukenborg's was no exception! Jim has a mildly customized 65' coupe that has been up on blocks for 16 years awaiting new trailing



Some of us of course were just there for the donuts



Saturday Tech Sessions (con't)



Jim and
his 65'



The Mild Mannered Joe Kolek Terry Brim

What I love most about being the editor of the Chapter news letter is doing the interviews for the Vette Gazette's Feature Article....Why is that one might ask? Because it's always a surprise!

Such was the case with this issue's Feature Article. I thought I was going to interview...well, a mild mannered Clark Kent so to speak. Instead, what I discovered was anything but....the mild mannered Joe Kolek. Read on and you will discover many things about Joe you didn't know!

Joe grew up, like many of us, in a working class family about 30 miles northeast of Pittsburgh. His father was a welder in the steel mills. In his high school years, Joe says cars were important, but then again, not many kids had a car. Joe's first car was a 48" Desoto 2 door coupe which belonged to his dad, but like many of us, it soon became "his" car.

Back then, Joe didn't know much about cars but the

old Desoto was a good car to learn on. The first thing Joe did was take all the chrome off the car, fill in the holes and then had a buddy paint the car a silver blue color. (I should note here that the original color of the car was Green with

I thought I was going to interview...well, a mild mannered Clark Kent so to speak. Instead what I discovered was anything but....meet mild mannered Joe Kolek..

a mole hair interior). Joe says his dad welded another pipe under the car to make it look like it had duels! To spruce up the interior, Joe bought tuck & roll door panels and seat cover from J.C. Whitney. The rest of the mole hair interior Joe says he dyed black.....sweet!

During this time, Joe and some of his buddies were also interested in airplanes so, after graduating from high school, Joe applied to the Air Force Academy. At the time, although Joe meet all of the qualifications, his family was not "politically connected" so Joe was offered the "secondary" slot and was asked if he wanted to go to the Naval Academy prep school first. (At that time, the Air Force Academy did not have a prep school).

Lacking family finances to do otherwise, Joe signed up as an Airman 3rd class in the Air Force reserve and enrolled in the prep school for 6 months. After graduation from the prep school, he opted to remain in the Air Force and did his basic training at Lackland AFB, Texas.

During this time, Joe has many stories about the ole Desoto...engines blowing up, black dye coming off the Desoto's interior onto his buddies uniforms as they sat in the back seat sleeping while driving down to Lackland...Eventually however, Joe was accepted into the Air Force Academy, so the Desoto had to go. Back then you couldn't own a car until your senior year and even then you were limited as to the amount of debt you could incur when you bought a car. As Joe recalls, it was around \$3200. Although Joe knew some guys that had Corvette's and would have loved to have had one, back in 1965, \$3200 wasn't enough money to buy a new Corvette. It was enough money however to buy a new GTO convertible with a 4 speed, 3 duces, a tach, and a radio. Sooo, that's

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The Mild Mannered Joe Kolek (con't)

Terry Brim

Continued from page 7

exactly what he did. According to Joe, his GTO could smoke the small block vette's between the traffic lights anyway! Turns out the Corvette Big Blocks didn't come out until half way through the 65' production year. Once they did however, that was the end of smokin the Vettes.

Having smoked all those small block vette's, Joe got the bug for drag racing. Around 1967, he traded his motorcycle (he still had his GTO) to a guy for a 39' chevy drag car with a Pontiac 347 under the hood. Unfortunately, the 39' chevy didn't make much of a drag car, so Joe bought a 56' chevy and he and a buddy proceeded to stuff the Pontiac 347 in the 56' and made a street drivable drag racer out o fit.

In 1968, as part of the newly formed Air Force Special Operations, Joe was assigned to fly UH-1 helo's to ferry parts to minute-man missile cylos in Grand Forks, Mn. As it turns out, Joe needed flying time in the UH-1's before being assigned to the front

Lines in Vietnam. Sooo, our mild mannered Clark Kent rolls into Grand Forks driving his GTO towing his 56' street/drag racer on a flat bed trailer.

Upon seeing that Joe was sort of a "car guy", one of the crew chiefs asked him if he was interested in buying a Corvette? The vette in question turned out to be a wrecked 66' 425 coupe that had been customized with flared fenders, hood etc. The car was damaged from the mid-front fenders forward, so after purchasing the car, Joe proceeded to find a company in California that made a one piece front end. Now the self learning/experimentations started with regards to fiber glass work.

Joe sold the 66' when he got his orders to go to Vietnam, but the Vette bug was set.

Sooo, our mild mannered Joe rolls into Grad Forks driving his GTO towing his 56' street/drag racer on a flat bed trailer.

at several cars around the Atlanta area, he found a 67' purple metal fleck 390 hp coupe with A/C in Austin, Texas. Where his next assignment was flying

President Johnston's helo!!

Joe says he remembers taking a perfectly good 390 hp engine and replacing it with a 454 including a L88 cam which was almost undriveable on the street. It was also about this time that Joe got back into drag racing with the 67'

Turns out however the 454 was not very good for drag racing, so Joe and a buddy of his decided to build an engine specifically for the strip. They started with a 302 of all things and built it up from there. Even though it was a small block, Joe says he usually ran on the 9's which was pretty good time back in the early 70's. The one problem Joe did have however was that even though he never blew the engine, he was always destroying transmissions and rear ends with the car.

For awhile, Joe ran the 302 in an Opal, he figured since an Opal was a lighter car, maybe he wouldn't go through so many transmissions and read ends...I never did ask him if that was really the case!

When Joe go his orders to

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The Mild Mannered Joe Kolek (con't)

Terry Brim

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PCS to Washington State, he decided to get out of the racing business, but his heart was still into Vette's. His wife's brother and sister lived in Selma Alabama and used to

send Joe newspapers. One day as Joe was looking through the Selma newspaper, he spotted a 63' Corvette for sale. After going back to Alabama and finding a Z28 under the hood with hooker side pipes, the temptation was just to much. He bought the 63' and that started a long string for Joe of buying and selling Corvette's.

For Joe, the buying and selling of Corvette's went on for a number for years. He would buy any vette that looked interesting, fix it up drive it for a while, spot another interesting vette and the cycle would start over again. This went on until Joe retired from the Air Force. Once retired and his location became a little more permanent, he began buying Corvette's without always selling the one he had.

Currently, Joe owns four vettes. A Black/Red FI 59', a Silver Blue/Blue FI 59', a Red/Red FI 61' (I'm seeing a pattern here), and a beautiful Blue/ Black 435 67' coupe.

After going back to Alabama and finding a Z28 under the hood with hooker side pipes, the temptation was just to much. Joe bought the 63' and that started a long string for Joe of buying and selling Corvette's

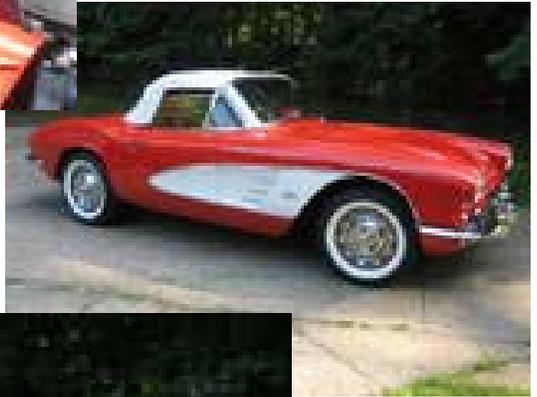


If anyone is the market for an original C1 Fuelie, Joe is looking to sell his Red/Red 61'.



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The Mild Mannered Joe Kolek (con't) Terry Brim



The Body Comes Off



After eating donuts and tackling Jim Stukenborg's trailing arms, it was off to Greg Gorniak's house a few blocks away to pull the body off Tony Ninotti's 54'. Jim was also gracious enough to supply the lunch for the afternoon's



The Body Comes Off (con't)



They say spring time
is for mating.....we'll
see what next spring
brings for Tony's 54'

Ads and Services

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Members Corner By Nick Kammer

In an effort for us to get to know each other a little better we will feature brief bio's of our fellow members. If you haven't submitted your member profile I would encourage you to do so. You can give as much or as little info as you want. You will find the 'Members Profile' form in our quarterly newsletter accessible at our website.

See page 18 for Members profile form. Fill out and return to Nick Kammer to get your profile published in the next issue of our Vette Gazette

For calendar/upcoming events and for sale items/parts wanted items see the chapter web site:

www.ncrs.org/mvc

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Kurt Meier Matt Stansbury
Joe Eyl

Miami Valley Chapter Officers

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Fax – 937-347-1193
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Jerry Michaels (36147)
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A Time Gone Bye Terry Brim

WAITING FOR YOUR PICTURES OF A TIME GONE BYE....I NEED YOUR INPUTS TO MAKE THIS PART OF THE VETTE GAZETTE A SUCCESS!!

Chairman's Corner (con't)

Continued from page 1

members are coming up in November and if you would like to have another job toss your hat in the ring.

There are some interesting activities planned - see the web site - [www/ncrs.org/mvc](http://www.ncrs.org/mvc) and look for the events.

Ever read dear Abby in the paper? We have our version and its called "ASK DON"

the link is posted on the MVC web site.

Challenge the members with your questions.

I have a few wooden Nickels that are stamped "Rochester Products FI". They are not that rare but if you have a "fuel car" it might be nice to have one. Lock me up and I will get you one.

Enjoy your cars and drive carefully.

Regards

Larry

Her Corvette Story (con't) By Jeff Bernhardt

Continued from page 4

owner - a Corvette that is definitely all hers. On the back of the car is an Ohio license plate for display that I had made up that simply says HERS. As I stood back to take it all in, watching all of the hugs and hearing the laughter, there was my wife of 25 years standing about 10 feet off the ground. As my



eyes moistened, I don't know who had the most fun. Karren knows me pretty well, but I think this one really took her by surprise. That was 5 years ago, but the memory seems like yesterday.

Great story Jeff, thanks for sharing.....Terry

Miami Valley Chapter

National Corvette Restorers Society

Member Profile

Name: John Reilly

Significant others name: Maureen

Date/place of birth: 1947, Philadelphia, Pa

NCRS #: 3405

Place of employment or occupation and brief description of what you do

Owner of Big Time Kennel, a dog Boarding facility in Centerville. We board, Groom and Train dogs. Personally, I train and compete with Bouvier des Flandres in Agility, Herding, Obedience and Confirmation.

What other interests/hobbies do you have?

Dogs and Corvettes are the main two things

Under the heading 'Complaints take a number, solutions come on in', what do you like about our Chapter and what could be done to improve what we do?

Unfortunately, due to my work and competition schedules, club activities are near impossible to do. But those activities I have attended, I have found informative and fun.

First car ever owned: 56 Belair Convertible

First Corvette owned: 1969 Daytona Yellow 427/390 which I still own today

Present Corvette(s), classic cars owned: 69 Convertible and 63 split window 327/340



Miami Valley Chapter

Are you having fun yet?

Join us. We ARE having fun and work hard to make it a TOP priority. We are the Miami Valley Chapter of the NCRS. We are NCRS members who in February of 2003 started a local chapter for Dayton area NCRS members and Corvette enthusiasts currently 76 members strong and growing. Most of our members live in Greene, Montgomery, and Warren counties.

To check us out go to our web site www.ncrs.org/mvc and cruise through our event's calendar. Come to one of our meetings to see if it's for you. We are a varied group owning everything from modified Corvette's to Top Flight award winning Corvette's. From C-1's to C-6's we all have one thing in common and that is a passion for the Corvette.

We hope to see you at one of our next meetings held on the 2nd Tuesday evening of every month. We also get together on weekends for cruise-in's and car show caravans throughout the spring, summer, and fall. You are already an NCRS member. Why not join **your** local chapter and get the most out of your membership. Feel free to call me with any questions.

Regards,

Nick Kammer
Membership Chairman
Miami Valley Chapter NCRS
Office: 937-297-3611
Home: 937-848-3022

Miami Valley Chapter

National Corvette Restorers Society

Member Profile

In an effort for us to get to know each other better we will include in our quarterly newsletter 'Vette Gazette' our members profiles. Whatever facts you wish to share with the rest of us are welcome. If you wish to submit a member profile just complete the profile below and send it to the web address listed below. Input on how we can improve our Chapter is also encouraged. If you would like for me to take your information over the phone just call me at 937-297-3611. Otherwise send the profile as an attachment to your return e-mail back to me (see bottom of page).

Name:

Significant others name: _____

Date/place of birth: _____

NCRS # _____ (we have this on file but other members may find this an interesting tidbit of information.)

Place of employment or occupation and brief description of what you do

What other interests/hobbies do you have? _____

Under the heading 'Complaints take a number, solutions come on in', what do you like about our Chapter and what could be done to improve what we do? _____

First car ever owned _____.

First Corvette owned _____.

Present Corvette's), classic cars owned _____

Thanks for your input and information.

Forward this profile to Nick Kammer, Membership Chairman

www.nick.kammer@ncmc.com