

# The '66 Corvette Challenge

## Part 1

### A little History...

by: Pat Cavanagh NCRS #57907

Before I purchased the '64 Fuelie Convertible a few years ago, I was working on the mechanical refurbishment of my '66 Corvette Convertible. After our chapter judging event in April 2019, I'm just going to drive it, show it and enjoy it for now. A regional event may be in the future, but no specific plans at this point.

My '66 took a back seat to all the restoration work it took to get the '64 ready for judging. The '66 has been sitting forlornly on the car lift in my workshop since I purchased the '64 Fuelie. I decided, with some prompting by my wife, that *my new challenge* was to get the '66 back on the road in 2021....but that may be asking a lot.-

The '66 build will take a different approach. The vision for the '66 will become clearer in future articles but it will not be an NCRS restoration. Think along the lines of a street driven vintage race theme.... This is the first in series of articles called "*The 66 Corvette Challenge*". We will start by discussing my '66's history and originality.

In December 2012, I sold Williams Controls Corporation (NYSE: WMCO) where I had worked for the previous 9 years. We were living in Portland, Oregon and I had decided to retire after the sale. A day after the sale, Diane and I drove to Arizona to enjoy the warmer weather and play a little golf.



While visiting my brother-in-law in Lake Havasu, Arizona I found a rally red '66 Corvette in the nearby town of Fort Mohave, Arizona. It was a dry, no rust, western car with an L-79 (non-original), 4 speed, knock-offs and a

factory hardtop. The downside was the car was originally ermine white with red interior and it was now rally red.

After a thorough inspection of the usual items and a triple digit test drive under controlled conditions in the desert, I purchased the car and had it shipped to our home in West Linn, Oregon. I picked up the Corvette in Vancouver, Washington a week later. I drove it home late one evening in a driving rain with marginal windshield wipers and very dim T-3 headlights.

The car had belonged to Bob and Peggy Diegan who spent the winters in Fort Mohave, Arizona and the summers in Vale, Oregon. Bob was in his 80's, and was having some health problems. He had not been driving the car much and was trying to sell his classic cars. He also owned a '57 Thunderbird.

Bob Diegan had purchased the car from a small classic car dealership in Oregon in February 1996. I decided to call the Southern Oregon Corvette Club and see if they remembered the car or the dealer. The club president remembered the car and he put me in touch with John Milne who once owned the dealership

that sold the car to Bob Diegan. John said that he owned the car in early 1996 and had purchased the car from Walt Everett. John also told me that Walt and his partner had owned an auto parts store in Medford, Oregon. He remembered that Walt had done a body-on restoration of the car in the early 1990's.

John Milne sent me a couple of pictures of the car in 1996 just after he purchased the car from Walt Everett.



Walter Everett's obituary was on the internet. He had died in 1997. With further research, I was able to locate his wife's phone number and I reached out to her by phone in

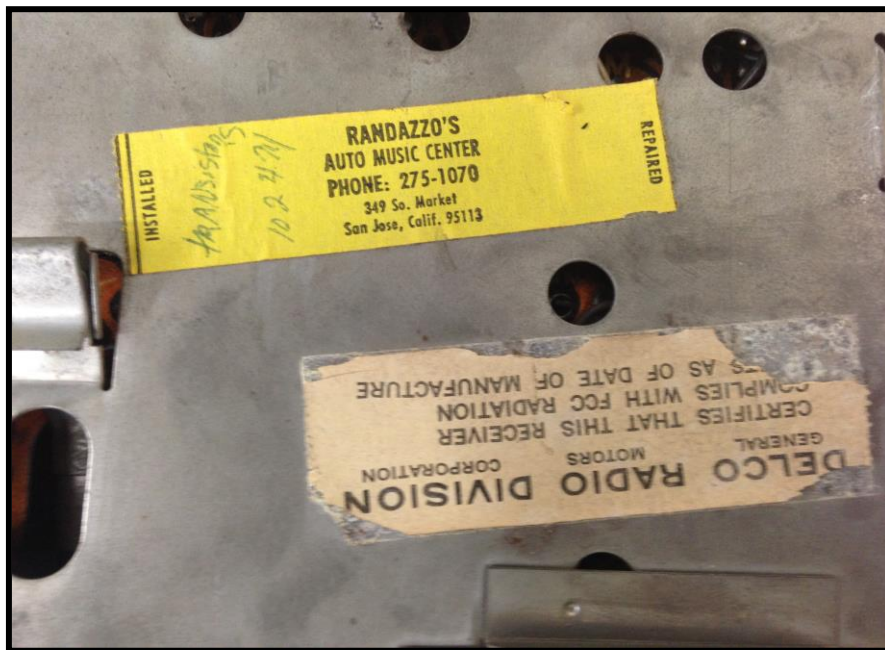
early 2014. She said that her husband purchased the car from someone attending the "Hot August Nights" car show in Reno, Nevada in 1988 or 1989. She did not recall much more about the car but suggested a call to her husband's former partner Dick Weide.

Dick now owns Rogue Valley Carburetion in White City, Oregon. When I spoke with Dick he indicated he had been partners with Walt Everett for a number of years in their auto parts business, Cannon Automotive, back in the late 1980's and early 1990's. He recalls that Walt saw the car sitting on the street with a for sale

sign on it at Hot August Nights. Dick believed the owner was from California.

I ordered the delivery information from NCRS. My car was built on October 26, 1965 and delivered to Luby Chevrolet (Dealer code 328, Zone 26) in Miami Florida in late 1965.

When the radio was removed, there was repair sticker dated



October 10, 1974 from Randazzo Radio Repair in San Jose, California. From the lack of corrosion on the frame and the pristine birdcage, I suspect that the car spent most of its life on the

West Coast.

I have continued to look for further information on the ownership history between when it was delivered new in Miami, Florida at Luby, Chevrolet in 1965 and its purchase at Hot August Nights by Walt Everett in 1989. I contacted the DMV's in Florida, California and Oregon with no help or cooperation.

*Any help filling in the ownership gap between when the car was delivered new and 1989 would be greatly appreciated. The VIN number is 194676S104070.*



When I purchased the Corvette there were a number of receipts for the engine work, mechanical repairs and paint. A brief summary of these are below:

Medford Cylinder Head & Machine, in Medford, Oregon, rebuilt the engine on May 5, 1990.

Balanced

Bored .020 Over

Stainless steel valves

Pinned rocker studs

Melling oil pump

350HP Blueprint cam

Forged TRW .020 over flat top piston



Mickey Cox in Grants Pass, Oregon completed paint and the bodywork on June 21, 1994.

I spoke with both the owner of the machine shop and Mickey Cox. They both remembered the car and Walt Everett. They filled in some of the questions I had, especially regarding the bodywork and the engine.

In Part 2 of the "The 66 Corvette Challenge", I will discuss the originality of the car along with the matching and non-matching numbers. I will also cover my plans for the future of my "66 Corvette.



Unfortunately, life has recently gotten in the way of progress on my '66. In December, I took an assignment in Miami Lakes, Florida as the interim CEO and Chairman

of a large international automotive and medical plastic injection molding company. Progress will be a bit slower but it will not stop on this project. Stay Tuned!

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