

How I came to drive a Vette!

CCND MEMBER OF THE MONTH

By Chris Carlantonio

Well, how would you like to be 18 and have the keys to half a dozen Corvettes everyday? That's right, I was a car jockey for Colonial Chevrolet. At that



time, Colonial sold a lot of vets and serviced cars from 7:00 a.m. to 2:00 a.m. the next day. I brought the cars to the mechanics and then to the customers for pickup. Although it was only one block, sometimes it stretched for four or five! One time, a fellow worker tried to impress his new girlfriend. He borrowed a 427 for lunch. However, you know vet owners – they check their mileage. Bottom line, he got the girl, but lost the job!

Driving cars as a job through college was great. I received my degree and started at \$9500 per year as an engineer but thought \$4000 for a Vette was out of my range.

In 1996, I fell off a ladder and down a set of steps; luckily, no broken bones. As I was recovering, I decided to go for it! Buy the Vette before something worse happens (like old age – ha ha). A '94 polo green coupe was now parked in my garage with a special license plate that read "DEARGOD" – probably the best plate in Delaware after I made it out of a fall and into a Vette. I think the plate says it all.

At the same time I bought my Vette, Jack Layton got his Callaway. He called me one night and told me about a group that met at Mr. Pasta. That was the start of CCND!

Since I don't have any wrenches in my toolbox, my idea for repairs is ... call the Chevy dealer. The '94 coupe was traded in on a black '98 coupe. Being a person who would rather drive than clean the car, I traded the black one for a pewter '99 convertible. It has all the features I like so much, tilt steering wheel, heads-up display, and tire pressure reading inside the car!

In November 2001, a close friend found a 2002 - 405 hp Zo6 in my favorite color "yellow". Headed for Washington with no buyer yet, I called the dealer and told him to mark it "sold". He said, "Are you going to pick it up next week?" I said, "No. I'll be there when the car comes in." Christine and I made it to the dealership in two hours (DE to DC) without a ticket!



The car was in the showroom ready to go. I took it for a test drive (after putting a deposit on it) with Pam, the salesperson. She told me everything about the Zo6 from the wheels to the racing options. She knew everything about the car but never drove a Vette, let alone a Zo6. I let her drive back to the dealership. When we pulled up, the manager came out and asked why I didn't like the car. I said I did but Pam wanted to test drive the car as well. You would have thought it was St. Patty's Day when you looked at the eyes of the other salesmen with Pam behind the wheel. I picked up the car on November 18, 2001, just in time to get 0% interest financing!

Well, I guess I must be getting older because between the '99 convertible and the 2002 Zo6, my choice is the smooth ride of the convertible. I like the softer seats with tuned suspension.

So... the "yellow" Zo6 will be going the "Way of the West." MAKE ME AN OFFER!

Cell (302) 521-2121 Work (302) 984-0266 Home (302) 984-9558