

Member of the Month

Jim Ebner

As with most kids growing up, our parents shape our likes and dislikes more than any other individual throughout our lives. I was no different growing up. When I was just 6 my parents separated (1967). I had no idea why mom and dad lived apart at the time, I just knew that every Sunday Dad would stop by and pick me, and my younger brother and sister up to go to Nana's where we could spend the whole day with Dad. He was 27 at the time with three kids. Whenever it was nice he would always let us help him wash his car. He knew full well he was going to get squirted with the hose but he let us help anyway and eventually the car got cleaned. During these normal Sunday washings he would always, always, say when he retires he is going to get a Corvette. He always had a sports car during my youth growing up but he thought the pinnacle of sport cars was the Corvette. The visits with Dad on Sundays continued for the next 13 years and although the water fights with the hose were not as frequent, (seems water from the hose gets colder the older you get) my Dad saying he is getting a Corvette when he retires was the one constant that never changed. I missed those Sunday washings when I went off to college, (Penn State) but occasionally over summer months I would catch up to Dad on a Sunday to help wash the car. It is not surprising that his sports car of his younger days had turned into a middle-aged 4-door sedan but his dream of owning a Corvette when he retired was still alive.



my daughter Emily all ready to go

On December 3, 1986 while driving home from work with my step-mother (he had been remarried for 14 years) by his side, he pulled over to the side of the road and passed away 34 days after his 46th birthday. I was 25 at the time and really just did not understand why things happen the way they do, but as time passed I realized that there is a reason for everything even if we cannot see it at the time.

Fast forward to April 2007. It is now 5 months past my 45th birthday, and I have been married for 12 years with a 7 year old daughter. Over those 12 years with my wife I would remind her that 35 days after my 46th birthday I was going to get a Corvette as long as I live that one day longer than my father did. I was not going to wait until I retire. Well now that I am 45 the talk got a little more serious and a little more often. A month later in May 2007 I found out that I had a torn heart valve and it would require open-heart surgery. The alternative was a fate of that of my fathers. The only reason I had my heart checked soon after I turned 45 was because of how my father passed away some 20 years earlier. I did not understand the reason why he died at such a young age until it became clear that he actually saved my life when my defective heart valve was detected, successfully repaired, and I was given a clean bill of health.

After I got back on my feet and back to work, I started thinking again about buying my Corvette within the next few months. With my new lease on life I knew I was going to live longer than my father and On December 29th 2007 I would be 35 days past my 46th birthday and I would get my Corvette. What I did not count on was my wife Lisa's response the first time I mentioned the Corvette after the surgery. She simply said

why wait, life is just too short. She was actually the one who found the one I currently drive for me. It is a blue, Penn State Blue I like to say, hardtop that is just an amazing car to own. My dad was right it is the pinnacle of sports cars.

My daughter now 8 and I drive every Sunday; weather permitting, to go get donuts, always taking the long way, mom always wondering if we got lost. I have no doubt my daughter loves the car as much as I do as well as our long Sunday drives for donuts together. So continues the passion and love that we pass on to our children.

I guess this story can be summarized very simply from my Delaware License Plate that proudly reads:



This is for you Dad – hope you like it