

BY BOB STEVENS / PHOTOS ANDY BOLIG

SHOW

THIS AWARD-WINNING '60 STILL CALLS THE HIGHWAY ITS HOME
Chevrolet was in good shape in 1960, especially its premier offering, the one and only Corvette. Chevy's sports car had finally, in its eighth season, surpassed the 10,000-unit production mark for the first time. Rumors persisted that it was soon to be axed from the lineup.



V & GO

But the car had been protected by some heavy-duty characters, including Ed Cole, Chevy general manager, and GM's top stylist, Harley Earl, who retired in 1958, and his successor, Bill Mitchell. It also had a few other friends high up the corporate ladder, such as Anthony

DeLorenzo, GM vice president in charge of public relations, whose son raced Corvettes. Back down at the divisional level, Chevrolet's top engineer, Harry F. Barr, was partial to the Corvette, and his assistant, Zora Arkus-Duntov, chief Corvette engineer, was fanatic about

it and not only designed Corvettes but raced them as well. Yes, 1960 was the golden year in which the Corvette came of age within General Motors Corp.

To romanticize the Corvette, a print campaign was created by Chevrolet's agency, Campbell-Ewald, and administered



by Jack Izard, Chevy's advertising manager, and Colin Campbell, Chevy account executive at Campbell-Ewald. The six print ads were exclusively Corvette. The prose was inspiring: "1960 Corvette ... more than ever, the pure definition of a sports car"; "You'll have to drive a Corvette to feel its javelin-swift motion, deep assurance of road-holding, the meaning of true dead steering, and the solid, flat way a Corvette slices around a curve"; "Poetry in motion marks everything a Corvette does"; and "Adventure is Corvette's business, every road takes on a new dimension."

Auto writers shared Chevy's enthusiasm

for the Corvette. In *Sports Cars Illustrated*, Stephen Wilder reported: "For all around performance per dollar, the Corvette is hard to beat, especially with fuel injection assuring better lap times on any circuit." Wilder's test car, a 290hp '59 Corvette fuelie, posted a 0-to-60 mph time of 6.6 seconds, a quarter-mile rip of 14.9 seconds at 98 mph, and a top speed of 125 mph.

Road & Track did about the same, also with a 290hp '59 fuelie, running from 0 to 60 in 6.6 seconds, and eclipsing the quarter in 14.5 seconds at 96 mph, while reaching a slightly higher top end of 128 mph. *R&T* surmised that

its test Corvette "has more performance per dollar than anything you could buy and parts are obtainable without sending to Italy, Germany or England." *R&T* concluded: "Fuel injection has it all over carburetors for throttle response and lack of sensitivity to motion. There is no flooding or starving on hard cornering with fuel injection."

Journalist Howard Harrison, writing for *Cars* magazine, added, "Light-headed and strong-hearted are the words to describe the 1960 version of America's hottest car, the Chevrolet Corvette." He found that the optional aluminum heads



boosted power on the top fuelie from 290 to 315 hp with 11:1 compression and pushed the 1960 Corvette to a lightning quick 0-60 time of 5.7 seconds and an even higher top speed of 135 mph. According to R&T's John Bond, the aluminum heads came with larger intake valves, larger plenum chamber, and higher compression ratio and came without 53 pounds of dead weight. Unfortunately, the aluminum heads were used only on a few race cars and never made it onto production models.

In racing, the Corvette remained strong in 1960. The Briggs Cunningham

team brought a Corvette into an eighth overall finish in the GT class of the 24 Hours of LeMans thanks to some nifty driving by John Fitch and Bob Grossman. Equally impressive was Bob Johnson's performance in SCCA competition where he drove his '60 Corvette to a Class B Production championship, edging out a very fast Ferrari.

Wayne C. Withrow bought the beautiful Horizon Blue 1960 Corvette pictured here on Jan. 11, 1968, after spotting it on the lot at Colliu Chevrolet in South Pasadena, California. It had belonged to the police chief of South Pasadena, who

bought it new, and had been used most recently by his son, a college student, who was soon graduating and getting a new car, thus the one-owner Corvette was being sold. "It was the best looking car I had ever seen, and I bought it. I have owned it ever since," recalls the 59-year-old retiree. He paid \$1,500 for the 9-year-old sports car, which was optioned with the 290hp fuel-injected 283, four-speed, whitewalls, Wonder Bar radio, heater, courtesy light, and seat belts. New, it had sold for \$5,122, with some \$1,250 in options added to the base price of \$3,872.



ENGINE: Powering this baby blue beauty is the most powerful and expensive engine offered to Corvette buyers in 1960, the premium fuelie pegged at 290 hp. Only 759 were so equipped. The fuelie sold for \$484.20 in either version, 250 or 290hp. Just 100 of the 250hp editions were sold, making it rarer than the 290-horse fuelie. **RADIATOR:** A major first for Corvette in 1960 was the use of an aluminum radiator, with top tank, but it was available only on the engines with the hot "Duntov" cam, the 290hp fuelie and the 270hp dual-quad engine. **TRUNK:** This was the last year for the traditional-style taillamps inset into the high-crowned rear fenders, as the '61 model would adopt the all-new ducktail rear end design. The spare wheel and tire were stowed under the floor of the trunk to maximize what little luggage space there was available. **INTERIOR:** Horizon Blue exterior was offered with light blue, black or red interiors, and a blue, black, or white convertible top (optional hardtops were painted body color). The basic interior design was carried over from 1959, except that the seat pleats ran vertical instead of horizontal. The shifter operates a manual four-speed transmission, a \$188.30 option. For the first time, the fuel-injected engines were not available with the Powerglide automatic in 1960. **REAR:** Horizon Blue was a natural color for the 1960 convertible; it matched the car's personality. Only 766 of the 10,261 Corvettes built in 1960 were painted the light shade of blue at the factory. The original owner, a police chief, ordered the small passenger-car-style hubcaps.



In April of 1968, Withrow moved to Virginia and drove his newly acquired Vette on famous Route 66. It was a memorable trip. Then in June of that year, he got married and the newlyweds took the Corvette on their honeymoon. After that it served as his daily driver and the vacation chariot. "I had a wonderful time putting 126,000 miles on it," Wayne said.

Then Wayne took a job in England and the car was put up on blocks in the backyard of his parents' home. When he returned to the U.S. several years later in 1976, the car was a mess and its engine

was locked up. He towed the car to his home in Maryland, removed the seized engine and installed a 327 V-8, and began driving it again. Then, in 2006, he decided to get serious about a complete restoration. The car and assorted parts were hauled to J&M Enterprizes in Brooksville, Florida, a shop run by the father-and-son team of John Ames and Tim Ames. Wayne's wife, Frances, worked with John Ames to surprise her husband at a car show in May 2007, where they unveiled the restored Corvette in front of a totally surprised Wayne. "When I saw those shining teeth

on that beautiful blue Corvette, I was speechless. I was instantly transported back to 1968 and all I could do was smile," he remembers.

Since then, Wayne and Frances have driven the car some 1,250 miles on pleasure cruises, to car shows, and on vacations. It's won numerous awards, including an NCRS Third Flight, which is outstanding for a car that is driven with any regularity. It's been a keeper for 40 years, and it always will be. His wife is definitely number one in his life, of course, but he's had his Corvette longer. ■



UNDERCARRIAGE: The fully restored undercarriage is correct and in immaculate condition. **REAR:** When it arrived at the restoration shop, the car looked pretty sad, but it was actually very straight and solid ... and pretty much complete. **SIDE:** Even stripped down to its bare naked soul, the 1960 Corvette still embodies a lot of inner beauty and character, and conveys a ton of charm. **CHASSIS:** The finished chassis is ready to be reunited with the body, which is mounted on a dolly in the background awaiting restoration. **FRONT:** Wayne Withrow is right at home behind the wheel of his 1960 Corvette, which he has owned for more than 40 years.



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