

The Continuing Saga of

When I was a boy...

Tormented '60 Corvette

In 1960, I convinced my dad to buy me (at 18) a new, red 1960 Corvette, with hard and soft top, four-speed, and 230-hp engine.

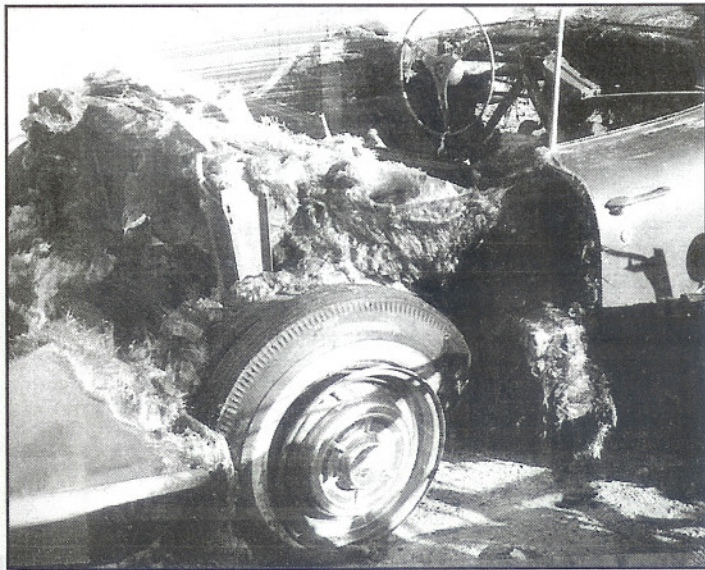
I drove it to Los Angeles in June, 1960, to summer with my aunt and uncle in Van Nuys, and attend Valley College. After the summer session at

Valley College, I decided to take a trip to San Francisco alone. The trip there was uneventful on the major freeways. A friend told me that I should return to L.A. by the scenic Route 1, or Pacific Coast Highway, that was cut into the edge of many mountains.

I decided to road race the Corvette along some of the twists and turns. At one point, after 15 minutes behind a

VW doing about 40 mph, I took an opportunity to pass, and I really laid it on heavy. I came into a hairpin turn and skidded up on the guard rail at about 70 mph. I jumped out of the car and realized the drop below the guard rail was more than 1,000 feet to the ocean.

The car was teetering on the edge when the VW that I had passed stopped, the driver got out, and helped me pull the



Corvette back about two feet. Shortly after, a tow truck arrived and towed the car back to San Francisco. While I was waiting for the tow truck, I managed to get my camera from the trunk of the car to take pictures of the scene.

When the Corvette got back to Los Angeles, it underwent a four-week repair stint before I drove it back to Chicago. When hearing of the accident, my dad tried to convince me that I should trade in the Corvette for a nice, safe, slow VW Beetle — though that did not happen.

Later, while I was going to Roosevelt University in downtown Chicago, I would drive my Corvette to class some days, and take the train on others. One day, I went to the parking lot, didn't see the Corvette, and thought, "I took the 'L' today."

I was about halfway home on the train, and remembered a guy had cut me off in construction. I changed direction and returned to the parking lot, only to find my car was really gone. I called the police, and they filled out the stolen car report. The insurance company paid off the car within 10 days, and I invested the net \$2,500 in my first classic car, a 1931 Cadillac V-8 convertible coupe.

About a month later I got a call from the police department — they had found my Corvette, but didn't think I would want to drive it. I went to see the car, and found the thieves had not only stolen the car, but set it on fire. It looked like a bunch of hay lying on a Corvette chassis.

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