

One of the Best Years

Although it's not his first car, Doug Van Noort purchased his 1972 Chevrolet Corvette at a young age, and managed to hang on to it.

Doug purchased his 'Vette in 1984, but just got around to restoring it three years ago.

"I was 19 when I saw it in a parking lot," Doug related. "It was just a sharp looking car, so I traded my (1977) Camaro for it."

The Camaro was an RS, and he liked it a lot too, but just not as much. He has no regrets.

"I wished I could've kept the Camaro, too, but I couldn't afford both," he said.

The 1968 through 1972 models of Corvette are his favorite. The 1972 models were the last to wear chrome bumpers on the front and rear. The next year the Corvette got the rubber front end, and by 1974 the bumpers were totally hidden. Doug's is equipped with T-tops and a removable rear window, Corvette's idea of a safer convertible.

Doug drove his Corvette for two years, then put it in storage in his father's barn. Out of sight, it never became anyone's "barn find" and Doug was able to one day give it the attention it deserved. Twenty years later he had finally saved enough money and purchased enough parts to have the car completely restored. He did some of the work and had some of it done by professionals.

Doug put in a custom CD stereo system as he redid the interior, and had the small-block 350 rebuilt with a hotter Edelbrock cam and aluminum heads. The car also got a fresh coat of red paint.

Now he and his wife Laurie can go back to the days of their youth and cruise in a car many people can still only dream of owning.

