

MAD
CITY
VETTES



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On The Road

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For the Members and Friends of Mad City Vettes

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“Meet your fellow Mad City Vette members”

Tony & Geri Walla

Geri and I met on Feb 14th, 2002 after getting to know each other online for a few weeks. Geri was raised in Oregon, WI, graduated from OHS in 1998, and has lived in the Madison area all her life. I grew up in Merrillville, IN and graduated from Merrillville High School in 1994. (Why is this sounding like an engagement announcement?) We were married on August 11th, 2007 in Madison. Geri is currently working for Motion Industries in Madison as an administrative assistant. Tony is employed at Charter Communications as an advanced video engineer.



My fascination with Corvettes started as it does with most of us... as a young boy. When I started to really notice them, we were already in the era of C4s. It was always a car that I knew I wanted, but would take me a long time to have one of my own. My first personal experience with a Corvette was in 2003 when my dad bought a 1987 red convertible. I got to drive the car, but never had a chance to really DRIVE it, so I was a little underwhelmed. I still knew I wanted a Vette, but I resigned myself to the reality that I would have to wait until my "mid-life crisis" to get one.

That feeling changed on Mother's Day in 2004. Geri and I were visiting my parents for the weekend. Dad and I had some time to kill while the girls were out shopping. We spent the early afternoon washing the car together. When we finished, Dad checked the weather radar for rain and decided we had at least an hour before the rain would fall. He flipped the keys in my direction. With the top down, we headed toward I-65 with a plan to make a quick run about 15 mi South. Once we got on to I-65 and cleared some traffic, my dad and I shared a look and I punched the throttle. Even though we were already traveling at 65MPH, I was still pushed back into the seat with noticeable force. When I looked back down at the dash, I had hit 100 in what seemed like an instant. I knew I had to have one.

The drive back to the house was filled with car talk with my dad as well as a few comments from him about getting my own Vette. A few weeks later I told my future brother-in-law to find a Corvette for me. I was budgeting for a decent C4. While waiting for "the call" I started reading "All Corvettes are Red" by Jim Scheffer. The book describes the gestation and birth of the C5 platform from inside GM and the skunk works. I was fascinated by the unique insiders' look at how the car came to be.

To speed the story along, I looked at a few C4s that didn't pan out. I was lucky when we found a 2002 Electron Blue coupe. The owner was upgrading to a 2005 and was trading in his '02. It had been driven cross country (72k worth!) and had a few "scars" from the highways, but it was in good shape and I could "afford" it.



I hadn't owned the car a week yet before taking it to Gingerman Raceway in South Haven, MI to test it out. I've been lucky enough to take it back to that track 2 more times before the management changed and they shut us out unless we carried an insurance policy. I hope to attend a NCCC low-speed autocross in the near future to scratch the racing itch.

I enjoy the cruises that our members put together the most (when we can get out.) Special thanks to Kevin Krueger for arranging the visits to Madison International Speedway which is single-handedly the reason why my father-in-law doesn't want to ride with me on the track anymore!

Tony & Geri Walla