

CORVETTE

U N M A S K E D !

'97 CORVETTE:
FIRST
AUTHORIZED
PHOTOS!

ALL
INFORMATION
FOR
IMMEDIATE
RELEASE!

'97 LAUNCH
DETAILS INSIDE!





The Director's Chair

NOW THAT THE LEAVES ARE GONE . . .



*Bill O'Neill, Chevrolet's General
Director of Communications,
with the '97 Corvette.
Photo order #97-62COR*

We'd like to formally apologize for the late Fall we had here in Michigan. The leaves weren't gone from the trees until well into November, which made it a lot tougher for "spy" photographers to get a clear shot at pre-production Corvettes on test runs at GM's Proving Ground in Milford, Mich.

But take heart . . . now, all the leaves are gone, and so are the embargoes! So, publish at will! Each article contained in this unique press kit is available for your immediate use, and every photograph marked with an order number is available through the addresses and phone numbers listed on page 1.

The veiled launch of the Corvette helped to heighten what is a very momentous time for Chevrolet. The launch of this car is, among other things, a reaffirmation of our ability to have fun once in awhile. If you can't have fun with Corvette, then you're just not doing something right.

In that spirit, we've set up this

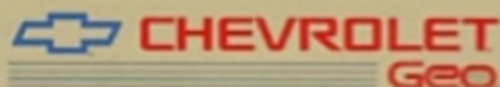
press kit differently. Many of you may have already received a much larger, more extensive press kit. Or, you may have attended one of our press previews in Bowling Green, Ky., in November. We thought it was appropriate to give you a different angle on the launch with this book and provide some information previously unavailable.

About the cover, please forgive us for claiming bragging rights on publishing the first "authorized" photos of the Corvette. We've been so thrilled by all of the press we received before our launch date that we got caught up in the excitement. But we thought you'd understand. As "buff book" editors already know, it's fun to be first.

Sincerely,

Bill O'Neill
General Director,
Chevrolet Communications





Communications

Communications Staff

BILL O'NEILL *General Director*

TOM HOXIE *Director,
Product Communications*

CARL SHEFFER *Director, Regional Operations
and West Coast Regional
Manager*

KEVIN ROSE *Product Communications
Manager*

CHARLOTTE GRIM *Media Materials Manager*

MARK LEDDY *Regional Manager/East*

CRAIG EPLING *Regional Manager/Southwest*

JENNIFER GOWAN *Regional Manager/Midwest*

DARIN WALSH *Help Desk*

This press book was developed by Chevrolet Communications, your official information resource for '97 Corvette news and photography.

We encourage you to reprint the Corvette information found in this publication. All photographs are marked with order numbers and can be ordered by contacting us at:

Chevrolet/Geo Communications
Chevrolet Motor Division
30007 Van Dyke Ave., M.C. 480-205-125
Warren, MI 48090-9065

FAX: (800) 504-5073

OR: (810) 492-8853

PHONE: (800) CHEVY-MI,

OR: (810) 492-8841

CHEVROLET MEDIA ONLINE: <http://media.gm.com/chevy>

WEEK PHOTO DATABASE: (214) 392-0888

PR NEWSWIRE DETROIT: (800) 697-9712



Cover Photo (actual photo shows entire vehicle)
Photo order #97-49COR



1997 Corvette Interior. Photo order #97-63COR

CONTENTS

WHAT'S INSIDE

Now You See It . . .

2

Chevrolet's public debut of the '97 Corvette turns out to be a magical event.

The Best Just Got Better

4

A summary of new Corvette features for '97 along with improvements in structure, ride/handling, power, space and styling.

Specifications

7

Latest available 1997 dimensions and basic specs.



What Puts the 'Vette in Corvette?

8

Avid Corvette enthusiasts within Chevrolet made sure that the new model delivers everything Corvette lovers have come to expect, and more.

Features

9

A summary of 1997 standard and optional features.

This Car is Our Car

10

A nostalgic look at the car that means as much to Americans as hot dogs and apple pie.

Now You See It . . .

CHEVROLET'S PUBLIC UNVEILING OF THE '97 CORVETTE WAS ONE NEAT TRICK.

Detroit, Mich. - Chevrolet used its own brand of automotive magic to introduce the '97 Corvette.

Using state-of-the-art special effects and Las Vegas-style showmanship, Chevrolet officially unveiled the 1997 Corvette to the world for the first time on Jan. 6, 1997.

During the months leading up to the unveiling, Chevrolet kept a tight lid on Corvette information. Very few Corvettes ever made it outside of GM's Proving Grounds in Michigan and Arizona without heavy camouflage. Except for select journalists and a couple of last-minute "spy photographs" - one taken by the tenacious automotive photographer and Detroit-based editor of *Popular Mechanics*, Jim Dunne - few people beyond the Corvette team had actually seen the new

Corvette in person.

According to General Director of Chevrolet Communications, Bill O'Neill, the veil of secrecy set the stage for one of the most intriguing product launches in recent history.

"The Corvette is news," said O'Neill. "So when we launch a brand new generation, there tends to be a feeding frenzy for information. It's really very exciting for us. We just couldn't resist the opportunity to dangle the bait until the very last minute."

In this case, the "last minute" was the Jan. 6 press conference, during the exclusive press days prior to the public opening of the North American International Auto Show in Detroit. Audiences in

Detroit and Los Angeles - linked via satellite - waited anxiously for Chevrolet General Manager John Middlebrook to break the silence.

In Detroit, journalists and GM executives gathered in an atmosphere of mock high security.

In contrast, the LA crowd reveled in a party atmosphere. With the audiences in Detroit and LA watching each other on video screens, the sleight-of-hand began. Vaults concealing the new car opened simultaneously in both cities and the new Corvette was revealed.

But only in Detroit.

The other 1997 Corvette, meant for the West Coast, was missing.

Was it a grand mistake, or was Chevrolet stretching the moment even longer to squeeze every ounce of energy out of what was already one of the most powerful product launches in recent history?

Enter professional magician Franz Harary.

When he's not performing to awestruck crowds around the world or warming up audiences for top stars such as Michael Jackson, Franz Harary spends his time thinking up ways to make the impossible happen. Harary was backstage coordinating the Corvette reveal for Chevrolet.

When the Corvette didn't show in LA,

Middlebrook and O'Neill sprang into action. O'Neill promptly disappeared into thin air on a mission to find the missing Corvette with a video transmitter strapped to his head.

The fun part was sitting back and watching the magic unfold. To the obvious delight of everyone in attendance, the Corvette disappeared from Detroit, and reappeared moments later in LA.

Middlebrook then made contact with O'Neill, who found the missing Corvette in the clutches of Jim Dunne. On his command, O'Neill and the missing Corvette reappeared in Detroit.

And as if the theatrics weren't enough, the Corvette

continued on inside back cover

G tcha!

Warren, Mich. - For years, members of the automotive press and Detroit insiders have known that a fifth generation Corvette was in the works. This led to a proliferation of rumors and an army of diligent spy photographers dogging Corvette engineers literally across the world.

The Oct. 28, 1996, issue of *AutoWeek* finally broke the tension with the first known published photo of a nearly undisguised production Corvette, taken by *Popular Mechanics* editor Jim Dunne. Up until that time, most of the photos published were computer-enhanced images of camouflaged test cars. As the public unveiling of the Corvette grew nearer, interest heightened. Numerous articles were published. Some of the information was surprisingly accurate, and Chevrolet insiders marveled at the enthusiasm with which the information was pursued, recorded and refined over time.

"The attention given this car is incredible," said Chevrolet's General Director of Communications Bill O'Neill. "It's been a real challenge hiding a product that is so sought after."

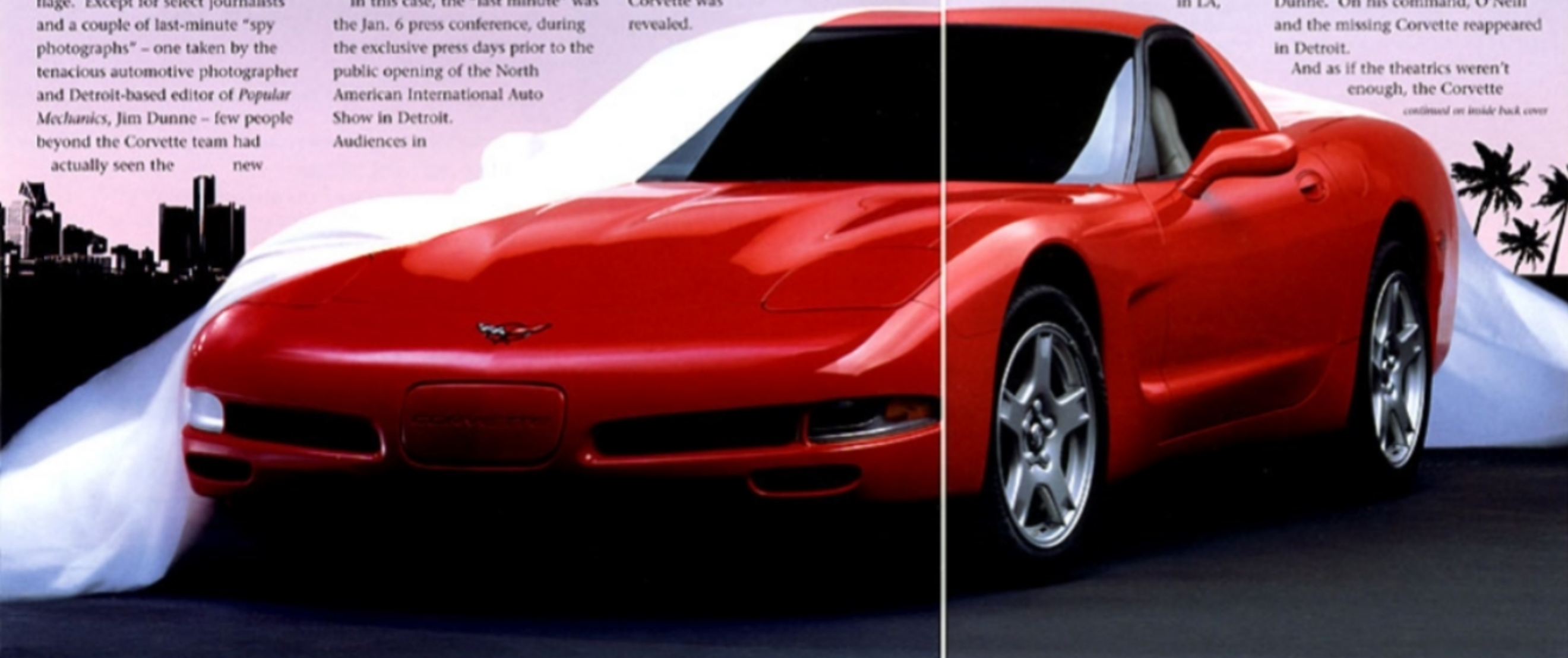
"On the other hand," he added, "by keeping Corvette a secret, we got the covers of some major publications."

If this keeps up we'll have to put Dunne on the payroll."

Chevrolet unveiled the Fifth Generation 1997 Corvette at simultaneous press conferences in Detroit and Los Angeles. Photo order #97-64COR



Jim Dunne, the photographer credited with the first published production Corvette "spy" photo, is caught by Chevrolet trying to keep his own identity a mystery.



The Best Just Got Better

A LOOK AT WHAT'S NEW ON THE BEST 'VETTE YET.

Warren, Mich. – Corvette's popularity has made it a market leader. More Corvettes have been sold than any other single sports car in history, foreign or domestic. In 1996, Corvette outsold its next nearest competitor two-to-one. No other sports car offers Corvette's complete package – power, image, technology and value.

Sports car aficionados hold onto your seats . . . the new fifth generation 1997 Corvette is better than ever.

A team led by Corvette Vehicle Line Executive and Chief Engineer Dave Hill

created the 1997 Corvette to outperform its predecessor in dozens of ways, from the user-friendliness of the interior and exterior to the superior performance for which Corvette is known.

"We examined our weak points and turned them into strengths," said Hill. "Things that were good, we made great. Things that were great are now even better. Even those customers who are import intenders are going to take a

long, hard look at Corvette.

"Make no mistake," he added, "it'll thrill our current owners. It provides more sports car for the money than anything in its



Dave Hill – Corvette Vehicle Line Executive and Chief Engineer. Photo order #97-41COR

market segment. It'll pull nearly 1g, and it starts and stops quicker than you can blink. It truly is the best 'Vette yet."

The Corvette was originally introduced in 1953. During its 44-year history – during which more Corvettes were sold than any other sports car in the world – only four distinct generations have been created. According to Chevrolet General Manager John Middlebrook, the fifth generation Corvette continues an important Chevrolet tradition. "Corvette is now, and will continue to remain Chevrolet's flagship," said Middlebrook. "It is our technological and image showcase.

Even more importantly, Corvette stands as the most singularly dramatic example of what we mean by 'Genuine Chevrolet.'

"Corvette is much more than just a car," said Middlebrook. "It's a love affair. Words alone fail to convey the passion it inspires."

Following is a synopsis of the changes and improvements made to the 1997 'Vette.

STRUCTURE

Engineers worked diligently to make Corvette's underbody structure stiffer than it ever was before. Why? By starting with a stiff foundation, engineers were able to improve many other areas of the car, such as noise, vibration, ride, handling and interior space.

For instance, Corvette's structure reduces objectionable noises and vibrations from the road and the engine compartment that can creep into the passenger area. A stiff foundation also helped engineers improve ride and handling. Here's how: In the past, engineers had to tune the suspension, in part, to accommodate the flexibility of the underbody structure. With a more rigid

1997 Corvette. (Photo shows entire vehicle) Photo order #97-65COR

structure, engineers were free to tune the suspension for incredible ride and handling.

RISE AND HANDLING

As any suspension engineer can tell you, ride and handling often work against each other. Great handling comes at the expense of smooth ride, and vice versa.

Not so with the '97 Corvette, which features a brand new exclusive suspension design, unlike some competitors who use off-the-shelf parts. Corvette's suspension engineers were able to customize Corvette's suspension to maximize both ride and handling.

For instance, because of the stiff structure, lower spring rates could be used to achieve great handling. Lower spring rates, in turn, improve ride smoothness. Also, different bushings were used for front and rear attachment points. Front bushings take the brunt of cornering forces; so, they're stiffer for better stability. Rear bushings are softer, to help the suspension absorb impacts over bumps.

Also new for '97: Corvette's suspension is height adjustable. Since few Corvettes are exactly alike, each car's suspension can be adjusted during production to match an individual car's weight and option content. Thanks to this new feature, customers can be assured of consistent handling from every Corvette off the line.

POWER

To millions of race fans, the Chevy small block V8 is the standard against which all other engines are measured. GM has been producing this powerhouse for more than 40 years for passenger cars, trucks, boats, race cars and commercial vehicles.

In 1997, the small block receives a new name (the "LS1"), and a new design. The cast iron engine block has been replaced with a strong, yet lightweight aluminum block. A long list of other technical improvements make the engine light, durable, fuel-efficient and powerful.

Engineers chose a "pushrod" design in lieu of an overhead cam design used on many engines, both GM and competitive. The pushrod design is the traditional design of the small block V8; it's less complex, and it allows a small engine package size so that the car's low hood

This full-scale rolling chassis shows Corvette's structure, suspension and rear-transmission configuration.

Photo order #97-66COR

line can be maintained.

Above all, the new engine is powerful. With 345 horsepower and 350 lbs.-ft. torque, the '97 LS1 small block produces more power than the 1996 LT1 or LT4.

STYLING AND SPACE

The '97 Corvette looks like a Corvette (see story, page 8). Research confirmed that Corvette must remain true to its styling heritage. So, designers maintained a stylistic link to past Corvettes - with features such as side air scoops, quad tail-lamps and analog gauges - as they crafted today's fifth generation Corvette.

A major goal for the Corvette team was to create more room for passengers and cargo. So, they took a radical step to improve interior space by moving the transmission to the rear, thus changing Corvette's basic architecture.

The results were dramatic. The '97 Corvette features more head, leg and shoulder room than the previous model. Foot room - an important measurement, yet one you won't find in most brochures



Designers and engineers created a clean, uncluttered engine compartment for 1997 - and a brand new LS1 engine.

Photo order #97-80COR

- has been increased on both sides. On the driver's side there was even enough room to bring back a favored feature among sports car owners - a "dead" pedal that serves as a left-side footrest.

Continued on next page.



Corvette Firsts

Warren, Mich. - Unlike the exotic sports cars it competes with, Corvette is mass-produced in volumes high enough to allow Chevrolet to test new technologies, and apply these technologies to other car lines. Following are a few examples:

- **Independent Rear Suspension** (1963). The second-generation Corvette introduced an independent rear suspension. Today, many of the passenger cars sold in the U.S. feature an independent rear suspension.
- **Four-Wheel Disc Brakes** (1965). Corvette was the first domestic car to feature four-wheel disc brakes. Today, many cars feature four-wheel discs as standard or optional equipment.
- **Serpentine Accessory Drive Belt** (1984). Today, most Chevrolets feature serpentine belts, which replaced multiple belts for reduced friction and increased durability.
- **Aluminum Suspension Components** (1984). The 1984 Corvette featured aluminum upper and lower control arms - an industry first.
- **Anti-Lock Brakes** (1986). Anti-lock brakes - available only on Corvette in '86 - are now standard or optional on all Chevrolet cars and trucks.
- **PASS-Key Theft Deterrent System** (1986). This system was credited with reducing Corvette thefts by 45 percent in the first year. PASS-Key and PASSLock - are common on today's Chevrolets.

The '97 Corvette is a showcase of new technologies that may someday find their way to other Chevrolet products. These include an aluminum small block V8 engine, electronic throttle control, new-generation Goodyear Eagle F1 GS Extended Mobility Tires, sandwich composite floor with balsa wood core, and hydroformed frame rails.

The Muscle Returns

Warren, Mich. – When the legendary small block V8 was introduced in 1955, it was considered "revolutionary." With today's small block, history has repeated itself.

The '97 Corvette LS1 small block V8 engine features the best of both worlds – an efficient, low-maintenance design with impressive muscle. The LS1 delivers 345 horsepower and 350 lbs.-ft. torque – more power than either Corvette engine available in '96. What's more, the LS1 features lower hydrocarbon emissions, excellent fuel efficiency and a first scheduled tune-up interval of 100,000 miles.*

With a redesigned block, cylinder heads, valve trains, intake/exhaust manifolds, pistons and oil pan, the LS1 is arguably the most sophisticated production small block ever built. The venerable engines of yesterday, while great, just weren't designed to meet today's demands.

Among these demands are federal emission control requirements originally introduced in 1972, which had an immediate effect on horsepower. At the same time, the industry switched to SAE net horsepower ratings that factor in the power draw of accessories (power steering pump, a/c compressor, alternator, etc.) providing a more realistic view of how much power is available to the driver.

In effect, a muscle-car era engine such as the highly-regarded LS4 small-block V8 of 1964-'65 (375 horsepower) would feature much lower horsepower ratings by today's SAE standards, and would lack the efficiency of today's V8.

Since the '70s, engineers have brought back the muscle while maintaining or improving emissions, durability and fuel efficiency.

Model Year	Std. Horsepower
1975	165
1980	190
1985	230
1990	245
1996	300
1997	345

According to Dave Hill, Corvette Vehicle Line Executive and Chief Engineer, the new LS1 V8 gained horsepower without requiring the added complexity and cost of overhead cams.

"The new LS1 V8 has the simplicity and compactness of the pushrod layout," said Hill. "But with porting so efficient and valve trains so light and stiff, it breathes like an overhead cam motor."



Corvette's new rear-transmission configuration and dual mid-ship mounted fuel tanks allowed engineers to nearly double the available rear storage space for '97.
Photo order #97-39COR

(continued from previous page) Corvette's rear storage compartment has nearly doubled. Now, the Corvette can hold two large sets of golf clubs in the rear compartment. Reach-over distance has been shortened to make the trunk easier to access.

Corvette's wheelbase is 8.3 inches longer with a wider track (equal in the rear to the ZR-1) which provides greater stability.

COMFORT AND CONVENIENCE

In redesigning the Corvette, designers and engineers examined every aspect of the car. As a result, Corvette for '97 is more comfortable, user friendly and intuitive than its predecessor.

Instruments, switches and controls are strategically located, creating an environment that is more in tune with driver needs. For example, the wiper control, parking brake lever, ignition and seat adjustment switches were all moved to more intuitive locations. The brake pedal is cast aluminum, providing a more positive feel and analog instruments provide a quick read of the car's systems.

In addition, a lockable, lighted glovebox returns for the first time since '93, and the center console has been redesigned with everyday small items (e.g., cassettes, CDs, portable phones, sunglasses, etc.) in mind.

On the outside, Corvette's hood is lighter and easier to open and close. The removable top has been simplified – it's lighter and can be removed without special tools. Side doors are lighter and openings are larger, making it easier to get into and out of the Corvette.

BUILDING AMERICA'S SPORTS CAR

The Corvette Assembly Plant in Bowling Green, Ky., has been Corvette's exclusive home since 1981. More than 380,000 Corvettes have been produced in Bowling Green, including the one-millionth 'Vette in 1992, and the entire run of the fourth generation, from '84 to '96.

The Bowling Green plant is among the most sophisticated in the industry, using computerized production techniques and one of GM's finest paint processes.

According to Hill, build quality was a top priority for the fifth generation Corvette.

"Owners in this segment expect excellent quality," said Hill. "While time will tell, I believe that this Corvette will be remembered as one that took a major leap forward into the 21st century in terms of quality and consistency, car after car."



The '97 Corvette is crafted with quality at its exclusive assembly facility in Bowling Green, Ky. Photo order #97-36COR

*May vary with driving conditions.



Kimble drawing
(front and rear views)
Photo order #97-SSCOR

SPECIFICATIONS

General

Body Style	2-Door Hatchback Coupe
Model No.	1YV07
Curb Weight, auto. trans. (lbs.)	3,229
Curb Weight, man. trans. (lbs.)	3,218

Powertrain

Engine	LS1 V8
Displacement (liters)	5.000
Fuel Delivery	Sequential Fuel Injection
Block Material	Cast Aluminum
Horsepower (SAE net @ rpm)	345 @ 5,600
Torque (SAE lbs.-ft. @ rpm)	350 @ 4,400
Bore x Stroke (in.)	3.90 x 3.62
Compression Ratio	10.1:1
Std. Transmission	Rear-mounted 4-spd. auto.
Opt. Transmission	Rear-mounted 6-spd. man.

Mechanical

Front Suspension	Short/long arm double wishbone
Rear Suspension	Short/long arm double wishbone
Steering Ratio	16.1:1
Brakes	4-wheel disc w/4-wheel anti-lock
Tires, Front	P245/40Z96 17
Tires, Rear	P275/40Z96 18

Interior

Head Room (in.)	37.8
Leg Room (in.)	42.7
Shoulder Room (in.)	55.3
Hip Room (in.)	54.2
Passenger Volume (cu. ft.)	51.4
Trunk Volume (cu. ft.)	25.0

Exterior

Wheelbase (in.)	104.5
Length, overall (in.)	176.7
Width, overall w/out mirrors (in.)	73.6
Height, overall (in.)	47.7
Trunk Lifter Height (in.)	36.7

Performance*

0 - 60 mph, man. trans. (sec.)	4.72
0 - 60 mph, auto. trans. (sec.)	5.06
Top Speed (mph)	172
1/4 Mile (sec./mph)	13.36/106.4
Lateral Acceleration (g)	0.93
Coefficient of Drag	0.29

*Figures are for comparison purposes only. Vehicle performance measured on a closed track under controlled conditions by professionally trained drivers. Obey all laws and speed limits, and buckle up for safety.

Mean, lean test machines



Photo order #97-67COR

Gainsville, Ga. - Corvette engineers are not very nice. Just ask any 1997 Corvette test car.

In order to create a Corvette that could stand up to the rigors of everyday driving and weekend racing, engineers devised cruel and unusual tortures for pre-production Corvettes.

Corvette prototypes covered in excess of 500,000 miles on two continents, undergoing extreme speed, temperature, altitude, braking and endurance conditions - all of which stressed components well beyond what most customers will ever experience.

The most grueling test of all: The simulated "press test." This test was meant to recreate a long lead press event - much like the one conducted in Bowling Green, Ky., and Gainsville, Ga., during November 1997. At the press events, journalists do their best to push the Corvette to its theoretical limits and then leave it trackside to idle for a few moments before the next journalist's thrashing. This stop-and-go punishment is the worst kind of torture, yet Corvette passed this and other tests with flying colors. 🏁

What Puts the 'Vette in Corvette?

CORVETTE LOVERS GET WHAT THEY WANT . . . AND MORE.

Warren, Mich. - Though many have tried, few can explain the almost magical appeal of the Corvette over the past 44 years. With every new generation, designers and engineers are faced with not only recreating the magic formula, but improving it.

The goal of the '97 Corvette team was to keep everything that Corvette fans have grown to love and expect from their car, while turning weaknesses into strengths. The desired result was a better Corvette that would not only thrill die-hard Corvette fans, but would appeal to a broader range of buyers, including import intenders.

Does the Fifth Generation Corvette pass muster? Insiders who have driven the new 'Vette give an enthusiastic "yes!"

According to John Heinrich, Director of Corvette Total Vehicle Integration Engineering, the new Corvette gives 'Vette traditionalists everything they asked for, and more.

Heinrich is both a Corvette engineer and a long-time Corvette racer and sports car enthusiast. In 1990, Heinrich was one of a team of drivers who broke world speed records in a pair of Corvettes. During his career, Heinrich has won four World Challenge Sports Class driver's championships. As one who has spent considerable time behind the wheel testing, evaluating and racing, Heinrich is one of the Corvette's most astute and enlightened critics.

"The driver in me couldn't be more pleased with the '97 'Vette," said Heinrich. "Anyone who has spent a significant amount of time in a Corvette is going to see that we made a big leap forward. We improved ride, handling, comfort, quality, power and refinement."

Heinrich added that a long list of improvements - stiff underbody structure,



The '97 Corvette is the ultimate boulevard touring coupe, or weekend racer. Take your pick! Photo order #97-86COR

larger brake rotors, refined instrument layout, lower drag coefficient, - helps drivers perform behind the wheel, whether they're weekend racers or boulevard cruisers on a shopping trip.

"Take the Magnasteer II® steering system for example," said Heinrich. "We chose to use it because of the extra preciseness and crispness it gives to the handling of the car, especially in high performance driving. It also makes it a lot easier to drive your Corvette in everyday situations, like parking the car."

RECREATING A LEGEND

So what's the secret? Pure horsepower? The '97 LS1 V8 engine has more horsepower than either available engine in '96. Is it ride and handling? The '97 Corvette

uses a custom-designed short/long arm (SLA) suspension at all four wheels - typical of most sophisticated race cars - yet it's tuned to provide a smooth ride as well.

What about style? The '97 Corvette blends a subtle combination of lines and shapes that, put together, make people of all ages stop and stare.

With so many critical eyes focused on the new Corvette, how did Chevrolet recreate a legend? The Corvette team faced the challenge with a clear vision of the demands of the sports car buyer.

"We know our buyers," said Corvette Chief Designer John Cafaro. "So while there was a whole list of areas we wanted to improve, we knew in our hearts that this Corvette had to be instantly recognizable as a Corvette." Aside from a vast personal knowledge of the car, Cafaro and his team relied on research, which included in-depth one-on-one interviews, and a national survey of more

than 1,600 sports car enthusiasts. Following multiple consumer focus groups and clinics, buyers' comments helped confirm the styling direction of the new Corvette.

Research, and a life-long passion for Corvettes guided the Corvette team and ultimately led to those "magic touches" that put the 'Vette in Corvette.

"You don't wake up in the morning and say, 'hey, I wanna do Corvettes,'" said Cafaro. "It's something you grow up with. You dream about the car, then you drive the car, you restore it. You love the whole Corvette experience."

"The car's got a great future and it's had a great past," he added. "Long live the Corvette."

Here are a few of the heritage cues that keep Corvette's magic alive:

■ **Twin-pod cockpit with passenger-side grab handle.** The twin-pod look began with the first Corvette in '53. A grab handle first appeared on the '58 Corvette.

■ **Analog gauges and dash-mounted ignition.** Today's Corvette features the simplicity and function of muscle-car era Corvettes. Dash-mounted ignitions – which date back to the first Corvette – disappeared after 1968.

■ **Headlamps and taillamps.** Concealed headlamps and quad taillamps have been hallmarks of Corvette since they first appeared on the memorable 1963 Corvette.

■ **Side air scoops.** Thanks to the ability of composites to hold rounded shapes, Corvette's body design makes it one of the most recognizable cars on the road. The '97 Vette features side air scoops that continue into the door, much like the side coves of '56 - '62 Corvettes.

■ **"Fastback" style rear window.** The "fastback" look appeared in 1963, and disappeared in 1968. It returned on the 1978 25th Anniversary Corvette and has been a styling element ever since. 

STANDARD AND OPTIONAL FEATURES

Powertrain

5.7 Liter (346) Pushrod V8 Engine (SFI)	\$
4-Speed Automatic Transmission, rear-mounted (A50)	\$
6-Speed Manual Transmission, rear-mounted (M96)	0
2.73 Axle Ratio (Auto. Trans.)	\$
3.42 Axle Ratio (Man. Trans.)	0
3.15 Performance Axle Ratio (Auto. Trans., 010)	0
Traction Control	\$
Differential, Limited Slip	\$
Economic Throttle Control	\$
Exhaust, Aluminum Stainless Steel w/Quad Outlets	\$

Chassis

Brakes, 4 Wheel Disc w/Anti-Lock	\$
Steering, Magnetic Speed-Sensitive Variable Assist (Magnumflex II)	\$
Suspension, Fully Independent Front and Rear	\$
Suspension, Selective Ride Time Damping (F40)	0
Suspension, CurbHeight High-Performance (J51)	0
Tires, Goodyear Eagle F105 Extended Mobility	\$
Wheels, Aluminum	\$

Exterior

Daytime Running Lamps	\$
Lamps, Fog (190)	0
Floor, Composite w/Lightweight Balas Wood Core	\$
Frame, Polymer Steel w/Aluminum Windshield Frame	\$
Glass, Solar Tinted, Flush Mounted Windshield	\$
Headlamps, Retractable Halogen	\$
Mirrors, Heated Folding Exterior Rearview	\$
Moldings, Color Keyed Body Side (080)	0
Paint, Base Coat/Clear Coat	\$
Radio Antenna, Windshield/Rear Glass Mounted	\$
Removable Roof Panel, Body Colored	\$
Removable Roof Panel, Transparent (K22)	0
Removable Roof Panels, Body Colored and Transparent (K21)	0

Interior

Air Bags, Driver and Passenger	\$
Air Conditioning, Manually Operated	\$
Air Conditioning w/Electronic Dual-Zone Temp. Control (E20)	0
Cassette, Lockable w/Antitheft Lighter	\$
Cruise Control, Electronic	\$
Driver Information Center, Multilingual (English, French, German, Spanish)	\$
Floor Mats (034)	0
Glove Box, Lighted, Lockable	\$
Instrumentation, Analog (Speedometer, Tachometer, Fuel, Voltmeter, Water Temperature and Oil Pressure Meters)	\$
Low Tire Pressure Warning System	\$
Luggage Shade and Parcel Net (042)	0
Memory Package – Settings for Driver's Seat, Exterior Mirrors, Radio Pre-Set and Climate Control (AAB)	0
PAOS – Key Theft-Deterrent System	\$
Power Door Locks	\$
Power Windows w/Driver and Passenger Express Down	\$
Radio, Delco Premium AM/FM Stereo w/Cassette and Bose Speakers	\$
Radio, Delco Premium AM/FM Stereo w/CD Player and Bose Speakers (090)	0
Remote CD Changer w/Removable 12-Disc Cartridge (J11)	0
Remote Function Actuation – Auto. Door Lock/Unlock	\$
Panic Alarm, Hatch Release, Secure Return, Two Key Fobs	\$
Safety Belts, Driver and Passenger Lap/Shoulder	\$
Switchgear™ Fabric and Carpet Protector	\$
Seating, Leather Buckets w/Power Driver's Seat Adjuster, Integral Head Restraints	\$
Seating, Perforated Leather Sport Seats w/Power Lumbar	\$
Side Bolsters, Integral Head Restraints (113)	0
Seating, Power Passenger (A02)	0
Steering Wheel, Leather Wrapped, Tilt	\$
Tire Pressure Monitor	\$
Wipers, Intermittent	\$

Side air scoops, quad taillamps and a "fastback" style rear window are just a few of the '97 Corvette's heritage traits. Photo order #97-69COR

This Car is Our Car

ELVIS, LADY LIBERTY, AND THE CORVETTE ARE AMERICAN AS APPLE PIE.

Hometown, U.S.A. - To many Americans, Corvette is high on the list of national treasures, along with mom, baseball and apple pie. Many have grown up with Corvette, and some have been lucky enough to own one. Many others who haven't will admit that they dream about owning one someday.

Corvette is truly an American icon - a symbol of personal freedom and fun. It's as much a part of popular culture as any person, place or event. Corvette is permanently intertwined in the rich fabric of this country's history; its body styles and technological advancements serve as bookmarks in the chronicles of our changing times.

Following is a look back at the past 44 years, and how both Corvette and culture have evolved through the decades:

1952 Harley Earl, head of GM's Art and Colour Section, and a team of engineers put the finishing touches on a concept car named "Project Opel," later called Corvette. In the conservative, sedan-oriented world of Chevrolet, the Corvette is an eye-popper.

1953 The Korean War ends; Americans yearn for 3-D movies and a real American-made sports car. In response to the latter, Corvette appears in the GM Motorama and six months later, the first production Corvettes roll off the line. They come in any color - as long as it's white with a red interior. Only 300

original 'Vettes are built by hand in Flint, Mich. (By 1954, Corvette production moves to St. Louis, Mo.)

THE 50's
Corvette is born, and so are Sports Illustrated magazine and the I Love Lucy show. "Stiffing" erupts on college campuses... 22 college kids stuff themselves into a phone booth... 40 adolescents squeeze into a VW "bug." Despite this feat, Corvette still seats only two.

1954 '54 Corvettes are nearly the same as the '53s... except that they come in four colors: Blue, red, black and white. Other American happenings include a 'coonskin-cap craze, begun by Fess Parker's portrayal of Daniel Boone. Corvette's price rises only slightly, while the price of 'coonskin skyrockets!

1955 Disneyland makes its debut in Anaheim, Calif., and the small block V8 makes its debut at Chevrolet! The small block is revolutionary: lots of power and efficiency in a small package. Corvette engineer Zora Arkus-Duntov is the first to drive Corvette in excess of 150 mph at the Daytona Flying Mile Speed Trials.

1956 Romance is in the air... actress Grace Kelly becomes Princess Grace of Monaco. In an act of automotive passion, designers sculpt deep coves into Corvette's side panels and replace its "side curtains" with real roll-up windows. Dinah Shore sings "See the U.S.A. in your Chevrolet" on *The Chevy Show*, and Elvis sings on *The Ed Sullivan Show*, but only from the waist up.

1957 Wham-O* introduces the Frisbee® flying disk and Chevrolet introduces

fuel injection. Both are American firsts. Corvette achieves yet another first for an American production car - one horsepower for every cubic inch of engine displacement (283 cubic inches, 283 horsepower). Meanwhile, Dr. Dick Thompson (a Washington D.C. dentist) drives Corvette to a GT class Championship at 12 Hours of Sebring. And Dick Clark, looking much the same as he will for decades to come, hosts the first American Bandstand.



1958 Corvette is laden with chrome, and the '58 becomes known among fanatics as the shiniest 'Vette yet, complete with two signature chrome trunk strips and a face full of chrome teeth. Kids who have not yet achieved driving age are too busy practicing with their Hula Hoop® sport toys to notice.

1960 *Route 66*, a TV show starring a Corvette convertible, makes news. New technology for the year includes the first laser (built by Hughes Aircraft) and the use of aluminum for cylinder heads and radiators on select Corvettes. Both accomplishments, however, were overshadowed among America's youth by Chubby Checker's recording of *The Twist*.





1963 The dashing actor Sean Connery makes his debut as James Bond in *Dr. No*, and the handsome second generation "Split Window" Corvette is born.

The rear window divider is criticized for its intrusion into the driver's rear view, so it's dropped for 1964. (Judging by the value of a '63 Split Window Coupe today, owners evidently have learned to live with the intrusion.)

1964 Corvette driver Don Yenke beats the pants off the competition in the SCCA B class and Dick Guildstrand shames his opponents in the GT class at the Daytona Continental. Cassius Clay follows suit by beating Sonny Liston to become boxing's heavy-weight champion, and The Beatles conquer America.

1965 Astronaut Ed White leaves the Gemini 4 to become the first man to walk in space. Meanwhile back on earth, Corvette becomes the first domestic American car to offer four-wheel disc brakes. An optional big block 396 cubic-inch V8 with 425 horsepower turns Corvette into a land-bound rocket ship.



1967 The second generation Corvette Sting Ray convertible and fast-back coupe enter their final year of production. To cheer up Americans, Dan Rowan and Dick Martin air the first *Laugh In*. ("Sock it to me!")

1968 The third generation Corvette - based on the styling of the Mako Shark show car - is introduced, along with

"T-top" removable roof panels and new pop-up headlamps. *Car and Driver* readers choose Corvette as their favorite, and Aristotle Onassis chooses Jackie as his favorite.

1969 The 250,000th Corvette rolls off the line at St. Louis on November 19. Corvette is the highest-selling two-seat sports car in the world. The significance of the 427 cubic-inch L71 V8 is not lost on Corvette fans: At 435 horsepower, it's the highest-rated 'Vette production engine ever.

An even bigger engine takes Apollo 11 and its three astronauts to the first moon landing.

1971 A sign of the times... from now on, all Corvette engines will run on unleaded fuel.

1972 New federal emission standards are introduced, lines are getting long at gas stations and the muscle car era is effectively over. Corvette, America's most enduring sports car, shrugs off the news by posting annual sales higher than either of the past two model years.

1974 Big block customers take home the last Corvette 454 cubic-inch V8 engines ever offered. And twice as many Americans take home CB Radio licenses in one year than in the past 15 years combined.

1975 This is Corvette's last year to offer a convertible until 1986, and its first year to offer a catalytic converter, headlamp warning buzzer and

high-energy ignition system. A kilometer-per-hour speedometer signals Corvette's widening global appeal, while on the homefront Americans are falling for pet rocks and mood rings.

1977 The 500,000th Corvette is built on March 15 in St. Louis. While Luke Skywalker cruises through space in *Star Wars*, Corvette drivers experience cruise control for the first time.



1978 A special Silver Anniversary badge replaces the familiar crossed flags for the model year. And remember that fastback body style of the 1963-'67 Coupes? It's back on the 25th Anniversary Corvette. Also making a comeback is the ancient tradition of toga-wearing, thanks to John Belushi and friends in the movie *Animal House*. In other entertainment news, the film *Corvette Summer* is released.

1980 The Ideal Toy Company puzzles the industry by selling 4.5 million Rubik's Cubes. Corvette solves its own puzzles with a weight-saving rear axle and a new low-profile hood. John Travolta proves that being an urban cowboy is a bunch of mechanical bull.

1981 A dot-eating menace known as Pac Man™ chomps his way into the hearts of video arcade junkies across the country. The first space shuttle leaves the earth, and Corvette production leaves St. Louis for its new home in Bowling Green, Ky. A Corvette innovation - fiberglass-reinforced composite monoleaf rear springs - is intro-

duced, and Corvette is presented with the Society of Plastics Engineers' Grand Award.

(Continued on next page.)

THE 60's
The muscle car era rules. Corvette turns 17 in 1969, falling within the prevailing guideline: "Don't trust anyone over 30." Hundreds of thousands of American youths end the decade by playing in the mud and listening to rock and roll music for three days on a 600-acre dairy farm near the town of Woodstock, N.Y. Corvette wears three distinct body styles during the '60s, while Americans wear everything from Nehru jackets to granny glasses to tie-dyed T-shirts.

THE 70's
While disco, platform shoes and puka-shell necklaces came and went, the Mako Shark body style endured throughout the decade, making it the longest-running Corvette generation to date. Despite oil embargoes and tightening federal standards, Corvette ended the decade on a positive note with a record production year in 1979 of 53,807 units.

1982 Americans who don't like change are in for a surprise in 1982. Corvette introduces Crossfire Fuel Injection, with twin electronic fuel injectors and a specially designed manifold, and eliminates carburetion from the engine lineup. On a broader scale, the compact disc is introduced, sending "LPs" toward extinction.

1983 In the midst of redesigning the Corvette for 1984, Chevrolet decides not to produce a 1983 Corvette, creating an excellent trivia game question for future generations. (They do, however, build 43 test vehicles, of which only one remains and is on display at the National Corvette Museum in Bowling Green, Ky.) The only item more rare than an '83 'Vette is, possibly, one of the Cabbage Patch Kids® during the winter holiday season.

1984 The fourth generation Corvette is born (released in April, '83). The 750,000th Corvette is built on October 26, 1983 – a white coupe with a red interior, in honor of the first Corvette ever built. Also in '84, Mary Lou Retton wins Olympic gold. The media give the Corvette and Mary Lou rave reviews.

1985 Bill Cosby, Madonna and small block engine power make news. Corvette's 5.7-liter V8 features tuned-port injection and 230 horsepower – up 19 percent from 1984.

1986 For the first time in 10 years, Corvette offers a convertible and ragtop fans rejoice. The Statue of Liberty celebrates 100 years of illuminating New York Harbor, and on Corvette the center high-mounted stop lamp (or, CHMSL) becomes a permanent fixture.

1987 The Corvette is retired from the SCCA Showroom Stock endurance series, undefeated since 1984! Evidently, race promoters thought some of the slower competitors should have a chance to win, too.

1989 Corvette's reputation for technology grows, this time with a new 6-speed manual transmission with computer-aided gear selection, and an optional Selective Ride Control System. The Berlin wall tumbles, and the Barbie® doll turns 30.

1990 Corvette fans reverently remember this as the first year of the ultra-high-performance Corvette ZR-1. In March, a regular-production

coupe and a ZR-1 break three world endurance records that had stood for half a century, and establish a total of 12 international class records at Fort Stockton, Texas. The driving team includes three Corvette engineers.

1992 Performance from the new 300-horsepower 5.7-liter V8 is so impressive that Corvette engineers give it the legendary LT1 designation that harks back to the muscle-car era. The 1,000,000th Corvette rolls off the line in Bowling Green – a convertible with, you guessed it, a white exterior and a red interior, just like the first!

1993 Letterman moves to CBS, Jurassic Park earns record millions at the box office, and Corvette celebrates its 40th birthday with a special Ruby Red 40th Anniversary model.

1994 The National Corvette Museum opens on Labor Day Weekend, with an audience of more than 4,000 Corvette owners who traveled across the country to witness the event. Corvette gets dual air bags and sequential fuel injection, and

George Foreman gets another heavy-weight title at the ripe old age of 45.



1996 Chevrolet produces the Grand Sport, in honor of the '60s racers of the same name. In celebration of the final year of the fourth generation, the Collector Edition Corvette is offered.

1997 The fifth generation Corvette is born. Along with Dick Clark, the Barbie® doll and the Frisbee® flying disk, the all-new Corvette maintains appearance traits that provide a link back to the '50s. 🍷

THE 90's

Michael Jackson fades and Michael Jordan flourishes. Americans rediscover the Brady Bunch, the Flintstones, Mission: Impossible, the Beverly Hillsbillies and 101 Dalmations via the big screen. While many Japanese sports cars resign defeat in the American Market, Corvette endures and launches a fifth generation. The rest is history.

What's in a name?

Warren, Mich. –Would the Corvette, by any other name, be a Corvette?

When Corvette was still in the design stages, Chevrolet faced the task of finding a name that would complement the sports car image of the day – it had to suggest a sleek, nimble machine, one that was more compact and quicker than the stodgy, hulking sedans of the day.

Myron Scott, a Chevrolet photographer in the Public Relations department, was the one to suggest the name "Corvette" – the generic name given to a type of naval vessel that is small, fast and nimble.

Look in most any dictionary, and you'll find the generic definition of "corvette."

FRISBEE, HULA HOOP, and BARBIE are trademarks owned by and used with permission from Mattel, Inc. © 1996 Mattel, Inc. All rights reserved. Photos of Mattel products used with permission.





Chevrolet capitalized on the public's interest in the Corvette by staging a closed launch and a theatrical public unveiling. "A rare car warrants a rare approach," says Chevrolet's John Middlebrook. Photo order #97-03COR

(continued from page 3) returned not to the stage, but to the air space above it.

That's right. The Corvette defied the laws of physics and floated gracefully, seemingly weightless, above the stage. Then, two additional '97 'Vettes drove out to join the activity. Making its magical first public appearance, the Corvette proved itself a worthy flagship to lead Chevrolet into the 21st century.

According to Middlebrook, the Corvette is a rare car that warrants a rare approach.

"We couldn't see letting the Corvette out of the stable without a very special send-off," said Middlebrook. "This car is important to GM, and based on the attention it's getting from the automotive press and the sports car buying public, it's an important car to America's culture."

"This is a different Corvette," he added. "It's more refined. And as far as performance is concerned, 'phenomenal' doesn't even say enough. It's an exciting car. It deserves an exciting first public appearance."

Middlebrook suggested that the Corvette launch, with its emphasis on excitement and anticipation, was done in part to attract the attention of non-traditional buyers.

"We need to get the story out to people who may not have considered Corvette in the past," said Middlebrook. "This car has improved so much, in so many user-friendly ways, that these consumers are really going to be amazed at the changes we've made. They really need to take a look for themselves."

"Once they do," said Middlebrook, "we're confident they won't want to pay more for less car somewhere else. With Corvette's craftsmanship, quality and performance, there really is no equal in the high sports segment today."

O'Neill added that the competition for press coverage among manufacturers has grown so fierce that special treatment of major product introductions has become essential.

"The journalists who attend our press previews at the auto shows are a sophisticated bunch," said O'Neill. "Every manufacturer tries to out-do the competition. They've seen it all. In order to make an impression, you've really got to have something up your sleeve."

The one big question that remained in every journalist's mind after the press conference: "How'd they do that?"

"We'll never tell," said O'Neill with a smile. ☺

Okay, who started it?

Warren, Mich. — Who started the Corvette legend? That depends on who you ask.

Most will say that Harley Earl is the father of the Corvette. Earl was a California designer who became the head of GM's first styling department, the Art and Colour Section.

But Earl couldn't do it alone. People such as Maurice Olley, Ed Cole and Bob MacLean helped design, engineer and create the first Corvette prototype — originally named "Project Opel." This prototype later became a "Dream Car" displayed in the GM Motorama in January, 1953. Public response was so strong that the "Dream Car" became reality in six short months.

Many Corvette fans know Zora Arkus-Duntov as a Corvette legend. While Zora wasn't part of the original team, he joined GM soon after he saw the '53 car and forever left his mark by turning Corvette into the performance legend we know today.



Throughout its history, Corvette has been a product of teamwork. There have been contributions, big and small, made by literally thousands of individuals. According to Tom Hoxle, Director of Product Communications, "their fingerprints are all over this car, even if their names are not."

But who could forget the people who started it all back in 1953? Like Tony Kleiber. Kleiber found himself working on a small production line in Flint, Mich., assembling fledgling Corvettes out of a new material known as fiberglass. When the first Corvette rolled off the line on June 30, Tony was in the driver's seat.

So, did Tony start it? Rumor has it that the car was already running when he got in.





Corvette Legacy



1 9 5 3



1 9 6 3



1 9 6 8



1 9 8 4



1 9 9 7 - F I F T H G E N E R A T I O N

Photo order #97-01COR