

# ON SOLID GROUND

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Salute to Solid Axle Military Veterans



## Help from Walter Frame

by Mark Swanson

Upon reading one of the last issues of On Solid Ground I came across the article on Members' Cars written by Alan Blay. Alan recounts his car history and in 1974 he stopped in at Frame Chevrolet to see their 1957 FI Corvette. At the dealership they met Walter Frame, a Corvair collector, that had purchased the 1957 Corvette that he had for sale. After reading the article, I contacted Alan by phone and told him of my friendship with Walter Frame (hence this article).

I purchased a 1956 Corvette in 1982 and after the purchase I did several things that many of you do. I went over the Corvette to see if there were any flaws or improvements that I could make. Initially I made some mistakes, however, over time I became better educated with the 1956 model. When I purchase the Corvette, it had a Coppertone exterior, beige interior, hardtop and 225hp 265. The seller asked me if I wanted the convertible top and my girlfriend at the time tried to convince me to leave it. Thank God, I listened to my intuition and took the top. The relationship with my girlfriend did not last a lot longer because she thought that I was spending more time with the Corvette than her. I traced the Corvette back to 1958 at Midway Chevrolet in St. Paul Minnesota. There were two owners before me and the present mileage on



the car was 50,000. I started restoring the Corvette in 1984. After stripping the paint, I found that the original colors were Arctic Blue with silver coves.

**Back to Walter Frame:** I started purchasing NOS parts from Walter in the mid 1980s through the 1990s and past 2000. Walter told me that

he had always wanted a 1957 Corvette (Maybe he got the bug from the 1957 FI that he sold). Anyway, Walter would send me a taped shut envelope with pictures of the NOS parts and the prices he was asking. I do not think that I ever turned down a purchase and I looked forward to the envelopes that Walter sent. Pretty soon, my Corvette friends were calling me the NOS King for all the parts that I was purchasing. I started developing a friendship with Walter



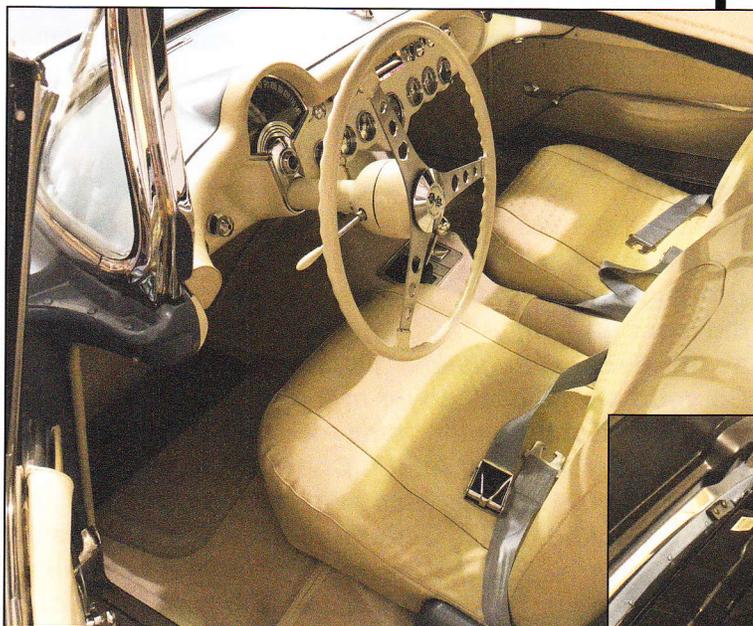
and one thing led to another. I purchased Walter's collection of Corvette emblems, his dealer albums for several years of Chevrolet, and many other items from the dealership. We had not talked for several years; and all of a sudden, I had a package delivered from Walter. Upon opening it up, I found a framed anniversary artwork of the Corvette through the years. I called Walter and told him that I did not think that I could afford the piece. He responded that it was a gift for being such a good customer.



run of 1956s is that they started using 1957 parts on them like the Wonderbar radio, etc.

I plan on having the 1956 Corvette judged in May at an NCRS Chapter Meet. I know how judging goes as I spearheaded the 1996 NCRS National Convention in St. Paul. I had a new family and a demanding job that prevented me from traveling to the National Conventions, so I decide to put one on myself by my home town.. I escorted David and Glenda McLellan along with Elfi Duntov.

Elfi's stories about her and Zora's escapades, including skinny dipping, her dancing days, her escape from Germany, etc. were absolutely wonderful. She wanted me to buy Zora's plane because she said I was the same size as Zora.



After the Chapter Meet, I may put the 56 up for sale, as I have a 1961 Low Horse FI and a 1965 FI that need restoration; and I am not getting any younger. Maybe there is a big spender out there for my 56?

Sincerely,  
Mark Swanson

I am presently finishing my several decade restoration on the Corvette with Walter's NOS parts. The interior is all original except for new carpet. I now know why a lot of people did not order the beige interior. My Corvette was built on August 27, 1956 and the VIN is 4200. What is different about the last

