

## 1969 Chevrolet Z28 Camaro



### Owned by Ralph and Carolyn Thiele

I have always loved cars. As a three-year-old boy I couldn't get enough of riding in my uncle's 1935 Ford coupe. My dad bought a new 1949 Ford Club coupe and would let me drive home from church when I was only twelve years old; I was big for my age. My dad died when I was fourteen. Being an only child, I started working at my love for cars at a Shell gas station where I washed cars, pumped gas and learned how to turn wrenches.

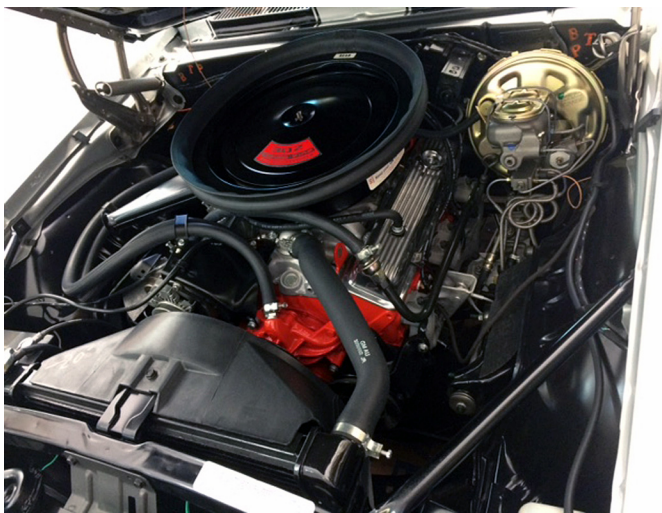
My dad's 1949 Ford became my first car at age sixteen. One year later I found out that the 1949 Ford was underpowered. So, an engine transplant was done with the installation with a full race Cadillac engine. Now the car was scary and fast. As Cadillac would increase their engine size, I would go bigger. Over the years, I did this four times. The last Cadillac engine installed was a 390-cubic inch with all the speed equipment I could put on it. It was a lot of fun learning the hobby, and it didn't hurt that I worked at a Cadillac dealership.



I had always wanted a Z28 from the time it came out in 1969. The love of these Z28s started when a friend of mine had a Chevrolet agency in Ohio and asked me to drive one from Cleveland to his dealership in eastern Ohio, about an 80-mile drive. That was it; what a ball I



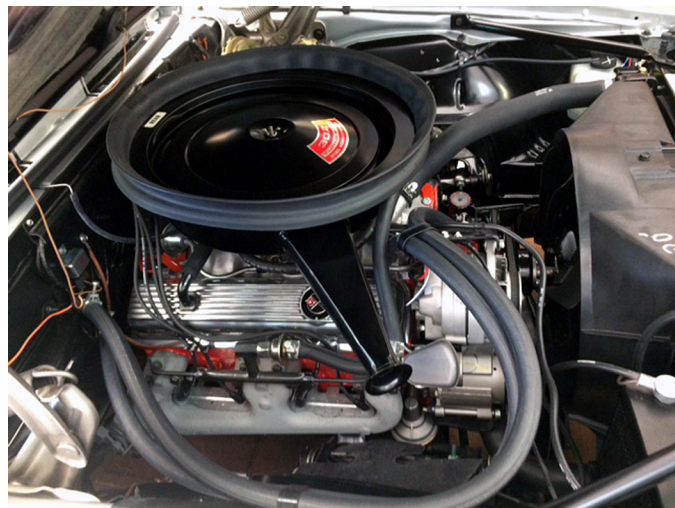
had putting that Z28 through its paces. It flew! These cars have a high winding, short stroke engine; they scream even though horsepower was underrated. Z28s were used a lot in road racing at the Sebring 12 Hour and Daytona 24 Hour races. Roger Penske campaigned these cars and won a lot of races all over the world.



They have always been a car in which to have lots of fun. In the spring of 2005 my son Bill spotted one at the Ft. Lauderdale Auction, called it to my attention, I bid on it, and won it; the rest is history.

My newly purchased Camaro was manufactured at a General Motors plant in Norwood, Ohio. It has a Nom DZ 302 cubic engine/290 HP V8 engine, 4-speed M20- transmission, 11:1 compression, X33 code car with style trim Group D80, 12 bolt positraction rear end, cowl induction hood, tachometer and gauge package, AM/FM radio, tinted glass, power disc brakes, wood sport steering wheel, center console clock, an aluminum intake manifold with a 4-barrel Holley carburetor, and no air-

conditioning. Years later the Camaro had a frame off restoration. Even with the professional restoration I needed to make a few improvements. The first was to achieve the car numbers matching status which was made possible by my son Bill. Some of the other improvements are as follows: new 15-inch wheels and new Good-year GT wide tread raised white letter tires, the correct date coded Harrison radiator and clutch fan, engine tie down strap, date code 4-speed shifter, new interior kick panels, and a date coded starter motor. Between the two of us we have four Camaros, so a lot of knowledge has been accumulated.



Thought to be one of the most recognized muscle cars in the world, our 1969 Chevrolet Z28 Camaro has received several local and national awards. A First Place was awarded at the South Florida Region Miracle Mile Car Show. A First Junior and Senior were awarded at two AACA National Meets. Lastly, it was an honor to receive a nomination for a National Award for an outstanding vehicle in the 2017 show year.

