

CAR TALK

CORVETTE NEWS:

If you've ever owned a third generation Corvette (1968 - 1982), you probably had trouble at some point in trying to get your headlamps to go up and down when you wanted them to. Most owners of these beautiful models learned to hate those vacuum-operated headlamp units. Only the 3rd gen Vettes were equipped with the vacuum-operated headlamps, while 2nd, 4th and 5th gen models all used electric motors.

Well, a company called Elite Custom Paint and Body has come out with an ingenious replacement for those faulty headlamp raiser-upppers. They designed units that perfectly replace the originals, but use electric motors to make them raise and lower. Everything you need to make the swap is included in a well-packaged kit, however I couldn't find the price for the kit.

If you're interested, I'm including contact information for Elite in the Car Talk package that'll go on our website.

Elite Custom Paint & Body, LLC
(706) 639-9493
www.ecpb.biz

I'm sure many of you receive e-mails from West Coast Corvettes. But if you don't, or haven't read them lately, I noticed they're advertising a spectacular 1990 ZR-1 that's on their showroom (unless it's already sold). I believe 1990 was the first year for the ZR-1. If you're not familiar with this version of the 4th generation Corvette, you'll be amazed by it. It's most distinguishing feature is the LT5 engine designed jointly by GM and Lotus. This V8 features 4 overhead cams and 32 valves. (This is not too exotic by today's standards, but this was 21 years ago.) It pumped out 375 horsepower at a time when the standard pushrod L98 Corvette engine was making 250 horses. The really interesting part is that the engine was built by Mercury Marine in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

The other distinct features of the ZR-1 were mostly body panels on the back half of the car. They had to make the car wider to accommodate the

huge wheels and tires that were unique to the car. 3049 ZR-1's were built for the 1990 model year.

This one only has 9,577 miles on the odometer! It is a very well preserved original car. It's painted in dark red metallic with a black interior and it is gorgeous. Best of all.....they have it priced at only \$26,900.

5 years ago, you would have been hard pressed to find a decent 4th generation ZR-1 for less than \$30,000.

OTHER NEWS:

Maybe you've heard about this—

The Bonneville Salt Flats is running out of salt. Now this area is a national treasure and unique resource of international significance central to the history of Motorsports. Hundreds of speed records have been set and reset here dating back to 1914. For decades, the Salt Flats have been decreasing in size, strength and thickness because salt has been removed by an adjoining potash mining operation and not adequately replaced.

Preservation of the Salt Flats is under the authority of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The BLM has issued an "Environmental Assessment" of the current mining operation that addresses future salt removal and replenishment. Our friends at SEMA provided comments to the BLM as part of the Save the Salt Coalition, a diverse group of racing enthusiast organizations. The Coalition urged the agency to adopt a plan which requires a mandatory salt replenishment program. Salt removed from the Salt Flats to obtain potash will be replaced in the same amount or more. The current mine owner, Intrepid Potash-Wendover LLC, supports this approach.

I was sorry to hear that Margie Petersen, wife of publishing great Robert E. Petersen, passed away on November 25th. She had fought a long battle with breast cancer.

Margie was actually born and raised in New York and was a top professional model, having appeared on hundreds of magazine covers, as well as in hundreds of TV commercials. Mrs. Petersen was also a television actress under contract with MGM. She was married to "Pete" Petersen, founder and

chairman of the board of Petersen Publishing Co., who died in 2007. Together, they were the founding benefactors of the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles. Most recently, she donated to the Museum their entire car collection, the building that houses the museum and a monetary gift totaling \$100 million.

Together, the Petersens owned the famous Scandia Restaurant, located on the Sunset strip, and Petersen Galleries in Beverly Hills, which featured up-and-coming Western and Wildlife artists. They were huge supporters of many of Southern California's major charitable organizations and were extremely generous.

Today, the Petersen Automotive Museum stands as the nation's premiere automotive museums, serving thousands of visitors each year. Its mission remains to educate and excite generations of auto enthusiasts with the fascinating stories, vehicles and people that have influenced the American love affair with the automobile.

FIX THIS:

Here's a problem that's apparently not too unusual.

The owner of a 2001 Corvette coupe stated that he has been experiencing an intermittent problem with his turn signals not functioning. It started in the spring and he first thought it might be because of high outside temperatures. If he started it when the weather was cool, the turn signals worked fine. But then he had the problem on a nice 74-degree morning. After driving for five or ten minutes, the signals started working again. The answer may seem surprising at first, but makes sense when you think about it. "You should start by looking carefully at the hazard-warning switch. The hazard flashers and the turn signal circuits are linked and a problem in one can impact the other. It's likely that your hazard-warning switch is failing and this is what's causing your intermittent signal problem. The next time your turn signals fail, try gently wiggling the hazard-warning switch back and forth a little bit and see if the signals come back to life."

DON'T BE THIS GUY:

Years ago, when I was a super brilliant teenager, my father told me to clean up the rather large oil spot that I had left on his driveway after working on

my Corvette. Being the super bright teenager that I was, I thought to myself, this will be easy. I'll just pour some gas on it and burn off the oil. Well, I poured the gas on the oil stain and let it sit a few minutes to fully dissolve the oil and then I lit the gas.

Now, the driveway at my parents house is about a hundred feet long and slopes gently towards the street. When I lit the gas, a huge fireball about the size of a UPS truck took off down the driveway and out into the street. Amidst the screeching tires, you could hear people yelling "WHAT THE HECK WAS THAT?!" Luckily, no one was hurt and no property was damaged.

I still work on my own cars, but I am very careful now, since I'm not nearly as brilliant as I was when I was a teenager.