

# i'm a corvette enthusiast

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**Joe Inama**  
Eagle River, AK



There are some gems hidden in the Alaskan countryside, even if they are in the rough. Joe Inama's 1963 demonstrates that if you are willing to dig deep enough, you'll eventually get to the gem, just like the prospectors did many years before.

Joe first got into Corvettes in 1970 while he was stationed in Hawaii under the employ of the U.S. Air Force. From that day on, he's been hooked. Since getting older, his obsession has grown to the extent that he now spends much of his time restoring a once discarded hulk to its former glory. "Taking a Corvette that someone has discarded either in an old garage or in a field somewhere





and bringing it back to life is something that only a car enthusiast can understand." He's now a member of the Anchorage Corvette Association ([www.alaskacorvette.com](http://www.alaskacorvette.com)) and several of his Corvettes have been featured on the club's Web site in their scrapbook section.

Joe concedes that driving the car is the biggest thrill since its completion, and even though his driving season only runs from May through September, he says that's what it's all about—the drive! Since driving was the biggest consideration, he decided to build the car to go as well as show. That meant that the engine installed

had a few more cubes punched into the block, making it a full-fledged 383 stroker with a GM roller cam and valvetrain, fast-burn heads, Hooker headers and a March serpentine pulley system. Also, a '69 big-block donated its disc brakes to replace the original drums. A Muncie M-21 still transfers the torque to the rear wheels, but those wheels are now held in place with heavy-duty offset trailing arms and spun with oversized drive shafts, all from Tom's Differentials. The wheels are 17-inch Torque Thrusts from American Racing and, to be sure that the wheels will fit, Joe installed wider quarter panels supplied by Greg Thurmond at Retro-Vette. Since originality wasn't a concern and he was basically building the car from scratch, Joe decided to cover the new engine with a big-block hood of 1967 vintage. Once all the bolting, building and bodywork were completed, this resuscitated Ray was coated in 2002 Electron Blue Metallic with a Black stinger by Alaska Sales and Service.

It took nearly two years for Joe to convince the owner to sell this Corvette, when it was basically a basket case. It had been disassembled in the mid-'80s and many parts were missing or damaged. Once he did finally get the keys and the title, it took him almost another two years to get it to this state. Time well spent. ■

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