



Keeping Chevy in the Family Means Four Generations of Love

Art Fehrman's father found the 1957 Chevy convertible in 1969 in a backyard in Chicago.

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By Sherri Coner

If Art Fehrman's 1957 Chevy could talk, what a long, happy story it would tell.

This car would definitely talk about sweet memories of Amy, Andy and Laura, Fehrman's three children, giggling in the backseat.

They were so excited, crawling onto the backseat after dad put the convertible top down on the way to treat everyone to ice cream.

"I never thought anything about throwing my kids in the backseat," Fehrman said. "And Amy would always ask, 'Dad, why is everybody waving at us? Why do they have their thumbs up?'"

Then just like that, it was 2012, and Fehrman was behind the wheel diving Andy and daughter-in-law Samantha from the church to the reception hall on their wedding day.

Lots of special moments are attached to this car, that's for sure.

Maybe the most special chapter of this story is the first one, which belongs to Fehrman and his late father, the second of three generations with the same first name.

In September 1968, the younger Fehrman joined the Air Force and left home.

Since he was stationed at Grissom Air Force Base, coming home on weekends was a two-hour drive one way.

As the son got better acquainted with military life, the dad kept an eye out for a dependable car.

In 1969, Dad scored when he found a 1957 Chevy convertible in a backyard in Chicago.

Fehrman drove the car home and back to base every weekend from March 1969 to January 1970. It never once broke down.

While Fehrman served overseas for 15 months, the car was stored. When he got home, he intended to return the luster to his beloved car by adding a brand-new convertible top and a sparkling new paint job.

On the way to pick up his son at O'Hare International Airport in May 1971, his dad gave a security officer \$20 in exchange for allowing him to park a huge surprise right beside the airport entrance.

"The day I got off that airplane and made it back to the United States, oh man," Fehrman said.

As he and his dad walked outside the airport to head home, a beautifully redone car caught the young man's eye.

"I said, 'Hey, Dad. Look. See that car? That's what I want to do to my car.'"

Initially, his dad seemed to be ignoring him, Fehrman said.

When the older Fehrman turned around, there were tears in his eyes as he handed his son the keys to that perfectly spiffed-up car.

"He just said, 'Welcome home,'" Fehrman said. "But I handed back the keys. I was shaking so bad, I couldn't drive."

In 1973, Fehrman bought his first brand-new car. The beloved '57 Chevy stayed in the garage unless the weather was perfect.

"That was the last time that car saw snow," Fehrman said.

Seven years ago, when Fehrman and his wife moved South, the '57 moved, too.

Then his dad moved in, too. Fehrman drove him around in the Chevy until 2017, when his dad passed away.

"No way this car will ever leave the family," Fehrman said.

He now has six grandchildren. One of those is less than a month old.

He recently special-ordered seat belts for the Chevy in anticipation of their visit.

"I can't wait," Fehrman said. "I'm so anxious to take those little guys for ice cream."

