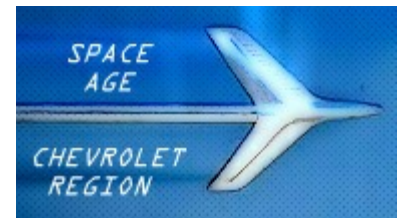


# SPACE AGE STAR

**JUNE 2020**



**1960 EL CAMINO AND SEDAN DELIVERY,  
PLUS AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOUNG  
CAR COLLECTOR**



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### EDITOR'S NOTES

“Strange days have found us...” That quote is from a 1967 Doors song, but it's appropriate now. I hope you're all avoiding the corona virus and not getting too stir crazy. Many antique car events have been canceled, so there's very little to report on this month. I was planning on attending the Grand National Meet and Hershey this year, but I'm unsure about going even if they hold these events.

The local Buick club had a Zoom meeting the other night. 21 members attended, and it went surprisingly well. Since we may not have any events to hold a region meeting at this year, a Zoom meeting is something to consider. We'll need a tech savvy member to arrange the meeting if we decide to have it. Let me know if this is something you'd be interested in doing.

Speaking of Buicks, I bought another one. Its a 1991 LeSabre sedan with 38,000 miles. Its in great shape and comfortable to sit in. I haven't driven it because the Department of Motor Vehicles is closed, and I'm unable to register it.

Thanks to Jim Jack for the very entertaining and interesting article he submitted (see page 3). Member articles are much appreciated and make for a better newsletter. As always, please feel free to submit articles and pictures for the newsletter. Feedback from members is also appreciated as it's nice to know what members have to say. See Frank Giannattasio's letter below.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR:

I really enjoy your newsletter and greatly appreciate all that you and your staff do.

A little bit about me- I am 77 years old (born in 1942) and grew up in New Hyde Park, NY. After buying my first car, a 1949 Ford flathead convertible in December 1958, I quickly replaced it in 1959 with a 1956 Chevy Bel Air hardtop. After some body customization and engine modifications I became a die-hard Chevy fan. In December 1960, I purchased a new 1961 Impala convertible powered by a tri-power 348. Again some customization. I sold it for a new 1962 Impala sport coupe. I thought I wanted a more economical engine so I powered it with a 283 3-speed. Big mistake. I then traded that in on my all time favorite car - a 1963 all black Super Sport, dual quad 425 hp 409 cid solid lifter engine backed by a close ratio (2.20 1st gear) 4-speed and a 4.56 positraction rear. Did minor customization and some engine work. I kept that until I traded in in on my first wife. Another big mistake.

My second wife and I now have a 2018 Malibu and a 2017 Impala. Great cars but not my 409. Maybe someday....

Thanks for listening,

Frank Giannattasio #999303

Thanks for the feedback, Frank. As I said, it's always nice to hear from region members.

Let's hope that things get better and that we'll be able to get the old cars out and see each other soon. Please stay well.

*Russell Heim*

# **AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF A YOUNG CAR NUT**

## **(IT'S AN OLD STORY)**

**BY JIM JACK - REPRINTED FROM THE JANUARY 2020 ISSUE OF THE BOW TIMES - THE CENTRAL TEXAS CLASSIC CHEVY CLUB NEWSLETTER -WITH KIND PERMISSION OF EDITOR DANIEL BOWEN**



Why does a person get interested in old cars? My wife was raised by an uncle who was a mechanic. When she was one year old, he bought a new 1949 Chrysler. She helped her uncle fish out dropped wrenches or bolts out of the engine bay when he needed that kind of help. He just lowered her down holding her upside down by the feet, and the little hands would grab the lost item. Over the years she grew up with a lot of cars around.

My dad was always a Ford man, and got his first car when he was in high school during the worst part of the depression. It was a 1927 Model T coupe. After his college graduation, he bought

an almost new 1940 Ford Standard coupe, which saw him through the war and into family life afterwards. I have only vague memories of that car, but I remember when he got a 1949 Ford four-door. No more crawling over the seats to get in back, I had my own door. Always a fan of Abraham Lincoln, he wanted the car Henry named after him, and finally got one in 1953. I remember him babying every one he had since then, spending hours every weekend washing and playing with it.

By the mid and late '50s, I was starting to consider what I would like to drive to high school, knowing the current crop would be 10

years old by then. I came to the conclusion that General Motors made the cars I wanted, so I started paying attention to V8 Chevys and Oldsmobiles. Corvettes were the cars that caught my attention, but that would not be possible in high school.

Back in the '60s in small town Iowa, not much went on, but I knew I would soon be 16, and should have a good car. One day in 1962, I was delivering newspapers on my 1959 J C Higgins bicycle, when I came upon an all-black 1956 Chevrolet station wagon parked in an alley that looked good to me. This 13-year-old kid started to doubt his cool, seeing, of all things, a station wagon that looks really good. They were not the cars that the young single hot shot would drive. Young guys are supposed to like hardtops and convertibles, and idolize the Corvette, and I like that station wagon? Still I did like the looks of the one I saw. That car caused a small identity crisis. Having a strong memory of that day, I remembered that station wagon well. For several years after, I continued to look closely at 1956 Chevy wagons, wondering why I thought that one looked good, but I never saw another one that flipped my switch like that. Was it a Starbird or Barris custom? I finally managed to discount the incident, figuring I didn't really see that car. Years later, as these cars crept into the hotrod

magazines I was reading, I found out that I had seen a Nomad.

When I was 18, I went hunting for a car in St Paul, Minnesota, and came home with a 1957 Chevy convertible. It was Matador Red with white convertible top, and showed 49,xxx miles on the odometer. When I got the car back to Iowa, I checked to see when the last oil change was done. The sticker on the door said it was done at 99,xxx miles. I also noticed that the carpet was a bit wrinkled in the back, so I pulled the back seat loose and found it was held by a carpet tack. This led to finding that the floor consisted of the remains of a Masonite refrigerator crate. All that remained of the original floor was the center hump and rocker panels. Experience is what you get right after you need it. We had lots of fun with that car, learning how to drive better by hitting everything in sight with it. Every time I hit something with it, parts of the fenders broke off and fell in the road. By the way, steel doesn't do that.

The exhaust system of that car was usually gone, due to weak finances of a college student. The overall picture was that of a badly damaged rusted out wreck that made a lot of noise. That reliable old wreck took me to Chicago in 1968, to Seattle in 1969, and to Southern California in 1971.



During this time, my father bought me a recent model 1967 Mustang convertible for my 21st birthday, but it just wasn't the same as having an old Chevrolet. The disorientation was aggravated by the fact that this car came from a car auction, and had been severely wrecked at some point in its very early history. Every month or so, I would be stranded by that car and towed in for an expensive repair, and after a year, the repairs had cost me more than the worth of the car. By that time, I had decided that a Nomad looked as good as any of the Corvettes I had always dreamed of, but I could pack a lot more stuff in a Nomad.

I started looking for a Nomad in fall 1968, but back then, you had to depend on want ads in the Sunday paper for a 10-year-old Chevy. When I went on the road, I bought papers in every major city I went through, but there weren't any Nomads in them. The Mustang took me to Los Angeles looking for work in the summer of 1970, which gave me a new source of want ads. The first weekend of August took me south to San Diego, where I saw an ad in the newspaper that only read "1956 Nomad \$100" and a phone number. I thought I really wanted a '57, would take a '55, but the '56 would have to be a good one before I would take it. As it turns out, the car was an almost perfect body with bad paint, bad interior, and no drive-line. Just what I wanted. I told my father, the Ford man, that I bought a Nomad, but he could not figure out why I wanted a trailer. Driving Chevys was bad enough.

On August 8, 1970, I paid the \$100, tried to hook up the Nomad behind the Mustang with a rented tow dolly, but I could not get the Nomad to follow a Ford. After several days of trying various ploys, I finally hired a drive-away company in San Diego to tow dolly the car to where my parts car sat. I gave the man \$220 and left town. Months passed, still the car did not

arrive as promised. I found out part way through my last year of school that the man I gave the money to had absconded with company funds, and left my Nomad sitting in a gas station. By January 1971, that gas station had it towed to a salvage yard.

Giving up on retrieval of the Nomad to the location of the parts car, I had to patch the parts car together enough to get it to San Diego. The 1957 convertible was now a ragtop, rag sides, and rag bottom, but I found it a good source of reliable parts. I got the Nomad running with the remaining mechanical parts of that 1957 Chevy. When I got back to San Diego, I found that I owed the towing and 4 months storage, and that I had arrived only a few days before the car was to be scrapped. The convertible top nearly blew off the '57 near Raton New Mexico, and we put it back together with safety pins. I hired the Nomad roughly assembled, got married, and left San Diego for the first Colorado Springs National Nomad Club convention. The Thursday before convention, I paid \$600 for assembly of that car, and left the '57 convertible for California recycling to bale and melt down. On the way out of town, the heater core blew, and the radiator didn't make it much further. I patched the cooling system together in the parking lot of a radiator shop, and drove on. The car had been mobile under its own power for about 30 hours by the time I got to Colorado Springs, and it was still 6 different colors when I got there. I ran it in primer for a while, painted it badly in 1973, but it was a good 20 footer.

The first Nomad club was founded about that time, and I joined immediately. No other car clubs wanted that vehicle, though, as it was just a 15-year-old station wagon, and a clunker to drive to high school. I was initially rebuffed by the HCCA, AACA, VCCA, and others, for trying to join a club with that car. It wasn't yet 25 years old. Why don't you graduate to a decent



old car, and get rid of that station wagon?

By 1973, I was a member of VMCCA and VCCA, but officially it was without a car. The people in the local Kansas City chapters took us in anyway, and appreciated what we had done with the car. It makes all the difference to somebody who loves their car when others notice it, and like it. It will be as hard for me to welcome the next generation into the old car hobby as it was for the generation ahead of me to take me and my 15-year-old clunker into their society. By the same right some 40+ years later, I have trouble recognizing the 2004 automobile as a collectable old car.

But a young 22-year-old may like his 2004 as much as I at 22 liked my 1956. Can we do as well as the people who took us in at that young age? I hope so.

I stripped it to primer in 1984. At this point, the Air Force transferred me to the Pentagon, leaving me no time to work on the car. This assignment was followed by an assignment to Germany, and I had to leave the car behind in the states. I came back to the states in 1991,

retired from the Air Force in 1992, and moved to Texas. By this time, I was used to not working on the Nomad. Car sure could use more than that primer job... As soon as I get enough money to outfit my shop, and as soon as ... um ...

At this point, I was aware that I could not restore this car to the level I wanted, so I looked around for several years, and found a restorer here in the Austin area. He took the car in April of 2006, and worked on it, along with his other projects, until mid-2009. During this time, he briefly attended the Nomad convention in San Antonio, as it was only an hour from his shop in Buda. When we got the Nomad back, we had to rebuild the PowerGlide several times, but we finally got it running properly in late 2012. In early 2013, we took it to a friend in central Nebraska for the upholstery, then drove it straight to the 2013 Nomad convention in Chicago from his shop.

Proof positive that you don't have to have money to be happy. Money doesn't buy happiness, but enough money will buy a Nomad, and that's about the same thing.

# 1960 EL CAMINO AND SEDAN DELIVERY



*The magnificent 1960 Chevrolet **El Camino**...*



Our look back at Chevrolet's 1960 offerings continues with El Camino and Sedan Delivery. El Camino, Chevrolet's distinctive car/pickup was in its second and, for now, last model year. 1960 was also the last year for the passenger car based Sedan Delivery. Chevrolet considered these small trucks commercial vehicles and gave them a separate brochure. In the brochure, the copywriters claimed that El Camino was: "A commercial vehicle that's a prize combination of business ability and beauty." The brochure also noted El Camino's "luxurious executive interiors with harmonizing decorator colors," and that "it's built for hard work with a rugged X-built Safety Girder frame."

1960 El Camino featured a 32.5 cubic foot pick-up box with double-walled side panels. The ribbed pick-up floor was made from 18 gauge steel. The box was 76 1/4" long, 64 1/4" wide, and 12 7/8" deep. Chevrolet claimed the bed was nearly eight feet long with the tailgate open and that the G.V.W was up to 4,900 lbs. El Camino offered 13 single tone exterior colors and 10 two-tone combinations. A new feature this year was a foot operated parking brake.

Sedan Delivery also received praise in the brochure: "The 1960 Chevrolet Sedan Delivery, with its handsome passenger-car styling, will do any delivery business proud, including yours." Chevrolet claimed that Sedan Delivery had up to 93 cubic feet of load space, and was rated at 4,900 lbs. G.V.W. The interior featured: "stylish passenger-car instrument panel...adjustable form fitting seat...and a large load compartment that's paneled in smooth, no warp, Masonite." An auxiliary fold-away second seat was optional. The one-piece tailgate opened upwards.

Both vehicles featured a 17 gallon fuel tank. Standard tire size was 8.00x14, with 8.50x14 tires being optional. Other optional equipment available was: Posi-traction, power brakes, radio, arm rests, passenger side sun visor, fender ornaments, cigarette lighter, e-z-eye tinted glass, heater, foam rubber padding for seats, padded instrument panel, and two-speed windshield wipers with washer.

El Camino and Sedan Delivery's standard engine was the 135 horsepower Hi-Thrift six cylinder. Various versions of the 283 cid and 348 cid V8s were available, ranging from 170 hp to 335 horsepower. The three-speed synchromesh transmission was standard. A three-speed with overdrive, Powerglide, and Turboglide were extra cost optional transmissions.



**1960 Chevrolet Sedan Delivery**  
**combines high style with high capacity**

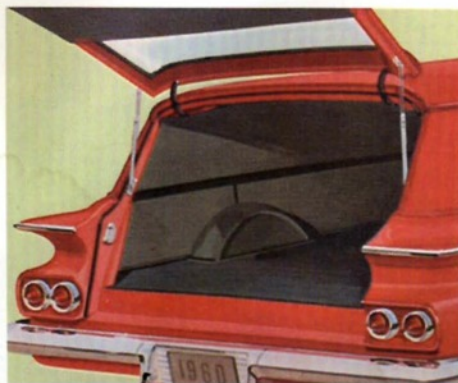
The 1960 Chevrolet Sedan Delivery, with its handsome passenger-car styling, will do any delivery business proud, including yours!

Interior appointments are practical as well as luxurious. They include stylish passenger-car instrument panel . . . adjustable, form-fitting seat . . . and a large load compartment that's paneled in smooth no-warp masonite.

You get space to spare in the new Sedan Delivery load compartment (93 cu. ft.!). Also, there's more room up front that can be utilized for extra packages. And there's more economy, too! Chevy's 1960 Turbo-Fire V8 provides a new economy-contoured camshaft for extra gas savings every mile you travel. And other engine choices, the Super Turbo-Fire V8 and Hi-Thrift 6, are first class cost-cutters, too. With all it offers in good looks and functional designing, the 1960 Sedan Delivery is a smart new answer to many delivery needs.

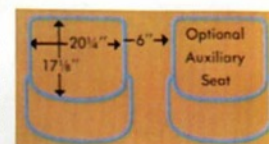


You get extra beauty and convenience, both, with that 1960 passenger-car-styled instrument panel. And you sit in a deep-cushioned seat that's steel sheathed at the back for added safety. Also, there's a new interior spaciousness: more leg room and more package space!



Full-width rear door swings up and out of the way. The roomy interior, with up to 93 cu. ft. of load space, can handle out-sized cargoes with ease. Maximum G.V.W. of 4,900 lbs. lets you pile heavy cargoes roof high! A tough, washable vinyl headlining extends from front to rear.

A comfortable auxiliary seat, optional at extra cost, folds out of the way for easy entrance to the load compartment. It lets you carry an extra man when needed.

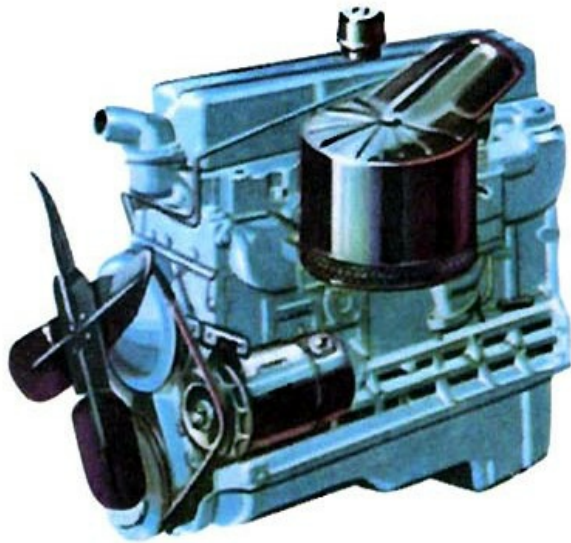




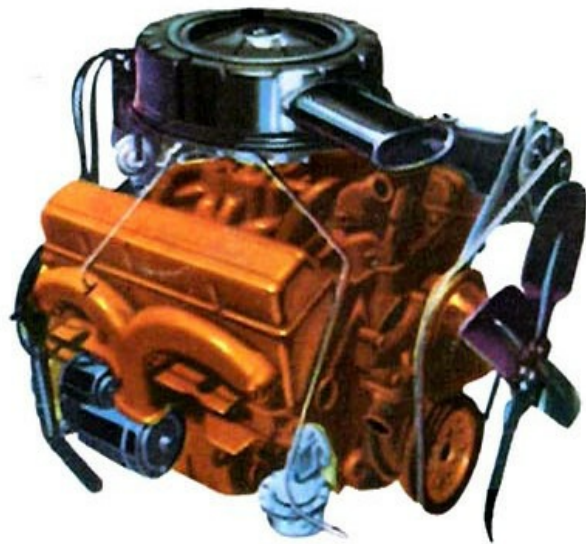


1960 El Camino interior illustration from the Chevrolet sales brochure. All illustrations in this article are from that brochure. These brochures can be found on the [oldcarbrochures.com](http://oldcarbrochures.com) web site.

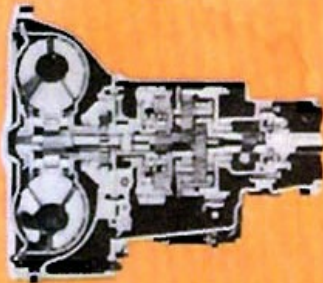
## Big-saving engine power



**Dependable Hi-Thrift 6**—This economy-minded 235-cu.-in. engine is now standard in El Camino model 1180 and Sedan Delivery model 1170. On-the-job dependability and long-lasting durability are assured by such premium features as forged steel crankshaft, precision alloy bearings, high quality steel valves and pressurized cooling. High 8.25 to 1 compression ratio gets extra power from every tankful of regular gas.



**Eight Efficient V8's**—Fuel economy is even better than ever in 1960, thanks to the new economy-contoured camshaft in the tough 170-h.p. 283-cu.-in. Turbo-Fire V8—now standard in the Sedan Delivery model 1270 and El Camino model 1280. Optional at extra cost in these models is the 230-h.p. 283-cu.-in. V8 engine. Five extra-high performance 348-cu.-in. V8's, with up to 335-h.p. are optional at extra cost in El Camino model 1280.



**Powerglide**—You can concentrate on driving and leave the gear shifting to this smooth, fully automatic transmission—owner proved over millions of highway miles. Powerglide speeds deliveries, reduces driver fatigue. Optional at extra cost.



**Positraction**—Snow, mud or slippery roads don't slow deliveries when you use Chevy Positraction. Positraction rear axle (optional at extra cost) directs power to whichever wheel is getting the better traction. Helps wheels to grip any road surface for more positive, safer control.



**X-Girder Frame**—Sturdy X-Built Safety-Girder frame provides a solid foundation that resists the stresses from maximum loads and rough roads. Box section side members and box girder center beam give extra rigidity.



**Safety-Master Brakes**—Quicker, safer stops with 199 sq. in. of bonded lining area. Wheel slots allow cool air to flow over the drums, while special flanges carry away the heat. Large lining and drum areas and the relatively cool operation all combine to give longer lining life.

All illustrations and specifications contained in this literature are based on the latest product information available at the time of publication approval. The right is reserved to make changes at any time without notice in prices, colors, materials, equipment, specifications and models, and also to discontinue models.

**CHEVROLET MOTOR DIVISION OF GENERAL MOTORS CORPORATION, DETROIT 2, MICHIGAN**

The *Space Age Star* is the official publication of the Space Age Chevrolet region of the Antique Automobile Club of America. This is a non-geographic region dedicated to the enjoyment, restoration and history of 1955 and later AACA eligible Chevrolet cars and trucks. We publish the newsletter six times a year.

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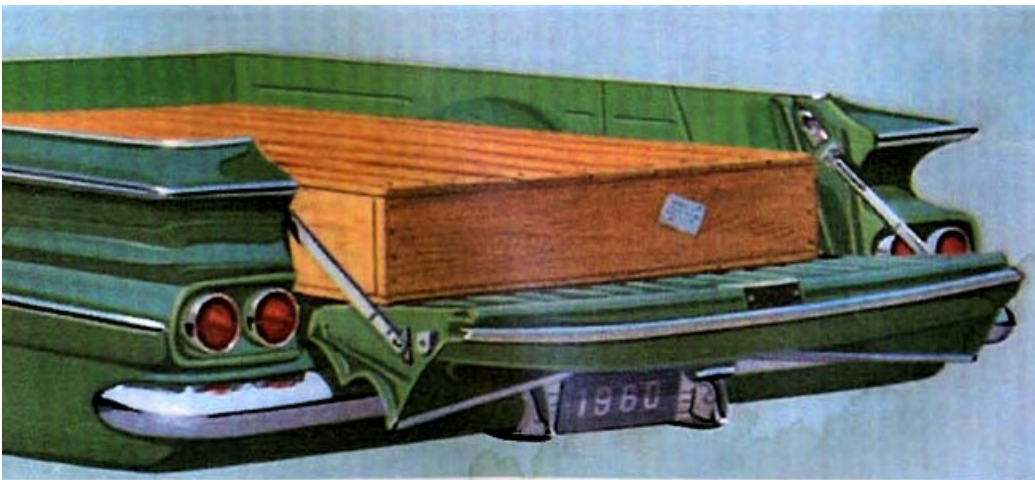
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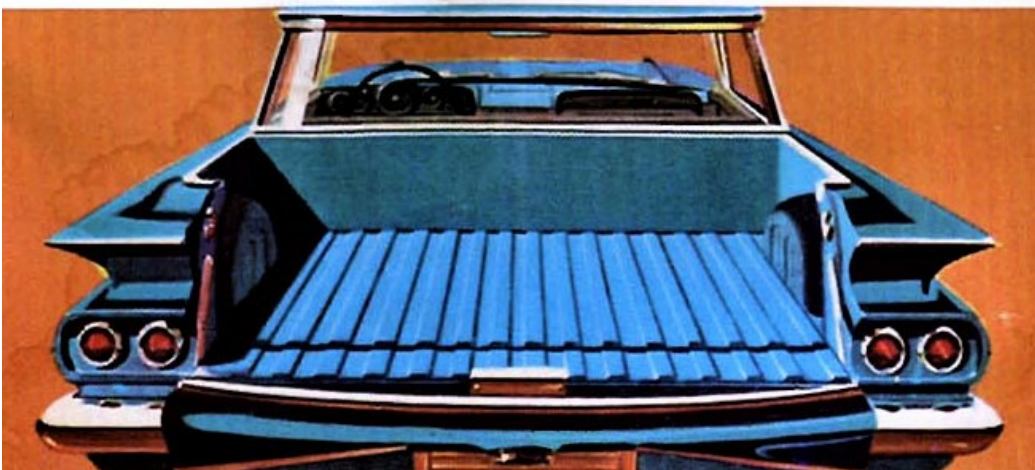
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The 1960 El Camino's strong, tailgate supports extra long, extra heavy loads; tailgate's double-walled construction helps keep the sculptured rear looking like new. When lowered flush with the floor, it forms a platform nearly 8' long. Closed, it forms a graintight seal.



This smooth-lined beauty is built for work! All-steel body has an 18-gauge ribbed-steel floor. Spacious pickup box is 76¼" long, 64¼" wide and 12⅞" deep. Rear license plate is hinged for vehicle identification when tailgate is lowered.