

Fred Gallasch '66, Corvette developer

Driving around the village of Franklin, Michigan, characterizes Fred Gallasch '66. He loves the community and he loves his cars. He winds through the

narrow streets of the Detroit suburb pointing out homes, town offices, and the community church. "It really is a community church," he says. "We vote there and hold meetings there."

He stops at an intersection, waits for the traffic to clear, and then punches the engine. He also loves to drive fast.

After graduating from Hampden-Sydney with a degree in mathematics, he earned an MA and a PhD in economics from North Carolina State University. He had been teaching economics while earning his doctorate and decided that he needed actual business experience to become an effective professor. He landed a job in the societal analysis department in the research labs of General Motors.

He says his math background from Hampden-Sydney helped him get the job at GM. "They were hiring people from different

fields—economics, physics, sociology, even an anthropologist—people who used mathematics and statistics as a common language." He led groups studying government regulations, energy issues, and product quality. The research was used to develop marketing plans.

Later, Gallasch moved to the corporation's Chevrolet division, where he was intimately involved in the development of the fifth generation of the Corvette.

That combination was a perfect fit. Gallasch has always been a car lover. "I think I got it from my mother. She always had to have the latest and greatest. She would have to get a new car every two or three years." He joined General Motors in the early 1970s and bought his first Corvette in 1975. Almost 30 years later, he has six of them.

Though out of the research and development department, Gallasch was still putting his mathematics background to use. He was technology director and assistant brand manager for the Corvette division of Chevrolet—a job which included accumulating and analyzing a great deal of market data. After learning what Corvette owners—and potential owners—wanted, he oversaw the development and implementation of the desired changes.

"We did a lot of focus groups. We would bring in owners of other performance cars and show them mock-ups of the new Corvettes without telling them what car it was. They would tell us what they liked and didn't like, but

eventually they'd figure out the car was a Corvette. Most everyone reacted fine—except the Porsche owners. Once they figured out we were with Corvette they stopped giving us feedback, so we stopped inviting them."

He travels to Corvette shows around the county and is regarded as an expert by collectors. After years behind the scenes at Chevrolet, he can speak confidently about the car's performance elements, its styling, and its history. Because of his unique position as one involved in the car's design and as an enthusiast, Gallasch has a deep personal connection to Corvettes. He sold his first Corvette and calls that a huge mistake. He almost sold a second one, but could not go through with it: "It literally made me sick."

Only two of his six are road-ready. "It's too expensive to keep them all tagged and insured." The yellow one, a 2002 Z06, is his everyday driver. He also has a 1980 L82, a 1985 Z51, a 1989 roadster, a 1996 Grand Sport, and a one-of-a-kind 2004 Commemorative Z06.

They are all parked efficiently in his garage, which bears a Chevrolet "bow tie" logo on the floor. Four of the Corvettes are parked in a space that would normally fit three cars and two more are parked on lifts; there is little else in the large room. "Garages are for cars," he says matter-of-factly. "I have friends who have come home to find that a rake or a shovel has fallen on their car. One friend had a bookshelf full of books fall on his car." The two Corvettes parked farthest from the garage door are covered. The others have a brilliant shine.

Gallasch laughs a little about how often and meticulously Corvette owners wash their cars. "I had 25 friends visit for a week and in their schedule of things to do, I blocked out times for them to wash their cars." During a Corvette show in Colorado, Gallasch got up early at his hotel to wash the Corvette he was borrowing from a friend. When he got outside, he found a man already washing a Corvette—one the

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man was renting for \$200 a day.

When you boil it down, Gallasch is not passionate so much about his cars as he is about people. "I love Corvettes. But if the cars went away tomorrow, I would still have dear friends around the world." Names of friends from New Jersey to Australia come quickly and with sincere smiles. He tells stories about others with zest and admiration, a true quality of friendship.

The passion Gallasch has for his cars he also has for the community where he lives. Franklin, home to about 3,000 people, is situated 20 minutes from downtown Detroit, but unlike other suburban areas, it has distinct rural qualities about it. All of the homes have well water. The streets do not have sidewalks, and they wind through the neighborhoods as if following the contours of the land. The village offices are in an old home near the center of town, which also has a park and the community church.

After moving to Franklin, Gallasch met some folks involved in local politics. "We meet at the Starbucks every Sunday morning and scheme." His friends convinced him to run for the village council; he won and serves as a village trustee. He fondly recalls battles over whether to install a sewage system and a cell phone tower. "That's what I love about our country, our democracy. You fight for what you want. Sometimes you lose, but sometimes you win."

Gallasch holds precious the ability for communities to make their own laws. He worries that the higher levels of government are taking that privilege away, so he has started getting involved in some state politics, too.

Corvettes are the ultimate vehicle for Fred Gallasch. Not only do they literally take him from place to place, but they also take him from person to person, and from time to time. Corvettes connect his worldwide network of friends, his career, and the decades of his life.



Edgar H. (Eddie) McGee '85, The Rev. James L. (Jim) McGee '82, and Eddie's twin David McGee (Davidson '85) after performing at their nephew's wedding in Jackson, Wyoming.

home furnishings company, he has run operations in South Carolina, Nevada, Georgia, and Reynoso, Mexico.

1980

R. BRYANT HARE IV works with **John Corey '80** and **Tom Cottrell '82** at CSC Leasing Company, which is based in Richmond, Virginia. Mr. Hare will represent them in Raleigh, North Carolina.

Lt. Col. **BRIAN WITT, USAF**, is chief of the Health Services Management Division at Warner Robins Air Force Base in Georgia.

1982

MICHAEL R. CHEVALIER has joined Global Knowledge as the firm's market research analyst. The company, based in Cary, North Carolina, was recently ranked the 15th largest global IT training company.

1984

GARRETT JETER of Wichita, Kansas, was cast in a major supporting role in an independent film, *Turning Back*.

1985

CHARLES CANTUS was promoted to Managing Director of the global systems integration and management consulting company BearingPoint. He is based at the company's headquarters in McLean, Virginia, and is responsible for directing all government relations activities. Mr. Cantus lives in Arlington, Virginia, with his wife Susan and his two-year old son Robert.

1987

JIM MOORE is the administrative director of the Acute Pain Service for the UCLA Medical Center and was recently appointed to the position

CONTINUED ON PAGE 39

1944

BEN I. JOHNS and his wife Betty moved in 2008 to Westminster Canterbury in Charlottesville. He was excited to attend the Patrick Henry Society Reunion in April, attend a football game last fall, and meet President Howard.

1953

Dr. **HUBERT E. "PUCK" KISER, JR.**, was the Alumni Day speaker at the University of Tennessee College of Dentistry in February 2010.

1963

GEORGE B. CARTLEDGE, JR., of Roanoke has been elected director for HomeTown Bankshares, Corp.

1965

SCOTT M. HARWOOD, SR., has been named to the Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission.

1966

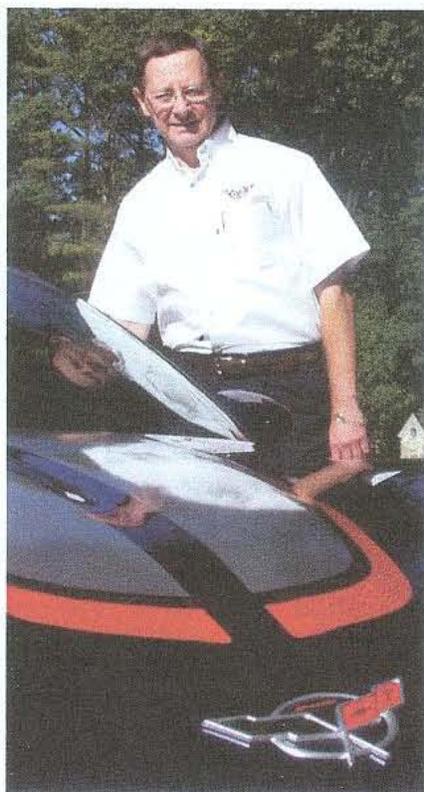
B. LOUIS BRIEL, JR., a writer and portrait artist, painted a portrait of Barbara Johns that will hang in the Virginia Capitol Building through 2010 before being transferred to Farmville's R.R. Moton Museum. In 1951, when Ms. Johns was 16 years old, she led a student walkout to protest the conditions of the African-American schools in Prince Edward County. Her subsequent lawsuit against the county became one of the five cases combined to form the 1954 Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education*.

Dr. **WILLIAM B. CRAWLEY,**



JR., was awarded *emeritus* status at the University of Mary Washington's commencement

ceremony on May 8, 2010. He has taught history at the University since arriving there in 1970. He was



Fred Galasch '66 with one of his Corvettes.

he and his wife, Terrie Crawley, received Washington Medallions for "extraordinary accomplishments, generosity, and service" to the University. Dr. Crawley is the author of *The University of Mary Washington: A Centennial History, 1908-2008*.

Dr. **H. FRED GALLASCH, JR.**, is being inducted into the Corvette Hall of Fame in September 2010. After earning his Ph.D. in economics from N.C. State, Gallasch went to work at General Motors and spent much of his career there working on the Corvette program. He has written several magazine articles about the brand and is a regular speaker at Corvette gatherings across the country.

1969

ROBERT R. HATTEN of Gloucester was inducted into the International Academy of Trial Lawyers on June 19, 2010. He has also been selected for the 2010 edition of *The Best Lawyers in America* in the specialty of mass tort and personal injury litigation.

1971

Specialists, Ltd., made the 2010 list of "Top Docs" in the April issue of *Richmond Magazine*.

The Rev. Dr. **KENNETH D. SHICK** of Tampa, Florida, celebrated 25 years of ministry at Hyde Park Presbyterian Church on September 1, 2009.

ROBERT W. WOLTZ, JR., president of Verizon Communications Virginia, has been elected chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Virginia Foundation for Independent Colleges. The Foundation is a non-profit fundraising and programmatic partnership of colleges and corporations.

1973

LEWIS T. STONEBURNER of the law firm Cantor Stoneburner Ford Grana & Buckner was named to the 2010 Virginia Super Lawyers list of "Top 50 Virginia Super Lawyers."

1974

WOODROOF G. "WOODY" FITZHUGH's miniature golf course in Fairfax County, Perils of the Lost Jungle, was named by *Newsweek* magazine as one of the best in the country.

B. BOYD JOHNSON of Roanoke has been named director of the newly formed Asset Managed Group of Hall Associates, Inc.

THOMAS M. MISHOE, JR.,



has been appointed a director of the Northfield Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to

providing treatment and a safe haven for young women struggling with eating disorders, self-harm, depression, and unplanned pregnancies. Also, he is founder and president of FinOpStrat Advisors, LLC, a business and investment banking advisory service.

1979