

SPOTLIGHT

ERIC POPE – ONE OF RMOC’S FOUNDING MEMBERS

Eric has been an Oldsmobile guy since 1974 when his dad gave him a green 1964 Starfire with a powerful 394 CID engine rated at 345 horsepower. He was 14 years old at the time; his dad had paid \$550 for the car. In his senior year, Eric bought a 1965 442 convertible, then a 1964 Jetstar 1. Imagine having three amazing Oldsmobiles at age 18? Eric still has the Starfire after all these years.

When asked why he continued to pursue Oldsmobiles during and after high school, he said they were luxury muscle and unique. He would see few Oldsmobiles at car shows and gatherings which gave them an air of exclusivity. They were as fast or faster than counterpart Chevys, MOPARs or other muscle cars of the day, but were of a higher quality and worth the extra cost.

In 1979, Eric joined OCA. In 1981, his dad saw an announcement in *Hemmings Motor News* that an Oldsmobile chapter was being formed in Colorado and convinced him to get involved. He attended the first club meetings at Jim Blum Oldsmobile-GMC in Englewood and has been a continuous member since then, even serving as club president in the late 1980s.

After a few years, RMOC meetings were moved to Empire Oldsmobile in east Denver. It was there, in 1984, that Eric met a young lady named Beverly who owned a red 1967 442. It was a match made in Oldsmobile heaven. They were married *Aug 21*, (Oldsmobile's anniversary day) in 1989 with Oldsmobile cakes and models representing their cars at the time.



Eric is a Colorado native – born in Grand Junction. He moved to Fort Collins as a kid and has lived in Loveland for 30 years. He started his working life in the Ford and Chevrolet dealerships in Ft. Collins, first as a detailer and doing light mechanic work, then as a GM certified mechanic for 36 years. He moved on from there to what became G&R Hot Rods, specializing in restoring and building hot rods.

Years ago, Eric began a hobby of buying and selling car parts and car toys such as Hot Wheels. His hobby gradually expanded into a business where he also buys and sells cars and does repairs and restorations – mostly on Oldsmobiles, specifically Cutlass and 442 models, although he can handle most any engine and/or interior work.

Eric has owned over 300 Oldsmobiles over the years (yes, *three hundred*). His oldest was a 1946 66 Club Coupe; his newest, a 1989 Cutlass Supreme.

Currently, Eric has 30 cars, including two of the coveted 1969 Hurst Oldsmobiles, one of which is Beverly's show car they bought two months after they were married. The other Hurst Olds is being restored. Beverly's Hurst Olds has been to three different OCA National meets over the years and has taken a First Place trophy each time. The car has scored 986 out of 1,000 –nearly perfect!

Of Eric's 30 cars, about 15 are licensed; the others are in various states of restoration. After much thought, we narrowed Eric's favorites down to three: the 1970 Rally 350, their '69 Hurst Olds, and the 1970 442 W30 (all pictured). He is restoring a rare (only 515 made) 1968 Hurst Olds. That may become his next favorite.

Eric uses his cars for daily drivers, drag racing, and show. He has raced at track nights at the OCA nationals and local drag strips. He is a regular at swap meets and Oldsmobile events and is a go-to guy for parts, restoration, and information about all Cutlass and 442 models.

When asked what keeps Eric in the club and what has sustained his interest over the years, he says it's the people, the activities and the variety of Oldsmobiles from all eras. He likes the way all models, years and styles – original or modified – are accepted and appreciated.

RMOC appreciates and thanks Eric for helping get the club started and for his (and Beverly's) active participation over these many decades.



