

Conversations with owners and engineers of the Corvette's latest generation.

What does it take for a car to become "world class?"

It's not something a car can achieve instantly. It takes a lengthy process of development—building achievements model by model.

The very definition of the word "performance," for instance, has changed. It's not just 0-to-60 mph anymore, it's g-force and braking ability and fuel economy.

Not to say that cars can't be fun anymore. At Chevrolet, it's a plum assignment to work in the Corvette Group. They're a lean, intense group of engineers and designers—fully aware that they are competing against cars that cost two to three times as much.

Another division of GM used to say, "Ask the man who owns one," and it's still good advice. So we did—went out and asked a few Corvette owners of the current generation what they like about their cars. What follows is not only what they said but what the engineers who designed the car say in response.

We hope you'll find it interesting...

“...the Corvette has very tenacious cornering and braking ability.”

— Marshall Buck, Audio Systems Designer, B4 Corvette Owner





Marshall Buck,
Audio Systems Designer
'84 Corvette Owner

“When I first read about the new Corvette, I thought ‘At last, they are building something that is world class.’ When I compared it to my Ferrari Daytona, I found that they were comparable as far as the technical sophistication.

“The thing that really sold me was the test drive. The salesman and I took the Corvette out for a little spin and I liked the stability and the acceleration—that sold me right there.

“I’ve had both my ’85 Corvette and my Ferrari Daytona on the track and find the Corvette has very tenacious cornering and braking ability.”



Derek Hodgson... Chief Engineer, North America,
Repco Brake International

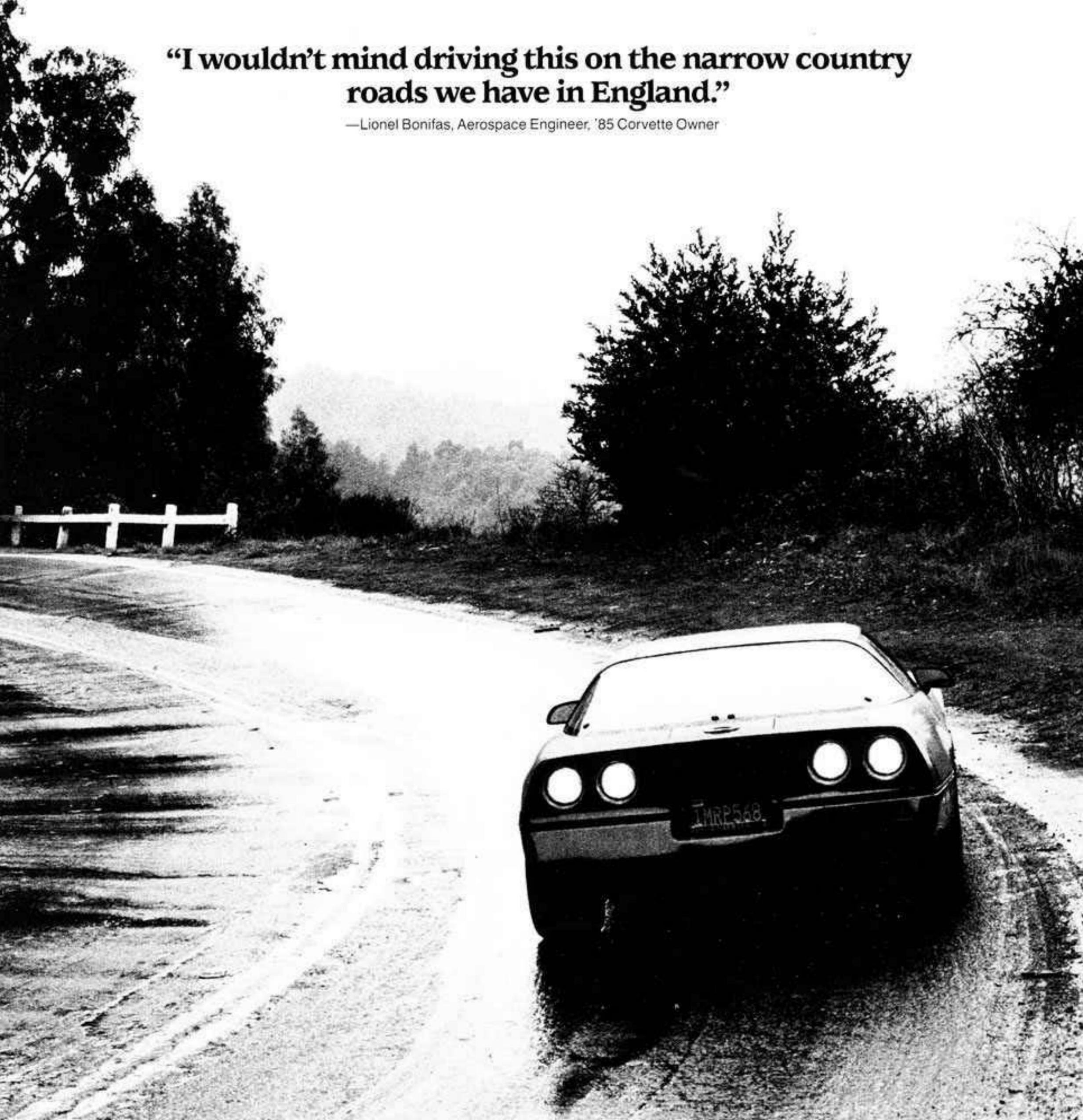
“In choosing the foundation brake system for the ’84 Corvette, Repco drew on its years of production experience in Australia and Europe with lightweight high performance calipers, and folded some of its racing experience into the design. The system was tailored to provide optimum front/rear braking balance, with a slight front bias to limit rear wheel lock-up. The result was a well balanced conventional system capable of extremely good stopping distances.

“The ’84/’85 braking system performance is exemplary in the hands of skilled drivers but, as with all conventional braking systems in panic stops, the car will end up stopped in four pools of molten rubber, at the cost of four very expensive Goodyear tires. Not a desirable situation.

“Since the performance envelope of the Corvette continues to expand, Corvette engineers felt an ABS (anti-lock braking system) would enhance the character of the car. The ABS, provided as standard equipment on all ’86 Corvettes, electronically senses incipient lock-up for each wheel and modulates brake pressure to prevent lock-up. The result is controllable stops, even in panic situations, and no flat spotted tires. The system also provides the same characteristics on low traction surfaces like wet or icy roads, where hard braking will be controlled by the ABS system, enabling the driver to maintain steering control.”

“I wouldn’t mind driving this on the narrow country roads we have in England.”

—Lionel Bonifas, Aerospace Engineer, '85 Corvette Owner





Lionel Bonifas,
Aerospace Engineer
'85 Corvette Owner

"I was impressed when I went to an auto show and saw the chassis of the Corvette on display. It looked very robust structurally. It is kind of nice that they got away from steel stampings for the suspension arms and went to forged aluminum.

"As far as the driving, the steering is very precise now that they've gone to rack-and-pinion. I wouldn't mind driving this on the narrow country roads we have in England.

"My wife and I have owned a lot of sports cars—right now we own two Jag V-12's as well as the Corvette—but we bought the Corvette because we wanted something that would be easy to maintain. And, because it has overdrive, it is proving to be very economical. The gas mileage I get around town I feel is quite good."*

*1986 EPA Estimates 17 MPG city and 24 highway.



John Heinrich... Former Corvette Development
Project Manager

"The '84 Corvette handling was definitely biased toward uncompromised performance and sacrifices to ride comfort were inevitably made on the way to those goals. After the introduction of the car, some customer complaints were received relative

to the ride harshness, so a concentrated effort was made to improve the ride characteristics for the '85 model.

"This was accomplished by reducing ride frequency with lower spring rates, but maintaining the necessary wheel control by increasing the anti-roll bar rates and tuning the shock valving for the new combination.

"For the '86 model, we have concentrated on reducing unsprung weight and reducing suspension friction. The '86 'Vette is fitted with tubular anti-roll bars in place of solid bars found on earlier models. The tubular bars give equivalent stiffness at reduced mass. We have also redesigned the spring mounts to reduce friction, since friction contributes to ride harshness in a very uncontrolled and non-linear or unpredictable fashion. Combined with further refined shock valving, the '86 ride comfort is enhanced."

"The new Corvette's styling reminds me of the Ferrari Boxer."

—John Nance, Architect, 85 Corvette Owner





John Nance, Architect
'85 Corvette Owner

"I looked at the Corvette architecturally—it has a kind of masculine look about it, and I appreciate the clean lines, where a car like a Porsche 944 has these protuberances.

"The new Corvette's styling reminds me of the Ferrari Boxer—it has a kind of chunky stance. It's not quite as sleek as the Ferrari 308, but has the chunky feel of the Boxer. I really like the headlamps—the way they're aerodynamically clean even when in the up position.

"I also like the way the designers incorporated the bumpers inside the body instead of hanging them on after they designed the basic shape. To me, that makes it a complete design, with no compromises.

"As far as the interior, I think as one who works with specifications a lot, I like the accuracy of the electronic instrumentation compared to the old round dial type of gauges which could be 500 rpm off or 5 mph off at any given point in time."



Jerry Palmer . . . Chief Designer,
Chevrolet Number 3 Design Studio

"One of the most important styling criteria for the '84 'Vette was to maintain Corvette identity. Bloodlines run deep, and to carry those traditions forward, items like the front graphics, side gills, and rear lights were incorporated, which identify the car as a 'Corvette.' The shape is very aerodynamically sensitive, and features like the rear deck height and length, and air dam depth and 'wrap' are dimensionally critical.

"The Corvette has been, and is today, a wheel-oriented design. It is built around the stance of the car, with aggressive wheel/tire combinations and complementary fenders and wheel arches. The '84 design was structured around a 16-inch tire/wheel package— unheard of at the time. Our philosophy is to stay a step ahead of the industry, and as close as possible to our racing heritage.

"During the design phases of the '84 'Vette, we always had a convertible in the backs of our minds, and we're proud of the '86½ model.

"We feel the Corvette isn't a trendy design, but is tasteful and will prove to have longevity. And, rest assured, the next generation car, whatever it may be, will continue the Corvette image and heritage."

**"...I'm able to adjust the seat and move the wheel so
that it's just right for me."** —Yoshie Imanaka,
Student, '85 Corvette Owner





Yoshie Imanaka,
Student,
'85 Corvette Owner

I bought a Corvette because of two things: the styling and the handling. I like low cars, and it is low. And the handling gives me confidence, even in the rain.

"Another part of the styling I like is the way the hood opens—like a racing car—so you can see the shocks, the tires, the engine. A lot of people think I wouldn't know about all that because I'm a woman, but I know all about my Corvette.

"I think because I'm five feet three, a lot of people think it's too big for me, but I'm able to adjust the seat and move the wheel so that it's just right for me."



Zara Rolles... Former Corvette Planner

Prior to the introduction of the new generation Corvette in 1984, I spent 2½ years in most phases of planning for the car. This included product lineup, color selection, engine choices, et cetera, and the thing I remember most was the mind-set infused in the organization—to widen the appeal of the Corvette. Not only in terms of its functionality—handling, performance, and styling—but its creature comforts and human

factors as well. We didn't just focus on the 95th percentile person, but branched out to encompass a much wider ergonomic scope. We weren't just concerned with who would fit in the car, but who would fit comfortably.

"The first time I climbed into the clay mock-up I gouged holes everywhere with my high heels, and with my fingernails as I reached for the new left-grab parking brake. All the engineers yelled at me until I pointed out that I represented the real world and the design should readily accommodate me. They changed the design.

"I would summarize my feelings by saying that the Corvette doesn't represent a design to accommodate women, but rather a design that encompasses a global range of sizes—which happily includes women. It's also important to recognize that women appreciate all the same things that men do in a car: styling, performance, handling, et cetera."



About the '86 ½...

In case you've been in Timbuktu, the hot news is that Chevrolet has created a full convertible version of the Corvette—the first convertible Corvette in 11 years—the Corvette Roadster.

Everything you liked about the '85 is in the new convertible, plus two significant new features we added for '86—Bosch ABS II anti-lock brakes and a state-of-the-art Vehicle Anti-Theft system which will go a long way toward protecting Corvettes nationwide.

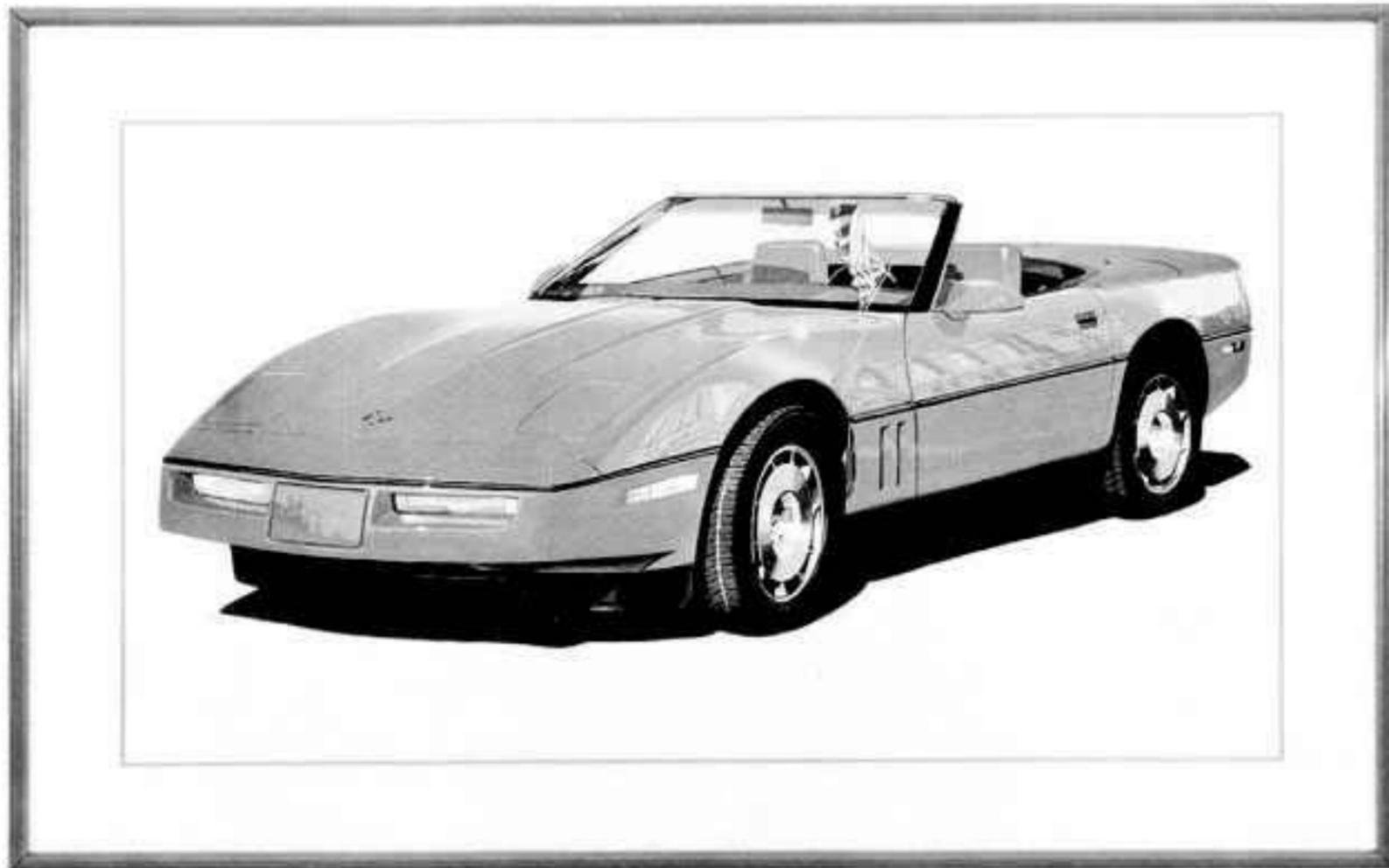
If you would like to see how a Corvette compares to the cars you've been driving, come on in and look at the 1986 ½ Corvette Roadster.

We think of it as the Ultimate Fresh-Air Machine.

The Artist

Harold James Cleworth grew up in Leigh, Lancashire in the 1940's and remembers pedaling 20 miles on his bicycle to see an American car. Now he is famous for painting American cars and his lithographs are in galleries around the world.

Receive a limited edition lithograph for purchasing any 1986 Corvette.



But hurry! This is a Limited Edition Lithograph; there are only 600 available!

The Offer

To celebrate the introduction of the new Corvette Roadster in California, Chevrolet would like to make you this special offer:

If you act now, a beautifully framed, limited edition lithograph of Harold James Cleworth's rendering of the '86 ½ Corvette Roadster, signed and numbered by the artist, can be yours when you

buy or lease any 1986 Corvette.*

Just fill out the attached coupon and send it with a copy of the purchase agreement to:

Corvette Litho
McDougal Street
1436 North Vista Street
Los Angeles, CA 90046

...and we'll send you this beautiful collector's item.

*Offer applies only to the first 600 individuals who received this mailing and who buy or lease a 1986 Corvette between June 30, 1986 and September 30, 1986.

Estimated value of lithograph—framed, signed and numbered—\$250.00.

