



Meet -a- Member

by Mike Kroyer

Ken Campbell – April 20, 1949 – June 25, 2010. A tribute to a Fiero friend

We were saddened to hear of the passing of our former NIFE Vice President and Secretary, Ken Campbell after what seemed like a short, yet courageous battle with cancer of the stomach. As a tribute to Ken and his dedication to our club, we are reprinting Ken's Meet A Member, which originally appeared in the March/April 2003 issue of Fiero Focus. Ken joined NIFE on May 9, 1995 as member #177. He accepted the responsibilities as our club's Secretary in January 2003. He later accepted the position as Vice President which he held until March/April 2006 when he took a job transfer to Colorado. Our thoughts and prayers are with all of Ken's family members and friends during this time.

Jim Hallman, NIFE President

Ken's Fieros:

1988 GT, red with grey interior, sunroof, PDL, PW, A/C, 5-speed, power mirrors, power lumbar seat.

1988 Formula, medium red metallic, with grey interior, sunroof, PDL, PW, A/C, 5-Speed.

I become interested in buying a Fiero when I first saw articles in the car maga-

zines before it was introduced. I was only mildly interested at the time since I had a relatively young family and a two-seat car was out of the question. While looking for a family car in 1987 I saw a new, gold GT on the showroom floor. That is the first time I was ever close enough to get a real good look at a Fiero. I thought it was really nice, but still out of the question for a family man. Later my friend, Jim Chabot, bought an '86 SE that I liked. I did not think much more about it for a couple of years until I needed a



Top: Ken Campbell and his wife, Kathy
Bottom: Ken Campbell circa 2003



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relatively inexpensive "go to work" car. I started shopping for a Fiero since it was small, had 4 wheel independent suspension and 4 wheel disc brakes. I bought a black '85 SE V6 4-speed with about 45,000 miles on it. I drove it for a few years with my high school aged kids borrowing it any time they could. In 1995 my daughter was in college and had saved up to buy a car and I suggested a Fiero since I had not had any trouble with mine. We found a very nice '88 Formula with 18,000 miles that was in her price range. She decided on something more practical (a rice burner hatchback), and

while back. The weather was perfect and the colors magnificent. We stopped at a small town to antique shop; if I remember correctly, it was in Richmond, IL.

My GT is still relatively stock, but I have made some minor changes. Most modifications have been cosmetic or restoration. I have changed to a Warber hood, upgraded the rear suspension to polyurethane bushings, added a later model Delco radio with cassette player, upper LCD tail lights at roof level, and a trailer hitch receiver. My Formula is in relatively stock condition also with only the Delco radio/CD player and Pioneer speaker being changed.



Ken Campbell in his Old's 442

power plants. When I am not at work, I have several hobbies that keep me busy. During the fall my main focus (besides Fierorama) is following NEBRASKA football (GO BIG RED! Last year was a tough year!). I try to watch or listen to every game, which is not very easy living in Big 10 country. Also during the last year my wife and I got a new full time hobby of two-mixed lab puppies. We now have about 165 pounds of puppies romping and running around the house. I do not believe how much energy they have. I am hoping the energy level will decrease in a year or so. The rest of my free time will now be used as I assume the responsibilities as our official NIFE Secretary! Wish me luck!

The only other car I own is a

Update July 2010

Since this article was written there have been many significant changes in the life of Ken Campbell. Four years ago he decided to follow his dream of living in Colorado. He and my Mom, Kathy, moved out there to enjoy everything the state has to offer: beautiful scenery, mountains to hike, Coors brewery and



Ken and his son, Scott

I bought the Formula! The Formula was kept as a summer car and the '85 used for everyday. Gradually as the miles piled up on the '85 I turned it over to my teenage sons and started driving the Formula full time. In 1999, I bought my '88 GT with 47,000 miles on it. It became my summer car, the Formula used full time and I sold the '85 with over 120,000 miles on it. I still drive the Formula almost every day and the GT about nine months of the year.

I have driven over 100,000 Fiero miles on the three cars I have owned. I have not had any unusual problems with my Fieros; but I seem to have a lot of clutch problems. I have personally replaced four clutches so far. It is a big job for one guy to do at home by himself (maybe my clutch problem has something to do with the way the Fiero makes me drive?).

The most truly memorable time I remember driving the Fiero was the fall color tour to Wisconsin with our club a

Pontiac Bonneville. All of my kids now have GM cars and trucks. My dream car though is a 1932 Ford highboy roadster with a fuel injected Chevy 350. This will never happen since I want to build it myself and am not that talented. More realistically would be a 1965 Chevelle SS or C4 Corvette. I would still keep my GT and plan on continuing to modify it as time and money permit. But the question is would I buy another Fiero? Yes, I would buy another Fiero. I already did, twice.

I am a Mechanical Engineer working for Sargent & Lundy in the Chicago loop. We design electric



Ken and Scott at the Bristol Motor Speedway

indescribable weather (no humidity and driving a convertible the day after getting two feet of snow). He accepted a job at Zachry Engineering Corporation as a Senior Consulting Mechanical Engineer. He truly loved his work there and everyone around him; he was a mentor to many.

As for the important things in life, he still has his '88 GT Fiero. He lowered it and changed all the suspension to polyurethane bushings and adjustable shocks, since the original publishing of this article back in 2003. The '88 Formula was sold to his nephew who is overhauling it and giving it new life in Rhode Island.

Ken did purchase a new toy to tinker with in fall of 2007.... a 1970 Olds Cutlass 442 convertible (red on black). He fixed it up and had a lot fun with it for the past three years. Since having the car, he has

enjoyed participating as a "Long Hauler" in the annual Hot Rod Magazine's Power Tour. Some of the best moments from those trips were taking the car down the drag strip and also running it on the Bristol Speedway.

As you might have guessed by now, it is not Ken writing this update. This article was rerun and updated in honor of our late NIFE Secretary and later, Vice President. Ken had been battling stomach cancer for six months. He was diagnosed with the cancer on December 16, 2009. He fought hard and strong, but his battle ended on June 25, 2010. It was peaceful and painless, with our whole family by his side.

The 442 will be sold to a car loving home. The '88 GT Fiero is being bought by me, his youngest son, Scott (Round Lake, IL). I plan to take the Fiero on future Hot Rod Power Tours and to

Fierorama in memory of my dad. It had to stay in the family, there was no other option; it is part of Ken's legacy.

Thank you to NIFE for running this tribute to a great man who was, and will always be, loved by so many, my Dad, Ken Campbell. 

Update written by Ken's youngest son, Scott Campbell and his wife, Therese



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