

TIME TO DRIVE

by edwin diaz & juan grimaldo

There's always a story. When you get your first car, the stories may have started before you even got your license. It could be the family car handed down from one member to the other, or it's the one you've always wanted. Either way, you'll never forget your first set of wheels.

It was 5 o'clock on a Sunday evening. Junior Adrian Cangas was cruising in his 1970 C-10 Chevy his dad had bought when Cangas was only nine years old. Suddenly, he hears a horrifying noise coming from the truck. His heart starts beating fast. The engine overheated and stopped in the middle of the road. The only thing Cangas could think of was what his father would say.

"I started crying," he said. "I didn't know what to do. My phone died so I ended up walking home. When I got there I told my dad what happened. He gave me the scariest look. We got in his car and drove to where the truck had stalled. On the way there, he interrogated me. 'How did this happen?' 'Were you messing around while driving?' He lectured me on responsibility and how I needed to take care of things. We kept trying to turn it on, but it wouldn't start. We ended up pushing it back home. He didn't speak to me for three weeks. I was disappointed in myself for ruining the engine. I chose to fix it myself. My dad saw my efforts and decided to help me by putting toward the repair. In the process of fixing the truck, my father and I became closer, discussing ideas for the truck and

understanding what we both wanted. I'm glad now that I ruined the engine because our relationship probably wouldn't be where it is now. The truck is building its legacy."

Junior Jessica Cereceres' 1977 Corvette also has special family significance.

"My dad passed away from meningitis," Cereceres said. "It was difficult. I was only eight years old when it happened, and I didn't know how to deal with his loss. I missed school for a couple weeks, and my mentality was getting to me. You don't think of ever losing a parent, and you don't think that it could ever happen to you. A couple months passed by, and it was already the beginning of summer. My mother surprised my brother, sister and I by buying a 1977 Corvette to try to help us heal. That was my dad's favorite car. My family cruised around in the car on the weekends. We'd grab a bite to eat, laugh, and talk about all the great memories of my dad. Even though me and my mom have gotten closer because of this, I miss my dad, but I know he's in a much better place. Not a day goes by that I don't think about him. Of course, I'd rather have him here with me. He always had a passion for cars. I'm glad that I still have a piece of him with this car."

You're driving home after school and you come to a stop. You turn to your left and see a random stranger dancing alone. What's the craziest thing you've seen while driving?

"I often see this homeless guy wandering around my neighborhood when I pass through. He just walks around jamming to life."

Jordan Steyer-11-2014 Kia Soul



"An old couple was making out outside the parking lot of Walgreens. I was getting into my car and I was so distracted, I accidentally sat on my sunglasses."

Eric Enriquez-11-1989 Corvette



"I saw a car going in the wrong direction on a two lane road. It was coming right at me. It was at an intersection and I was sitting at a red light. I wanted to turn left and braced myself for impact. But luckily he swerved out of the way."

Jos Garcia-11-2002 Ford Explorer



Juan Grimaldo

FIRST LOVE

Off to theater practice, senior Jasmin Palacios drives to school in her 2012 Hyundai Veloster. "I was glad my parents trusted me with a brand new car as my first car," she said. "I remember the first time I drove the car to school. Driving home, I noticed headlights right behind me. When I got home, I asked them if they had been following me. They just burst out laughing. 'Wow' was the only thing that came out of my mouth." Palacios got the car her freshman year, even before she learned how to drive.



Genesis Barraza

RIGHT IN RED

Senior Christian Sanchez cruises down Edgemere in his 1991 Acura NSX. "My dad gave it me for my 17th birthday," Sanchez said. "I kept getting mixed signals from him, but then when it was my birthday, I heard him talking on the phone with some guy. That morning I went downstairs to the garage to go to school and the car was there. I felt like it was a dream come true. I was so appreciative. I will never take it for granted."



Genesis Barraza

CAT'S MEOW

Surrounded by "Hello Kitty" accessories, junior Alyssa Sida jams out to her music. "My car [2011 Mitsubishi Mirage] was one of the best birthday presents I've ever gotten," Sida said. "Everyone knows my car as the tiny one with the 'Hello Kitty' merchandise. Yes, I know it's a lot, but she's one of my favorite cartoon characters, and it makes my car unique." Part of her 15 piece collection includes a "Hello Kitty" license plate frame, floor mats and seat belt cushions.

SCENIC VIEW

First time out at Red Sands with "Pearl," his 1995 Jeep Wrangler, senior Dante Palacio takes in the scenery. "I had been wanting a Jeep for a while," Palacio said. "I remember seeing the square cars and how different they were. I really wanted one. Two weeks before the school year began, my parents bought me the jeep. It kinda seemed surreal, but after awhile I came to my senses." Red Sands, located 14 miles east of El Paso, is a popular off-roading spot. (photo by Juan Grimaldo)

