

# CAR OF THE QUARTER . . .

## 2008 Dodge Challenger SRT8 ..... by David Schwartz Sr.



### CHRISTMAS IN JULY

February 2006, Detroit Auto Show, Dodge unveils the Challenger concept car. WOW, I need to get one of those. It looked so much like the 1970s Challenger, and that was a good looking car. Unfortunately I missed out on owning one back in the 70's and missed out on a couple of Chargers. I was not going to miss out this time. Instead we had 1975 Dodge Dart Sport with a 318, jacked up with air shocks, L60x14's on the rear and fun to drive.

Early 1980s and with the family starting to grow it was time to get another vehicle. We were living in Galveston at the time and would always come to San Antonio on the weekends to visit. While the Dart was fun to drive it was time for a road vehicle. We decided on a 4 year old Cadillac Coupe De Ville, still had 2 doors (every car we owned up to that time had 2 doors, swore I would never buy a 4 door car) and a very large and powerful 425CID. Yeah, this was a road car.

December 1986, we moved back to San Antonio for good. Staying with the Cadillac theme, we would eventually add an El Dorado and what would become OUR VERY FIRST FOUR DOOR CAR, a Fleetwood. With the kids growing up, the 4 door car was now just a fact of life. Still kept in the luxury market I even owned a Lincoln Town car for a while. Our daughter Julia and son David Jr were now driving and owned their own cars.

Fast forward, March 2008. For the last 2 years I would read as much as I could about the Challenger. Dodge was ready to go from concept to production. "WOW, 425HP, 0-60 in under 5 seconds" I would tell Julia and she would reply "that's too much car for you". I would reply back, "no sweetie, that's just about right". Our son liked the looks and the specifications, but not growing up around muscle cars, he didn't know what this car truly was. One day in March, still talking about the Challenger and not really thinking I could get one of the first year limited edition one,

my wife Rebecca said to "find out" how to order one.

The next day I called Fiesta Dodge and talked to their sales manager Mike Smith. They were expecting to get 10 of the 6400 Dodge Challenger SRT8 for 2008. The process was real simple. Put your name on a list along with your color preference. The choice was Orange, Black or Silver. You could select only one color or all three. However, if you only selected black and the dealership received silver and orange you would not even be called. I selected all three colors in hope of increasing the odds of being called. I signed up and was number 14 on the list. Production was scheduled to start in April with the first cars arriving at the dealers in May.

May and no phone call. June and no phone call. July 8<sup>th</sup> we would be leaving for a 3 week vacation to the west coast and still no phone call. As we were preparing to leave I told Rebecca that it looks like we were not going to get the 2008 Challenger and we should check into ordering a 2009 when we get back to San Antonio. July 15<sup>th</sup> we were in Portland Oregon visiting my mom and dad. That morning we went to Multnomah Falls and were driving looking for a place to eat. We found a pizza restaurant and I noticed a missed call on my cell phone. When I played it back, it was from Chris at Fiesta Dodge. They had a Hemi Orange 2008 Challenger SRT8 for us. Great, 2500 miles away from San Antonio, now what. They were going down the list and needed an answer. We would not be back in San Antonio for 2 more weeks. They would hold the car with \$\$\$\$\$\$ deposit. We arranged for our bank to get the funds to Fiesta Dodge, they would hold the car, we would continue our vacation and take care of the paper work when we were back in San Antonio. David Jr was flying back to San Antonio the next day as he needed to be back at work. He would be able to check out the car. The next week David Jr was going to fly and meet us in Reno. He had pictures of the car and actually sat in it. It was #3282/6400 and he was a happy camper. We

continued our vacation and returned to San Antonio. On July 28<sup>th</sup> we went to Fiesta Dodge and finished up the paperwork. This would be the first time we would actually see the car, WOW, no test drive needed. Pictures do not do this car justice. This is the kind of car that would require plastic surgery to remove the smile from your face.

Now that we had a certifiable muscle car, time to join a car club. One day while surfing the internet I came across the Mopar Muscle Club of San Antonio. This one would fit the bill, Mopar, Muscle and Club. The next meeting was going to be on Sunday August 17<sup>th</sup> at the Pig Stand on Broadway. We made plans to attend. Upon arriving at the Pig Stand I was expecting to see a parking lot full of Mopars. Since there was just a few I wasn't sure if the meeting was still going to take place. I recognized Wes Pieper from the internet web site photos, so we stayed for the meeting. We could see this would be a fun bunch to hang out with and it would give David Jr the opportunity to see the cars we grew up with. We decided to join the club and made it official at the next meeting.

Team Schwartz (David Sr, Rebecca and David Jr) entered 3 car shows in October and was lucky enough to win trophies in 2 of them. At the car shows people come to the car in groves as many have not seen one close up yet. The Challenger is awesome in every aspect. Old school look with modern technological advances. It handles well, has plenty of power and is just fun to drive or ride in. We are looking forward to future club events, shows and cruises. We have come full circle and are now back to a 2 door car. Christmas truly came in July this year for the Schwartz's.

