BY ANDY BOLIG

WILD THING!

THIS MILD-MANNERED ENTHUSIAST WEARS A WILD THING FOR FUN

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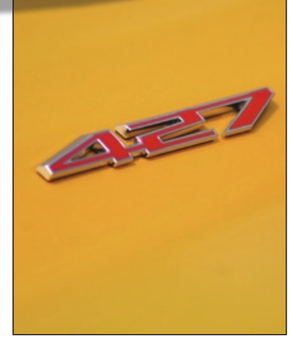














KIRK DOBBS, A SELF-EMPLOYED ENTHUSIAST FROM NORTH OF THE BORDER IN ONTARIO, CANADA, IS PRETTY EASY-GOING. AN EVEN-KEELED TYPE OF GUY, HE DOESN'T SEEM LIKE ONE TO GET OVERLY EXCITED ABOUT THINGS, BUT SHOULD THE OCCASION ARISE WHEN HE'D LIKE TO GO OUT AND "STIR THINGS UP" A LITTLE BIT, HE'S GOT THE PERFECT SUPERMAN SUIT TO DO IT IN.

It all started with a 2007 Z06 Corvette and the dictate that the car needed two things, drivability and a really bad attitude! For the best of both worlds, Kirk took his Corvette to Zip Products with only one number in his head – 700. Horses that is.

The team at Zip knew exactly what Kirk wanted, and that is exactly what they gave him. Instead of going the path typically traveled and installing a supercharger in front of the engine, Zip Products built Kirk's wild ride by using tried and true components that they have tested. All these components are combined in the form of their wild Z06 engine package, featuring a stock crankshaft, titanium rods, custom forged pistons with a compression ratio of 12:1, a custom port job on the cylinder heads, a ported intake and throttle body, a custom ground camshaft and capped everything off with a set of Zip/Kooks LS7R headers. To help feed all 700 of Kirk's newfound horses, Zip also included their Mamba air intake, and to keep them all in check, a set of Zip performance two-piece rotors were installed, wrapped with a shining set of Forgeline wheels.

There's no way anyone could observe this car and overlook the exterior paint scheme that it wears. Wild Thing wouldn't be nearly as wild if it weren't for its appearance. Kirk wanted to make a statement, so he carried his Corvette off to VooDoo Customs for a touch of their paint gun and airbrush magic. Various Corvette colors were peeled off to reveal the white-hot base that began Wild Thing's color transformation. The entire job took scores of hours to complete and make it all work together, all adding up on the clock connected to Kirk's checkbook. Kirk decided that it was better to do it right than to get too excited, another example of his understated enthusiasm.

IF IT'S UNCOMFORTABLE OR GIVES YOU A RASH, WHY WEAR IT?

Of course, there's more to wearing a superhero suit than the flashy colors and the bulging muscles. If it's uncomfortable or gives you a rash, why wear it? That's exactly why Kirk took his Corvette to Caravaggio and had it equipped with a full treatment of supple leather upgrades and their particular eye for the details. The entire interior has been re-wrapped in blue leather, completely changing the feel and appearance of the interior, yet contrasting and complementing the exterior colors nicely. In their pursuit for the details, Caravaggio stitched the interior with several different shades of thread pulled from the exterior colors of the car. The colors range from a blazing yellow to red and/or blue to match the color of the cockpit. In true Caravaggio style, the colors do more than simply switch from blue to red or yellow. Instead, to get a gradual switch between colors, the craftsmen at Caravaggio went back and re-stitched over previous work to allow the colors to blend nicely, making it difficult to determine exactly where the colors meet. A nice touch that allows for such contrasting colors to work so nicely together. While they were at it, Kirk had them put a few latches on the Z06's originally immovable hardtop, giving Kirk an unobstructed view of the world around him, especially when it's right above him.

With all of the work completed on Kirk's new ride, there was

only one thing left to do – drive it! That's exactly what he is doing. Rumor has it that this enthusiast from up north was actually sighted driving his Corvette down south in central Florida recently, proving that, indeed, the car is drivable and, being true to his word, Kirk is driving it. Some enthusiasts might worry about damaging that wild and expensive paint job that graces the outside of Kirk's costume. But for Kirk Dobbs, enjoying the car by driving it is all part of the plan. ■



