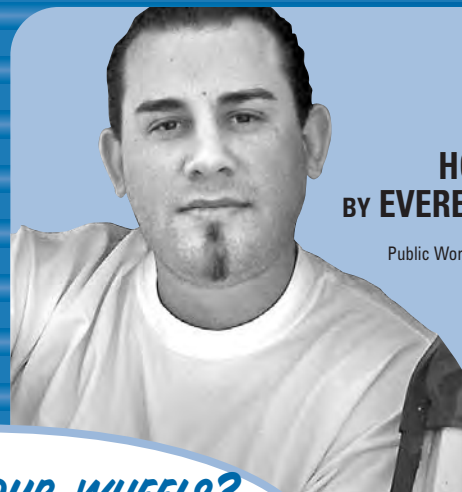


# THE CAR CLUB



HOSTED  
BY **EVERETT BENNETT**  
Assistant Inspector,  
Public Works/Contract Administration

**PROUD OF YOUR WHEELS?  
SEND IN A PHOTO!**  
(SEE DETAILS AT BOTTOM)

## Wife's Ultimatum Leads To Restored '68 Eldorado

On a cold clear Valley morning, I found myself behind the wheel of a car I was falling in love with rather quickly. The more knobs I touched and the harder I stepped on the gas, the better we got along. It crossed my mind that instead of making the last right turn to return it to its rightful owner, I would keep going straight to my house. Then reality checked in and the thought that this car was restored and owned by one of LAPD's finest, I figured I wouldn't get very far. As I pulled back in the driveway, I felt a tear run down my cheek due to the sadness that I wasn't the proud owner of such a beautiful 1968 Cadillac Fleetwood Eldorado coupe.

Cadillacs have always stood for style, class and sophistication. Before every soccer mom in Southern California equipped herself with an Escalade to rule the highways, they had to cram all their kids into one of these sport luxury coupes with 375 horsepower. Personally, I would take this coupe over the Escalade.

Luis Aguilar, LAPD, acquired the car in 1998 from his friend's father, who took the car as payment for some plumbing work. It didn't take a whole lot of convincing or money for Luis to take ownership of the car. When I say not a lot of money, I mean \$125. Excuse me while I pick myself up off of the floor. After trailering the car home, Luis changed the valve cover gaskets, spark plugs, oil and all the other fluids. He turned the key and it fired right up! After driving it around the block a couple of times, he parked it and tinkered with it for almost a decade.

In early 2007, Luis' wife told him that he had to either restore the car or get rid of it. He said it wasn't a hard decision to make, so the next day the brake rotors and master cylinder were off of the car. After restoration, the car was then stopping on a dime and running excellently, so the next stop was probably one of the most important factors in the restoration process: bodywork. Sepulveda Auto Body was trusted with sanding, pulling, filling and prepping the body for the Jet Black paint. Painting a car black can be either a huge mistake or a great decision because black magnifies every little ding you missed, scratches from sanding and "waves" in the bodywork from not block-sanding enough. Needless to say, Luis placed a lot of trust in the body shop to make his '68 as gorgeous in reality as it was in his dreams. Sepulveda Auto Body came through and helped bring its true beauty to the surface.

The last item on the agenda was the interior. With the surface of the car still wet from the paint process, Luis drove the car to Martin's Auto Upholstery in Canoga Park to tackle the interior. Matt, the owner, covered the seats and everything else in black vinyl and cloth. The interior and exterior really complement each other.



The last thing about this car that really makes it special is the fact that it has a moon roof. It isn't factory, but it was driven straight from the dealership to California Sunroofs, where the moon roof was installed and made to retract into the body. Luis thinks it may be the only '68 with a moon roof. GM began offering the option of moon roofs in 1969.

This model car is based off of the Oldsmobile Toronado platform. For the most part it has the same bodylines and they are both front-wheel-drive vehicles. This was the third year that GM produced front-wheel-drive-cars, and even though you might think it wouldn't handle well, it's possible it would give a Honda Civic a run for its money.

I would like to thank Senior Lead Officer Luis Aguilar (Foothill Division) for his hospitality and allowing me to test-drive his beautiful Cadillac.



**Send in a photo of you and your car, and we might publish it!**

Send us your information, too – name, title and City department, a phone number (we won't print it) and a paragraph or two about why you love your car, what kind of car and year it is, and maybe some fun details of how you got it, how you restored it, etc. Send it all to: [talkback@cityemployeesclub.com](mailto:talkback@cityemployeesclub.com)



### PUBLIC WORKS

## Run, John, Run

Engineering employee is on the fast track to fitness.



John McNeil holds the T-shirt he wore when he completed the City of Angels Half Marathon in December.

Story and photo by Ben Gaetos, Architectural Associate III, Public Works/Engineering

John McNeil, Architectural Associate II, Public Works/Engineering's Architectural Division, has come a long way in less than a year. The first time he ran three miles was just last spring. Now, he's running half-marathons.

The day after running three miles for the first time last spring, his legs and body were completely sore. He swore it would be impossible to finish the Pasadena Marathon/Half Marathon this past November.

John continued training with Club 26.2 at Marina Del Rey and gradually built up his endurance. The Pasadena Marathon was canceled due to poor air quality from the forest fires. John wasted no time and registered for the City of Angels Half Marathon in December.

Approximately 6,000 runners started from the Los Angeles Zoo to the finish at Downtown Civic Center. The course passed through scenic streets and landmarks of Griffith Park, Los Angeles River Bike Path, Hyperion Bridge, Silver Lake, Echo Park and the Second Street Tunnel before finishing near the Superior Court at Second Street and Broadway.

John's heart pounded loudly as soon as he saw the finish line within reach coming out from Second Street Tunnel.

The spirit of marathon is now infused in John's veins. The hard work paid off as John tackled the 13.1-mile distance in 3 hours and 14 minutes. He now has his first gold medal. We'll soon hear more about his adventures.

*Congratulations, John! Keep going! And thanks to Ben Gaetos for sending in this inspirational story.*  
—Ed.

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Club Store for  
Valentine's Day!**

**SEE PAGES  
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