

PONY 2 PONIES



The Keller's Garage Increased By 2 Ponies.

Text by Connie Keller
Photos by Bob Keller

My love for Mustangs began with my husband. Over time, His love for them rubbed off on me. We've been married for 34 years. It took 28 of those years before he could seriously look for a Mustang. With children at home, and the cost of insurance, Mustangs were on the back burner.

By 2003, things were heating up on the search. We went to Jim Tidwell Ford our local dealership. Bob dreamed of owning a Mach1 since he was a teenager. The timing was perfect. He test-drove an Azure Blue Mach1, and it was an exciting drive! I was in the passenger seat. The salesman was in the back with a fearful look in his eyes.

After we left the dealership without the Mach, I think my husband was in a state of disbelief. It was almost too much to take in. After all, he'd waited all those years. However, we went back the next afternoon and drove home in

a 2003 Mustang GT. What happened to the Mach1? Well, Bob wanted to make modifications to his new Mustang, and he couldn't see himself digging into a prestigious pony like a Mach1. "Ford built it perfect from the factory," he said.

It's now been more than five years and he said he hasn't regretted his decision one day. One year after we purchased the GT, Bob was diagnosed with bladder cancer and chemical poisoning. The doctors believe it was from transmission rebuilding since he never did smoke, and doesn't drink much at all. He underwent surgery to have his bladder removed. Telling us how long Bob had to live seemed so final. It was a rough period for both of us. However, so far, so good. He has to wear an external bag, which makes it difficult for him to do many things he took for granted.

Before he went into surgery, Bob made changes to the Mustang that would become too difficult after surgery. He installed a MAC cat-back exhaust, Eibach Pro Kit springs, KYB 8-way adjustable shocks, and 1-inch rear wheel

spacers. Since then he has installed a BBK Cold Air Kit and 75mm throttle body, Trick Flow upper intake plenum, and a Diablo programmer. Exterior upgrades include a 40" Anniversary stripe package, 4/6 Rocker panel stripes, ultra-smoked headlights, Mach1 rear panel kit, and a 2001 Cobra front bumper. A neighbor recently helped Bob install GMS adjustable lower control arms. The interior was enhanced with MGW billet pieces, Ford Racing pedals, and a Silver reverse glow gauge cluster, Champagne Pearl (my choice) painted center panel with an automatic shift book, named Da-Boot after his brother Dave, from



Gotcha' Covered Upholstery in Woodstock, Georgia.

Bob let me drive the Mach once a week. Well, that wasn't good enough for me; I really wanted my own pony. Bob asked what I had in mind. He figured with the new 2005-up models available, I'd choose one of those. Much to his surprise, I said, "... an '04 Mach1, Black with an automatic transmission" knowing he always wanted one, and truthfully it was my favorite, too. He laughed and said, "It's impossible. Only 217 were built in that combination." Bob decided to begin a search on the Internet. Since we live in the Atlanta area, I hoped we had a chance. We were delighted to find that Bob had to eat his words. That next weekend we drove home from a dealership just south of Atlanta in my 2004 Mach1. His dream came true twice with my assistance.

We added a few items to the Black Mach such as a K&N filter, 1-inch rear wheel spacers, Diablo programmer, Da-Boot, Flowmaster exhaust, Ultra smoked headlights, and, of course, a Mach1 rear panel kit.



We allocated one room in our house as a Mustang room. Its décor includes many die cast models, plaques, trophies, books, posters, clocks, and magazines. Additionally, our garage is all Mustang with Ford blue stripes, Blue ovals, and racing ponies on the walls. Some say we're crazy, we say we're Mustang crazy!

Attending car shows in and out of state has become common for us. With Bob's current health situation, it's always uplifting for him. Since both Mustangs are daily drivers, he takes care of them the best he can. He wants them to be show worthy. I think I may actually enjoy the shows more than Bob. I love meeting new people, looking at other Mustangs, and visiting with all the people we've met at various shows.

Mustang people are some of the most enjoyable and friendly people around. We look forward to traveling with our two ponies to more shows, meeting more Mustang people soon! **MT**

