

FROM THE DRIVER'S SEAT

What's left a mark in your life? What action or event has made you stop and think? Nothing/none? Come on, things, events, and actions are (or should be) an important part of our lives. Maybe not every day, but for me, quite regularly.

If nothing else, you've probably run into a chair, a wall, your garage workbench and thought, "man, that's gonna leave a mark". Yep, done that too!

I've pretty much worn out my right knee. You may have seen me wearing my knee brace at different events. The surgeries, rehab, the wear and tear on my knee have certainly left several marks, physical and mental. As have falling out of tree houses (I'm now scared of heights), riding motorcycles (it's not IF you will fall, it's WHEN you will fall), and racing cars (I love fast cars).

Several years ago, during my club racing days, I was towing to Daytona. I had attended my uncle's funeral earlier in the day and so was driving back-roads across Georgia headed towards I-75 South. I was driving alone, I was running late, and my mood was a bit somber.

Out of nowhere, the largest, brightest, strongest, [even to this day] rainbow I've ever seen appeared across the sky. For no other reason than I needed cheering up, I took this as a sign things would be ok. (Note: I may talk a mean line sometimes, but I know full well Who butters the bread in this world of ours. God watches over us every day.) We qualified well, won the race, and had a great trip overall. Probably because my mood had been changed. I still smile at rainbows.

Later on down the life road, I got another jolt. Nancy and I had been married just over three years. I walked in from work and she informed me WE were pregnant. I just sort of stood there, numb. Then I just started jumping up and down, and laughing out loud like some idiot (ok, so you know the idiot part). Talk about changing things... You've been there, done that? Try it at age 46. Having a child definitely leaves a big mark.

You know, I should back up and say marrying Nancy left a mark. Before her, I was pretty wild, always racing, riding bikes, and chasing life with nobody to slow me down. Some race friends actually told me they were concerned about me because I was making some "interesting moves" while racing. One even said he did not know race cars were capable of doing what I was doing. Nancy brought meaning to my life, which left a much needed mark.

Many experiences have left marks in my life. Some positive, some not so positive. My family growing up, racing, living in the South, getting a good education, attending Auburn (Are you listening, Austin?), Nancy and Christopher, all have left some kind of mark in my life.

The last two years as President of the Mustang Club of America have been one of those experiences as well. I've been privileged enough to represent every one of you, the membership. I have met wonderful people across this great country (I would add I've met some not so great people as well, but that's another story).

I've worked with people on our Board of Directors who I now consider life-long friends, even family. And I've been fortunate working with great companies; Ford, Heacock Classic Insurance, Kicker Audio, Shelby American, Barrett-Jackson, and others who have helped to make the MCA a better place. Heck, I got to eat lunch with Alan Mulally and dinner with Carroll Shelby.

We have grown, together, from a small group of Mustang fans to a strong and influential organization. Our events and shows have grown, too. I would say the MCA is leaving a big mark on the Mustang hobby and the Mustang industry.

Events throughout my life have left a mark. I hope your life has marks too. I think it's just supposed to be that way. Truth be told, I hope I've left a mark; on my friends, on my family, on the MCA.

All of you have a couple more months to read my babbling (two more after this). If I've left some print on you and your place in the Mustang hobby, I hope it's a good one and does not just wash off with water. If bad, I hope you touched base with me with your thoughts.

We all face life in different ways. And it leaves marks along the way. I've enjoyed most of mine and learned from the others. I hope the mark I leave here [with MCA] helps to create another mark. And another, and another, and another!

Later,

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