

Cadillac Dreams

Cadillac Dreams

Where the Freeways Meet

**Working at a Family Owned Cadillac Dealership
in the 1970's and how it changed me**

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By

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The Dream Begins

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My experiences are mine alone.
I do not represent, and I do not claim
copyright on the name of Bob Spreen
or the automotive brand of Cadillac.

I am writing about some very important moments of my
life to illustrate my appreciation for
these life changing experiences.
My intention is to share these stories
with my family and friends.

Bob Karnes September 2021
www.bobasan.net

Cadillac Dreams

Table of Contents

Dedication 1

My first memory of the Spreen dealership 2

Troubling Times 4

Cadillac Therapy 4

The Best Customer Sales and Service Possible 6

The customer experience 6

Amazing kid days at the dealership 7

Working the Service Drive 10

New Car Lot Boy Job 11

Entry Level Work Experience 13

Map 18

The Tower 19

Pick Up and Delivery a great adventure 20

The P&D Vehicles 21

My First Ride along with an experienced P&D Driver 22

Limo Runs 24

My last and Best Spreen Job 27

Appreciation for Life Changing Opportunities 29

Confession of the Office Runner 30

The Dark side of the Cadillac Dream 31

Fast Life and Drugs in 1977 Los Angeles 31

Bob Spreen Cadillac is sold to a corporation 33

Dedication

To the Spreen Family
and to all the people who worked there.

All of you
helped this Cadillac Dreamer.
And to My wife Alicia my partner and supporter of
my art, writing of Books, and Manuals.
She makes this effort possible.

Bob Karnes

My first memory of the Spreen dealership

I have a dream like memory when I was a young boy in downtown Huntington Park slightly after sunset a week before Christmas in 1963. My mom my sister and I were riding a street car to my dad's work. Our family got off the street car in front of a brightly lit Cadillac dealership. The sign was large and with the name BOB SPREEN CADILLAC. It was opened in 1954. This new and used car dealership also included a full service center and body shop. My dad was a heavy duty mechanic there overhauling Cadillac automatic transmissions. We were at the dealership to visit with the employees and their families. We continued to walk downtown to see the Christmas lights of Huntington Park Southern California.

Las Angeles car culture

We lived in the city of Bell in LA county California. My interests in cars came from my dad and the car culture around us. A famous hot rod builder and artist Ed "Big Daddy" Roth grew up in Bell, California, attending Bell High School, where his classes included auto shop and art. Roth was the artist of an airbrush cartoon of extreme cars driven by his creature Rat Fink. His tee shirts popularized the "monsters in hot rods" art form.

Cadillac Dreams

His famous custom cars along with Rat Fink were popular model car kits inspired me to start drawing at a young age. Big Daddy Roth made a living by pin striping show cars.

<https://www.ratfink.com/ed-roth-museum/rat-fink-art>



Along with a few trips to the local speed shop with dad I was hooked on art and cars. These were logos from the speed shop that fascinated me.



Troubling Times

While living in Bell California in the middle 1960's the world seemed to be on the verge of collapse. The Cuban missile crisis caused our grade school to do duck and cover drills in preparation for a nuclear attack. The assassination of President Kennedy, watching the nightly TV news about the war in Vietnam, civil unrest made us aware that our world was full of dangers beyond our control. Luckily dad's steady job at Spreen was something we could count on.

Cadillac Therapy

Our family was lower to middle class income with the last few years left of a what was a standard single earner income that was common in many USA working class families. We were comfortable in our home purchased by our grandparents, but the stress was showing. My dad worked hard in greasy hot conditions as a heavy duty car mechanic. His reward for his work was his new Cadillac. He leased a new one every two years. Dad took us on trips to Pier Point, Long Beach, to the red woods and to Reno, Nevada to visit mom's relatives. Dad quietly drove for hours, and he seemed at peace when he was behind the wheel.

Cadillac Dreams

Dad sold mom's 1962 Chevy Nova without asking to get money for the lease of his new Cadillac and she was not happy. To her the new Cadillac seemed more important to him than her priorities for the family's financial and emotional needs.

Bob Spreen Dealership moves to Downey, California

It was around 1965 that the dealership moved to its new location in Downey, southern California. It was still in Los Angeles (L. A.) county but near the border of Orange county. The family run business was a traditional cradle to grave business encouraging hope for the employees that this business was there for the long term for the benefit of the customers, the employees, and the owner Mr. Bob Spreen and his family. Several coworkers had family members working there including my own.

Other Changes

Our family purchased a seven unit apartment complex in South Gate. The purchase of the apartment complex was to move into the front unit and supplement our income with my mom running the complex to help our growing monthly expenses. A year later my parents divorced with my sister and mom we moved to Reno, Nevada. My father married a great lady (who also worked at Bob Spreen)

The Dream Begins

with three great kids. My sister and I now had two step sisters, a step brother and later a half-brother.



The Best Customer Sales and Service Possible

The picture is from 1967. For the TV add

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96127tKN7SE>

Bob Spreen Cadillac and the famous commercial played
often late at night in

Los Angeles California. Cue the harp and the waterfall
“A beautiful place to buy or lease a beautiful car, Bob
Spreen Cadillac where the freeway meet in Downey”.

The customer experience

The Coffee Shop

For a standard service on their new (free) or used
Cadillac was to drive into the service drive, talk to your
personal service writer. The waiting room was the coffee
shop-mini restaurant.

Cadillac Dreams

There was a complimentary lunch for new car owners or an affordable lunch for used car owners and employees. The customers are sitting in the same area as the employees. The coffee house was open before lunch for breakfast orders. I loved the heated cinnamon bun with butter.

Free Pickup and Delivery

New car owners could have their car picked up at their work or home and have it delivered back to their work or home after service or repairs.

Free Loan Cars

If it was a major repair the customer could use a Chevy Nova from our loan car fleet. For a few highly valued customers a Cadillac loan car was provided. Repeat loyal customers and happy loyal employees in service, office workers, warranty, leasing, and sales was the goal.

Amazing kid days at the dealership

During my first summer vacation trip back to LA Dennis (Denny) my step brother and I at 11 or 12 years old went to work with my dad to the new dealership and service center. Denny and I had breakfast at the dealership coffee shop we walked next door to the used car lot. A friendly used car salesman came out to greet us. He found out who we were related to, and he had a mission to send us on.

The Dream Begins

The salesman said to go to Tom in the heavy duty department and ask him for a left handed monkey wrench to unlock the secret room under the big Bob Spreen sign and then report back on what we found.

Tom looked at us and smiled as he said that he did not have one, but we should ask Jeff in the body shop. This kept us busy going from one department to another until lunch time and a new car salesman told us that the used car salesman was pulling a joke on us. We went back to the used car salesman, and he laughed and bought us each a coke for our effort.

Another day visiting the dealership and the shop Denny, and I were invited behind the front desk to help the parts department guys. We had fun running around finding parts for the front desk, but we were interrupted with surprise ambush attacks by the employees and us armed with thick rubber band using supplying the power for folded paper projectiles. Our mutual attacks were great fun and we felt special in this strange adult world that my dad worked at.

Working at the Spreen Carwash



The traditional place for employee kids 16 years and up was to hang out at was the carwash and if they did well as volunteers when they graduated high school they could be hired \$5 an hour.

A car is pulled up into the line, you or you and a partner vacuum the interior. One person slowly drives the car through the soap spray, the wet hanging shamies, the brush rollers, and the blow dryer. You and all other workers quickly wiped off the car using an old washing machine and winger to dry the towels that were washed in the machine. One person drives the car up front to the service drive or to the back parking lot. This was a fun job with a great responsibility for a young person. You were driving Cadillac's and other expensive cars around the parking lot while mechanics and the service runners were also in a hurry to get their car parked or to be brought up front. During slow times the car wash pranks would happen involving spinning tires, water, and snapping towels.

Working the Service Drive



Another young adult job was as a service runner. One or maybe two young guys moved cars from the service drive to the back lot after the service writers wrote the work tickets. When the customer's car was ready the cashier would call on the intercom to get the car # from the back. First we made sure it was washed then we would bring it up pick it up after the work was done. Keeping the line of cars orderly and helping the service writers was a fast-paced job.

Leon Whiley and his Battery Charger Chariot



Bob Spreen took care of their loyal workers by sometimes creating a special job just for them. Leon was an older man always chomping on his unlit cigar. He managed the gas pump and watched us youngsters and the back lot in general. He was one of the few original workers from the Huntington Park dealership. This was Leon's cart with battery charger cables. If you borrowed it you better not get caught doing donuts on it

Cadillac Dreams

(spinning in circles on two wheels) and you had better bring it back to Leon so he can plug it in to recharge it or you will get a talking to. In my mind I can still see him riding that cart around the dealership keeping an eye on things yelling over the noise of the service center “howdy how ya doing”.

New Car Lot Boy Job

A step up in responsibility and pay required driving experience. I worked for a while on the new car lot to help out my peer and teacher Eddie. We kept the new cars in line and cleaned inside and out for the best presentation for the customers. We made sure that the cars were operational and sometimes we took a car that the salesman said was running rough out on the freeway at a brisk speed to test it or to blow the carbon out as it had been sitting on the lot for extended periods or only being run at low idle. We put different models of the Cadillacs together with different colors to make an appealing presentation of the entire lot. We worked with the new car salesmen who were our showcase for the elite image of the Cadillac brand.

New Car Dealer Trades

If one Cadillac dealership needed a particular model and color and they did not have in stock the lot boy would drive a new Cadillac to the other dealership and drive the trade car back to our lot. This was a nice break from hand washing and rearranging the cars on our lot. In a few cases the dealer trade was an all day job and other times it was to a local dealership.

Perks and Accommodations from Management

Some entry level jobs were too physical and demanding except for the young and for people who were conditioned to do hard outdoor work. Although with the entry level wages we made only enough for a single person to afford to rent an apartment with one roommate health care was affordable then and with help from the dealership and financing (if you had a co-signer) you could afford a used car.

Entry Level Work Experience

If like me and my younger coworkers this was a few years of a fun job learning life lessons until we got serious with earning more at a real job requiring more education or training. I was hopeful someday that I could find union job with higher wages and benefits. Some young workers moved into working at the dealership as an apprentice on the lube rack and then later progress into a mechanic job.

Use of the Parts Truck or Loan Cars

Another benefit for all employees to compensate for lower wages of entry level unskilled labor and other employees with family and mortgage expenses was the use of the parts truck to help employees move their house hold belongings during a move. If your personal car broke down you could use a Chevy Nova lone car for a few days.

Created Jobs to Help Older or Disabled Employees

One older employee was unable to do the hard job of a car detailer and the owners created a less demanding job for him. This helped him to stay active and to continue his positive contribution to our dealership “family”.

The Dream Begins

A long time body shop employee was recovering from a heart attack, and he could no longer work that demanding job they created a correspondence courier job or office runner job doing bank runs, post office, and DMV runs.

The Dealership felt like a Family

This dealership was more than a job. Although we did not have a pension, retirement, or health benefits that union jobs had as a group we helped each other. If your personal car broke down an employee could barter with the mechanic or trade services to get your car fixed as long as it was done during their off time or in between their assigned repair jobs. The support of fellow employees and Mr. Spreen's leadership, life seemed like a community working towards a high quality product that the customers appreciated and one that we could take pride in.

My Job as a Used Car Lot Boy

After working the wash rack, the service drive and helping out on the new car lot I moved to the used car lot to work it on by myself. I lined up the cars side to side about one foot apart. I kept them washed and moved them out of the line for the sales men-customers test drives. I started them up in the morning to make sure that the batteries were charged and if they did not run correctly I would take them

Cadillac Dreams

for a test drive of bring them back to the used car service department if they needed repair.

Used Car lot Stories

Used car salesmen were different types of people who had to cope with the same inconsistent commissions because without a base pay they relied on luck and a few return customers or referrals to survive. A few of the salesmen were jokers usually at the expense of the most serious and sometimes annoying competing salesman. One time on a slow weekend a salesman pranked Bob McCoy. Two young high school girls were on the lot asking for Mr. McCoy. While we were standing around Bob the girls did a high school presentation to Mr. McCoy an award certificate for the best salesman in the world. He was not amused as he walked back to his office without the award.

At times I hung out in the salesman's office, and while he was looking out his glass wall at the gas station across the street he saw a dump truck with a full load of dirt. He said watch this. He called the number for the outdoor gas station pay phone. The truck driver picked up the receiver and the salesman told him "I am the owner of the Price Rite across the street to your left and I want to sell outdoor plants would you dump the truck load of dirt in the middle of our

parking lot”)? The driver did not do it, but it was sure funny to see the salesman try the prank.

I had a bad few days of ding a few Cadillac doors as I came too close to the light poles on the car lot while lining up the cars. I had to take several Caddies back to get the door dings repaired. I felt bad but I was not in trouble. One day as I returned from lunch all the light poles had spare tires chained to their base. The salesmen said they were there to protect the light poles from me.

Used Car Lot Confessions

I took a few liberties or chances that now would seem not responsible, and things could have ended badly.

As the used car lot sometimes had non Cadillac trade-ins usually for new Caddies we would get a Chevy Corvette or a Datsun 240 Z. Sometimes we had very nice Cadillac Eldorado's, or a Cadillac Limousine. After I lined up the car lot I had an hour before the salesmen showed up to work. Every Wednesday I would take a cool car off the lot and secretly pull up on the side of the freeway behind my parents Cerritos house. Denny hopped the fence. I then took my brother to high school before the morning first period bell.

Cadillac Dreams

We pulled up at the burger shop where the kids hung out and each weekday before school and they saw Denny's older brother drop him off in a different cool car each Wednesday.

R.W. Lee “Bigfoot”

The Used Car Sales Boss was R.W. Lee a large southern man about 6'4" tall. He was hilarious when he was on the phone to wholesalers making deals yelling at them for ten minutes “You had better come up on that price or you will get my big foot next time”. He was that way with the wholesalers and his Used Car salesman telling them to “Go out there and get that money, get that sale”! We accepted the big man and his tactics, and we had many laughs together.

With my noncompetitive nature I knew that I was not going to be a salesman. I knew that I had no aptitude to become a mechanic. A lot boy was fun for a while until I trained transferred to Pick Up and Delivery. My replacement already worked ten times harder than I could and he did a better job. He was also raising a family and it was beyond me how he did it all. I always was dependable, but I did just enough to get paid and stay out of trouble.



Map



The Tower



Tower Service Intercom Work Ticket Holder Intercom Speaker pneumatic cylinder System

The tower was the brain or the control center of the service department. It was located on a corner room on the second floor overlooking the service drive and the service bays. It was a very demanding job when the shop was busy. The service writer would talk to the customer and the service writer would write the work order. The work order would be placed into the pneumatic tube (Like you find at a drive through bank) and sent up to the tower. The tower operator would place the ticket in the same numbered as the number on the plastic hat number on top of the car to be serviced. The tower operator and the service mechanic keep in through the intercom speaker to give a job to a mechanic and for the mechanic to report when the job is finished. This system is fascinating to watch as all the workers involved responded differently to the heat in the work bays and the stress of getting their jobs done on time to make a living. The tower operator is not on the front line doing the physical work and they are in an air conditioned room,

but they orchestrate or manage all the parts to get an efficient outcome and to respond to problems at a very quick pace. A good tower operator is a positive facilitator, and he can manage conflict. The tower operator can help or hinder the positive moral of all the employees. The tower operator can maximize the productivity of the entire service center.

Pick Up and Delivery a great adventure

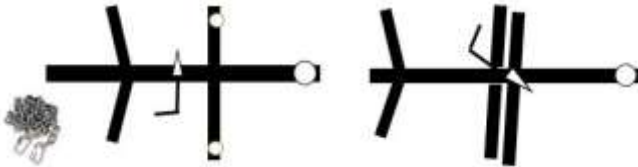
Sitting on the other side of the room in the tower is the Pick Up and Delivery Dispatcher. The service writers receive a phone call from a customer requesting the use of the free Pick Up and Delivery Service. The service writer writes on the P&D slip the phone number, the year and make of the car and the name of the customer. When the driver returned to the dealership they would walk up to the tower and get their next run slip.

The P&D Vehicles



This is a rough cut and paste version

**1973 Toyota Corolla Bob Spreen Tow Vehicle we had up to 12
Units (Tow cars) and 12 drivers**



These are two examples of the custom temporary screw on cadillac hitch receivers. They were different for each Caddie with different rear bumper and rear undercarriage. There was a crank and a point that “secured” it temporarily to the bumper without any bolts. Leverage and nibs that inserted into holes in the frame made it possible,

The Dream Begins

but today it would not be legal or wise to use these devices. A safety tow chain was attached to the Toyota hitch to the frame near the rear bumper of the Caddie. The Toyota was narrow enough so the drivers behind the towed Toyota could see the turn signals of the Caddie. The towed Toyota had a mercury sensing unit to activate the Toyota's break lights when the Caddie was braking in traffic. We had up to four different hitches in the Toyota trunk depending on the year and model of the Caddie that we hooked up too.



We were in contact with P&D dispatcher with a UHF radio. Using a call sign to get to the dispatcher we would say Wrap 83 to base, or the dispatcher would call us Wrap 83 to unit #.

My First Ride along with an experienced P&D Driver

The pay for P&D drivers was still unskilled labor wages but the job not out in the heat and you drove for a living which for a guy in his early 20's was appealing.

I went along with an experienced 24 year old driver to see what their day was like.

Cadillac Dreams

On our last delivery of Friday night I went through the process of putting the temporary hitch on the Cadillac and hooking up the Toyota tow car. I then looked up our delivery destination in the map book. We delivered the Caddie up in the hills above the city. I unhooked the Toyota and completed the delivery paper work. The driver and I rode in the Toyota to a liquor store to take a little break. He came back with two cans of beer. I was confused and surprised by the beer. I found out why we were not in a hurry to get back to the shop. The P&D dispatcher (Our buddy) was desperate to get a driver back to the shop to take the last delivery (Run) so he could go home to start his weekend to party. None of the drivers wanted the last run because it was to downtown L.A, and it would take several hours of stop and go traffic there and back. Finally a driver showed up to take the last run and as we saw the dispatcher our buddy grumble in the parking as lot several drivers showed up after the last run was taken when the code was 10-7 for out of service was announced meaning the dispatcher was going home.

There was freedom for the 12 of us drives to make the best of this job if we completed the task safely and with courtesy to the customers.

The Dream Begins

Picking up cars in the morning was clear cut with no side trips with the most efficient way there and back to the dealership with the customer car. In the evening after you delivered the caddie you could take a little side trip to get lunch if you did it quickly. If you delivered the caddie in laguna beach with your Toyota you could take the freeway back or you could take a more scenic way home and make it back around the same time.

If you delivered a car above Hollywood you could drive north to the freeway or drive the beautiful and twisty Topanga Canyon down to Sunset Blvd then to the freeway. Sometimes we teamed up and delivered or picked up more than one car on a run.

Limo Runs

Occasionally the Owner or other VIPs required Limousine driver to a party or to or from the airport. I once did an afterhours Limo transport of an executive and his guests to a party in Pasadena at a mansion. After dropping them off at their party I went to eat dinner. I sat in the back of the Limo at a Taco Bell restaurant eating my dinner. As I was wearing a thrift store suit jacket for the “Limo Man” uniform. I ditched the jacket, and I followed a group of teens

Cadillac Dreams

to a different mansion that was hosting a party with a live band for a wealthy teenager. I was back with the Limo in time to take the VIPs back to the dealership.

Sometimes we did not get a lunch break so we would take one at the end of the shift. One Time after dropping off a customer from a Limo run I was near Paramount, so to make an unexpected grand entrance I pulled the Limo up on to the front lawn of my friend's house. Several friends my age were renting their family home from their parents, and it was like a haven for us to have a great place to hang out.

P&D Confessions



There was some dare devil drivers who made use of what we called the Century jump. It was a slightly elevated railroad track off the main road. You could get some air time (So I heard) and there were gouges in the road where a used caddie, a loan car, and maybe one Toyota made with the front undercarriage of the car. No car was injured in this childish stunt.

During our normal P&D five or six hours five days a week driving, usually with a towed Toyota on the dangerous freeways and roads in southern California we were so lucky to have survived as the odds were against the 12 drivers making it back alive were not good. One trailer hitch failure luckily only caused a Toyota to become an unhooked projectile landing like a dart on a fence post on an off ramp near the dealership.



Breaking in a new Driver

One new driver initiation was unusual the new person was told to get in the Toyota that was being towed by the Caddie driven by the experienced driver. The new recruit was told whatever you do not touch the steering wheel. We should have mentioned not to touch the break but luckily he did not. The ride began on a narrow city street swerving a little to the curb then back to the street for a snake like motion for a quarter mile while watching the terrified recruit in the side mirror.

Gas Receipts

If the car that you were picking up was low on gas the driver needed to use their own money. To be reimbursed by the dealership cashier was expected. The temptation was to get a gas station person to fill out an extra receipt to be turned in later. This would pay for a lunch for that day or gas for your car to make it till payday.

My last and Best Spreen Job

Correspondence Courier (Office Runner-Gofer)

As I mentioned before a long time body shop employee was recovering from a heart attack, and he could no longer work that demanding job they created a correspondence courier (I made up that name because gofer was not as cool) doing bank runs, post office, and DMV runs.

I was in contact with the dealership by a pager. This was a job where I was completely on my own and answerable to the awesome Ms. Elanor Clark the Executive Secretary to Mr. Bob Spreen who was semi retired. If there was a problem the office manager or the service manager had they would go to her. If there were a problem in the sales department they would go to the two sons of Bob Spreen.

Ms. Clark was in Bob Spreen's office sitting behind a large desk and she was quite imposing. As I made a morning bank runs and picked up the mail five days a week I was allowed to wear service writers shirt and pants street clothes to blend in while carrying large sums of cash and checks. Like the gentleman before me I was given a used Cadillac to drive so I would blend in. I drove a different used Caddie every other week. I had control over what I drove, because a Nova loan car was not always available.

More Responsibility the Better

The year was 1978 and I was now 22 years old. I had a great time doing my office runs and regular bank and (Department of Motor Vehicles) DMV duties. Sometimes it was nonstop runs like traveling around southern California to banks to collect money orders on a customer check that could have been in dispute before the customer stopped payment. Another run that I did twice a year was to collect jewelry from car salesmen, office workers, and managers to have the jewelry cleaned in downtown L.A. I would have the jewelry in the same brief case that I used for the bank runs. I was buzzed into a diamond district showroom. I would go to lunch and go back to collect the jewelry in the briefcase and bring it back to the dealership.

Appreciation for Life Changing Opportunities

As I now had time to think while driving and working on my own I started some positive habits. While I could go a few work days without a lunch break at times I had some down time. During a lunch break I would have time to get in a guitar lesson or get a chance to go to the library to get a book to read while waiting in line at the commercial registration room at the DMV.

I would take some time in between runs sitting in the shade in the parked Cadillac and practice the guitar near the dealership while listening to my pager. If I was taking a break I may be asked to make a bank run an hour away and back and I would not get a full break that day but at other times I would have a slower paced day and I may get a beach run or discover the Getty Museum or Lucky Baldwin's Ranch that was nearby a bank run.

I was called into Ms. Elanor Clark's office to be talked to for goofing up on some run felt like my world was ending. I was worried about my over emotional reaction so I while on a break I went to the library and asked for the self-help section.

The Dream Begins

I checked out a Dale Carnegie book and a beginner book on transactional analysis I'm OK you're OK. Reading kept me busy on my breaks and while at the DMV waiting in line. These books gave me practical coping skill exercises to practice. I developed the habits of reading, practicing the guitar, drawing, and painting. This was the beginning of finding out who I am and what kind of person I was and who I will strive to become.

While I walked past homeless people sleeping on the sidewalk when I had thousands of dollars of jewelry in a briefcase made me think. This day helped me to be more aware of the difference between the poor, the middle class, and the very wealthy. I learned compassion and how to relate to many different types of people. They all had their gifts and trails and each deserved respect.

Confession of the Office Runner

I would take my break at my friends Savon Copier job. I would be in their parking lot as the employees came out to go to lunch. My friend was surprised and got into the Caddie while his coworkers looked on. We would then go to the park for our lunch.

The Dark side of the Cadillac Dream

Crazy New Generation of P&D Drivers

By the year 1979 a new group of drivers were hired. They were taking the occasional use of gas receipts to an extreme level cashing in \$10 or \$20 dollars at a time of obvious fraudulent receipts. The new drivers took their Toyota tow cars off road in the mud and showing off the muddy Toyotas bragging about the jumps and other stunts that un old timers would never try.

Traditional Parking lot after work Shooters

In 1973 and beyond I was aware of my dad, a few mechanics, an office worker, and a service manage visiting after work gathering around some employee's Caddie while they did a few shots of booze before going home on Fridays. This seemed to be a way to deal with their stress of a hectic and challenging week.

Fast Life and Drugs in 1977 Los Angeles

Life while at and off work was going out of control. The fast life was to party, buy the best car you can and live in the best zip code area that you could. This proved your status and worth to yourself and others.

The Dream Begins

Centered in San Francisco in the 1960's was the drug culture of the hippies in the 1970's in L.A. it turned into recreational use of pot and cocaine by the elite and the wealthy by the 1980's. We lost a few coworkers to dealing and using cocaine. In the middle 1970's on payday at work you could get marijuana, cross tops speed or diet pills by walking around to different service department stalls. It was like a supermarket. This appeared harmless but when cocaine became available this was the monster that brought it all crashing down around us.

The Doctors, Lawyers, Disco, and the Hollywood stars made cocaine popular and a status symbol until the 1980's and they discovered the dangers as it devoured them, their friends and loved ones. By the 1980's the cheap form of smokable cocaine called crack became the scourge of south central L.A.

Bob Spreen Cadillac is sold to a corporation

This sale was wise as the days of the long term family business was over.

It was now the days of the corporate race to the bottom line.

In 1979 I helped by taking important documents and bank drafts to different locations and I felt that I was a valued member of the new team. All the employees were assured that we all were valued employees as we started to take directions from the new chief executive of the new owner. Then came the bean counters. They looked for all the waste and they looked at all departments to cut costs. Nothing out of the ordinary things must fit the model that was successful for them in all of their many other dealerships and their other successful businesses. Success was achieved by good quarterly earnings that could be measured. The free lone cars, free pickup and delivery, and the full service coffee house with steak lunch on Fridays would be eliminated as far as I remember.

I thought that I could survive the change as the new manager as they seemed to trust and appreciate my conscientious deliveries that were helpful in this transition.

The Dream Begins

Then my used Cadillac that I used to keep safe with was taken away. I was given a junker loan car that was unfit for our customers. With no air conditioning it was not appropriate on hot summer days for me to be sitting in banks and the DMV representing a classy Cadillac dealership with sweat dripping off me. I thought unless the car broke down on the way to the bank that I would be OK. Then they told me to keep the important runs and when I was done to come back and clean toilets and do other janitorial duties during my non driving times while maintaining a professional appearance. This was humiliating but as my next job in Reno at the State Psychiatric Hospital being humbled was what I needed. My sense of privilege and self-importance was way too exaggerated.

I was done with the new Cadillac corporate dealership. Luckily I had a place to stay with my uncle while I arranged to move back to Reno, Nevada where the pace was slower, and I could my life start over.

My first Visit back to L.A. 1981



The Dream changes and it continues

To see where I landed and to read
more stories by Bob Karnes

like

Stories From The Dojo

and

Mental Health Workers

The Plumbers of the
Fountain of Mental Health

These books and several martial art manuals are

available at

Web Site www.bobasan.net