

# Local Dealer Gets Welcome Letter to the New GM

The year is 1956. The place is Main St. Fairfax City; Va. James R. McKay opens the door for the first time on his new car dealership "Jim McKay Chevrolet". In less than 2 years the business grows and more room is needed. The move is on in 1958 and 3509 University Dr. Fairfax, Va. is the new home of "Jim McKay Chevrolet". The "OK" used car lot is born across the street at 10452 Lee Highway (Fairfax Boulevard today) and business is full speed ahead.

Jim McKay is now known as "Smilin Jim" around town and his dealership has spearheaded commercial growth in the city. He's one of the original board of directors of the National Bank of Fairfax, an active



Kathleen McKay of Jim McKay Chevrolet receives a 50 Year Award from Chevrolet. Pictured from left to right are Paula McFarland, Chevrolet's Northeast Region Zone Manager; Kathleen McKay; her daughters Kristen and April; Ruth McKay and Kathleen McKay's daughter Kelly.

member of the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, Rotary and Optimist Club, and sponsor to almost every little league and youth group in the city that asks for support. "Smilin Jim" lives close by the dealership and he and wife Ruth raise the kids Jimmy Jr., Kathy, and Larry around the family business. In 1995 the torch gets passed and "Smilin Jim" makes his daughter Kathleen McKay the Dealer Principle. Kathy is an active member of the Central Fairfax Chamber of Commerce, an original on the board of directors of the new Fairfax Boulevard Business Improvement District "BID", sponsor of local school and little league youth programs, and through both support and involvement continues her families legacy with George Mason University. Before you know it it's 2006 and the business celebrates its 50 YEAR anniversary.

Now move on to the fall of 2008. Vehicles are being ordered and plans are being made to outperform the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter of last year and BOOM! No one saw this one coming. The economy takes a nose dive like we have never seen in most of our lifetimes. Possibly the worst since the great depression say the experts. Jim McKay Chevrolet finds itself right in the hot seat. GM, its parent company, is troubled and needs help. Help comes by way of the federal government and the new administration but all of a sudden the dealer futures may still be in jeopardy. A "NEW GM" is being formed. Dealers are receiving letters explaining their fates or destinies. You are either a partner to the new GM or you are no longer a franchised dealer. It is necessary to scale back the size of the dealer networks. After over five decades of top sales and service performance the McKay family anxiously awaits a letter courier to learn the family businesses future.

It's June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2009, 11:30 AM. Kathleen McKay and her future dealer principle daughter April get the delivery. "You open it!" "No, you open it!" They finally open it together. It's the good news they hoped for and expected. Welcome to the new GM. There you have it. Jim McKay Chevrolet is open for business and will be here for a long time to come. The all new 2010 Camaro sits in the front window of the showroom as you pass by and its mere presence represents the hopeful future of things to come.