



FROM THE Top DOWN

A THIRD GENERATION STARTS TO
EXPERIENCE THE FAMILY TARGA.

STORY BY **DAVID MATHEWS**
PHOTOS BY **RANDY WELLS**

THE 2025 PORSCHE PARADE abounded with sights, smells, and sounds that challenged the senses. The cars, of course, took center stage, be they the old ones, the new ones, the fast ones, the putterers, the colorful ones...it was Porsche overload. The aroma of fresh coffee, unburned gas, hot brakes, and pork BBQ wafted through hot, Oklahoma City haze. The booming exhaust note of 700-horsepower race cars, the chatter of autocross engines bumping against rev limiters, the eerie whir of EV cars, and the excited shouting between old friends once again reunited all created a raucous cacophony.

The vision that resonated the most, however, the

one that underscored the family focus of all Porsche Parades, was that of Francis, the 18-month-old son of Stone and Katie Dodson, squirming happily in his car seat, firmly secured in Dad's 1988 Carrera Targa.

"My dad and I purchased the Targa in 2006, when I was 15 years old," Stone said. "We bought it from a close family friend as a project car. The Targa was drivable, but needed a complete refresh from nose to tail. It had both mechanical issues and cosmetic issues. The engine would turn, but it was not ready for prime time in any way, shape, or form."

Stone and his dad worked on the car the next couple of years, doing what work they could and farming

out the heavier lifting to professionals. "I drove it to and from high school, and took it with me to college in Tulsa, Oklahoma," Stone said. "Seemed like a good idea at the time, but a college kid with a classic Porsche wasn't that smart after all. Got dinged up pretty good." An example: "While I was driving down Riverside Drive in Tulsa, the targa top flew off and was run over by a semi. Hadn't clipped it down," Stone said. "As a 20-year-old, I didn't have the money to fix it or replace it, so I just leaned it against the garage wall and waited for better times."

After graduation, Stone parked his beloved Targa, left Tulsa for a job in Oklahoma City, and bought

a more practical car. Life happens. Stone married. Work was time-consuming. The Targa remained garaged until 2022, when nostalgia struck hard. "I missed driving the Porsche and I missed the Porsche community," he said. "So we went to Tulsa for the weekend and pulled it out of the garage. As soon as I got it started, fuel shot out the back. All the lines and hoses were cracked and leaking. The tires were dry-rotted. I hadn't preserved the car; just parked it. So we had to do the entire thing again. Fifteen years later, we were redoing the fixes we had done before.

"Once again, Dad and I did what we could do. I shipped the targa top to 'Targa Dan' Petchel in Bra-



denton, New Jersey, to be repaired. Dumont's, an independent shop in Oklahoma City, accomplished the more complicated mechanical work. When the Targa was reliably drivable again, it became my daily driver. The car now shows 150,000 miles, but the mileage is actually greater because the odometer was broken for several years."

Stone kept his Targa completely stock during his refresh. The engine was never cracked open, a testament to Porsche reliability. Maintenance upkeep was a regular occurrence, as expected with a nearly 40-year-old car.

"When Francis was born a year and a half ago, it was important to me that he grew up with me and the car, like I did with my dad," Stone said. "So the Targa is my 'Day Care Mobile,' with the car seat in the back. We tool around town, enjoying the fresh air, the experience. My hope is that Francis and I will work on the car together when he gets old enough, and go to Porsche events together just like Dad and I did."

The Porsche connection began for Stone at an early age.



"Art and Bonnie Munson—Art was my great uncle—were big PCA members and founding members of the Cimarron Region," Stone said. "When I was not much older than Francis, Art and Bonnie would haul me around to Porsche events in the back of their Porsche. There were no baby seats back then, but those tiny back seats were the perfect size for a 4 year old. I grew up with them *and* the Porsche Club."

Family connections didn't stop there. Stone's father was born in a small town not far from Zuffenhausen. "We'd go there once a year and regularly visit the Porsche factory," Stone said. "Porsche has always been an important part of our family."

What is it about Porsche, and the Targa in particular, that appeals most to Stone? "I love how the car looks," he said. "I think it has the most iconic look. I love that 3.2L engine era. These cars have the most beautiful shape, the curves, everything about it. The Targa is great. The top makes the car so versatile, and comfortable, especially when you don't have air conditioning. Having an all-black car in Oklahoma, the targa top is essential.

"The car has such a connection with the road. The suspension provides good feedback. I like the way it feels. As a driver, I am part of it. The shifting is very tactile. The Targa is so basic. It's analog in our digital world; however, I did upgrade the original Blaupunkt radio to Bluetooth Blaupunkt. Other than that, it's original.

"More than just the driving itself, is the memories the car engenders. It brings back memories of my dad, Art and Bonnie, the Porsche events I attended, the crazy times in high school and college. Dad

taught me to drive a stick in that Targa. He had me park on a steep hill and told me, 'Don't roll back. Just figure it out.' I could never let this car go. Too many memories."

Francis is growing into the Stone Family Targa experience. "Because he faces rearward in his car seat, Francis loves looking through that large rear window, letting the wind brush his face, hearing the engine sound, enjoying the subtle vibrations," Stone said. "When he was very little, we'd take him to day care in Katie's Volvo. He'd sometimes get fussy. That's never an issue in the Porsche. The engine, the wind, the big rear window—he's a content little boy. And when all three of us are in the car, Katie squeezes in back with Francis, because the front passenger seat is mashed against the dash. It's definitely snug. It makes for a close-knit, bonding experience."

Francis, 18-month-old heir to the dad and granddad's 1988 Carrera Targa, with dad and mom, Katie. His car seat is firmly in place. At nearly 150,000 miles, this family Targa has seen use, as a slight tear on the steering wheel proves. A garage queen? No. A family jewel? Most definitely.

