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Rev up the New Year: Mid-Missouri

Old Car Club kicks off 2024 with classic garage tour

Today at 4:00 a.m.

by [Stephi Smith](#)





Stephi Smith/News Tribune Larry Rhea backs his car up to sit in front of Leonard Rutledge's garage during the Mid-Mo Old Car Club's New Years day garage tour.

Larry Rhea's car is old as him. His 1957 Chevrolet Bel Air, painted a bright turquoise with white accents, holds more character than something more recent, he said.

"I like the history of it, you can see the body-style change throughout the years with these cars," Rhea said.

Inside of Rhea's Bel Air is the original leather, bench seats and Nomad steering wheel. Rhea also added a pair of black and white fuzzy dice from the rearview mirror.

Rhea was at Leonard Rutledge's house for the Mid-Mo Old Car Club's New Year's Day garage tour. Rhea is also treasurer of the MMOCC.

The group traveled to view Steve Meyer's collection on Missouri Boulevard, Donnie Weber's collection on State Route D in Lohman and, after viewing Rutledge's collection, stopped by the Rusty Baldwin Shop on Highway E.

Rutledge had a classic Volkswagen car in his main garage as well as several vintage pieces of tractor equipment in his second garage and his father's John Deere antique tractor.

Rutledge said he has an affinity for Volkswagen vehicles. His pale-yellow 1970 Volkswagen Deluxe Bus sits outside his front door and is the 14th VW bus he and his wife have owned.

"I'm a Volkswagen guy," he said.

Tim Petty, president of MMOCC, said the club has been hosting New Years Day garage tours for longer than he's been a member. Petty joined the club in 1995; he owns several cars, all older than at least 1980.

Petty said he likes being involved with the MMOCC because it's a way to make friends with similar interests to him.

"I've loved cars since I was a little kid. I liked playing with (toy) cars, then driving them, now I can find people who like them, be friends with them. Sometimes you can trade stuff, too and it's easier than trying to buy everything," he said.

Petty still owns his first ever car, a 1953 Chevrolet pickup truck he bought back from a junkyard several years ago.

Mick Rhyme also stopped by Rutledge's home with his 1985 Chevrolet pickup truck he's owned since only seven years after the truck came out.

"I'm the fourth owner, I think. (The original owner) bought it with 34,000 miles on it and it's got under 150,000 on it now. Unbelievable," he said.

Rhyne is using spare parts from a 1937 Chevrolet truck as decor for the front of his house. The frame to the front-end of the truck hangs above Rhyne's driveway, in the spot a basketball hoop might be.

"When I get done, I'm going to back the truck in there," Rhyne said, pointing to a printed photo of his garage.

Rhyne's friend in Independence that owns the shop Rhyne purchases most of his parts from, Jim Carter Truck Parts, is going to make a calendar for 2024 and one month will display a photo of Rhyne's decoration.

"I'll hope for either January or October. The reason I say that is so it's either the first or because October is my birthday," he said.

Rhyne said he's rebuilding this vehicle "from the ground up." He bought the vehicle from a friend, who had taken the vehicle apart and left it that way for more than 40 years.

His favorite part has been the parts.

"I've had so much fun gathering up all the parts for it,"

Rhyne has fixed and sold other classic cars as well, including ones from 1948 and 1950. He said his current truck, from 1937, will be his last project.

"It's just so time demanding. The money is the easy part. It's just the time," Rhyne said.



Mick Rhyne shows a picture of his an outdoor decoration he's working on that incorporates a spare frame for his 1937 Chevrolet truck. (Stephi Smith/News Tribune photo)



Stephi Smith/News Tribune photo: Mick Rhyne smiles while talking about his new outdoor house decoration: the frame for a 1937 Chevrolet truck hanging above his garage door.



Mick Rhyne shows another printed photo, this one depicting him, Uncle Sam and his grandsons driving a




Larry Rhea



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