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Our featured Guest Writers

Aren't we lucky to have them!

Lou Refano

A fan of most everything automotive, Lou is also somewhat encyclopedic in his vast knowledge of certain things! This time out he starts his multi-part feature on Tri-Fives!

My Car Story

Gold cars are pretty rare! And when you have a classic that doubles as your daily driver and is in near perfect condition - well that is an extreme rarity! Check out Ken Reynolds' 1974 Plymouth Gold Duster and you will see an example of both!

Rich's Tech Tips

The fantasy comes true - you uncover that elusive "Barn Find"! Now what? How do you proceed to get it road worthy? Fear not! Sir Richard the Car-Minded will give you some very important tips here!

"Selling a classic car. Pt 3"

(Your feedback and comments are welcomed!)

In the previous two issues we spoke about the BSers who are out there all over the place just looking to waste your time in conversation about your car. Guys who are not real buyers.

In this issue, we will talk about REAL buyers and how you know you've got one!

Are they elusive? Yes they are. As we have established, most people who inquire about your car or truck are dreamers, so how do you know when the potential buyer is real?

Let's back track for just a moment....

I am basically a car collector and someone who loves most all things automotive. I have been this way since I was a tot. Matchbox and Hot Wheels collections as a kid, then building car models for ten years, and eventually bought my first car - and I still have it 38 years later!

During the past 38 years, I have bought and sold numerous vehicles - everyday driver cars, as a car salesman for years, and of course - classic muscle. I do not buy classic muscle to sell for profit, I love the cars and wish I had enough money and space to have a hundred or more of them! Just like Leno, Seinfeld, Jackson, and many other multi-millionaires with deep, deep, very deep pockets!

What I have come to know through experience, is that a real buyer of any nature, will not keep on BSing or make meaningless low offers, they will be close in price, have a "ready now" timeframe, (not a "Let me go ask my wife first" crap line), and in most cases, a deposit on hand.

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I have had dozens and dozens and dozens of people full of s#*t talk, text, and email me about my cars. The ones who are serious will make an email offer within a very short time of our first communication - and - they will call me on the phone!

I have sold cars over the internet to faraway places, and each time that has happened, I have received phone calls from the buyer and within a very short time we were talking money, how to send it, and how to get the deal done! Offers have been reasonable and terms were being discussed in short order.

Lesson #1. If they do not call you up and instead make offers via text or email, they are not real. If a guy calls you and asks some key questions and indicates he is ready to move forward if you can meet on price - you've got a potential real buyer.

Next;

People who make an appointment to come to see your car for sale and have too much fun while looking at it, probably are not real buyers. They are enjoying a day out. If your car is outside with a sign on it in your driveway, and people stop to ask lots of questions and start with the "I used to have a...." crap, and they want to tell you about their old cars from years gone by, tell them "Thanks for coming, but I am busy."

Lesson #2. A serious buyer is just that, serious! They will inspect the car in, out, under, over, and know what they are doing. Minimal talk, more action is key. A real buyer almost always works quickly to get the car. See, he doesn't want to lose it, and knows that he has found what he wants!

Next;

The guy who comes over at a car show and says, "Yeah, it's nice - let me think about it a while". Is not your serious buyer. If someone doesn't make a reasonable offer the first time, they could be a buyer, but probably are not. Unless they come back very shortly thereafter. Just like in new car sales!

Lesson #3. The guy with a reasonable offer, who says he is ready now, is at least in the game. He will make a move towards the purchase, then you know you have a real one. No move - not real. Offers, offers, offers! A real buyer will make a good offer on the spot!

Next;

I have sold cars for my full asking price, for close to it, and for pretty far below the asking price. The big similarity in the deals is the time frame in which the buyer works - and - what he shows up with!

Lesson #4.

The guy who shows up with cash and, or, a friend or trailer to help him move the car, is REAL! Even if he doesn't offer you what you want - you have a real buyer there!

Here's an example of a REAL buyer -- This past November I had a call about my Super Bee for sale. The guy arranged to come down the following weekend. He shows up with a trailer hitched to his truck - first sign he was real. He checked the car over carefully and made me a lowball offer. However - he had a bag full of cash with him! He was definitely serious! I sold it for less than I wanted to, but it was a price I could live with. A good deal.



Cruise Night Information!



“EXTRA EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!”

Here are locations from 2016. They sometimes change. Let us know if you have info on any of them.
Updates will be posted in the next Newsletter & on our EVENTS CALENDAR

- MONDAYS: Main St. East Rockaway, NY (*June-August*)
\$3 Admission. Various Charity Fundraisers.
- TUESDAYS: Dogwood Avenue. Franklin Square, NY
Public Gathering. FREE
- TUESDAYS: Yaphank FD. Yaphank, NY.
Sponsored by Yaphank Fire Department - FREE
- TUESDAYS: Tri-County Flea Market. Hempstead Turnpike, Levittown, NY
Public Gathering. FREE
- WEDNESDAYS: Nathan's. Long Beach Rd, Oceanside, NY
Public Gathering. FREE
- WEDNESDAYS: BLD's Restaurant. Hawkins Ave. Ronkonkoma, NY
Public Gathering. FREE
- WEDNESDAYS: Townhouse Diner. Rt 25a, Rocky Point, NY
Public Gathering. FREE (New venue - 2016)
- WEDNESDAYS: Parking Lot #4. Madison St (off Post), Westbury, NY
Public Gathering. FREE (New venue - 2016)
- WEDNESDAYS: King Kullen Center. Jericho Tpk. Garden City Park, NY
Public Gathering. FREE (New venue - 2016)
- WEDNESDAYS: Milleridge Inn. RTs 106/107, Jericho, NY
Sponsored by Milleridge Inn. \$5 Admission.
- THURSDAYS: Wendy's Shopping Center. Montauk Hwy and Locust Ave, Oakdale, NY
Sponsored by Still Cruisin' Car Club. FREE
- THURSDAYS: Kings Park Plaza-Located on Indian Head Rd & Meadow Rd. Kings Park, NY
Sponsored by Kings Park Chamber of Commerce and Professor's Diner. FREE
- THURSDAYS: Atlantic Avenue between Merrick Rd and Sunrise Hwy. Lynbrook, NY (*June-August*)
Sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce for "Community Chest" soup kitchen. \$3 to charity.
- THURSDAYS: Main St. Peconic River Front, Riverhead, NY
Sponsored by The Chamber of Commerce. FREE (*June-August*)
- THURSDAYS: Sea Cliff FD, Sea Cliff Ave., Sea Cliff, NY
\$5 Admission. Sponsored by The Sea Cliff Fire Dept..
- THURSDAYS: Main St., Mineola, NY
Sponsored by The Chamber of Commerce. FREE (*July-September*)
- FRIDAYS: Bellmore Train Station. Sunrise Highway. Bellmore, NY
Now run by...?.. some local group now charging \$5 - expensive - any info about this ??
- FRIDAYS: Massapequa Train Station. Sunrise Highway. Massapequa, NY
Sponsored by Massapequa Chamber of Commerce. Two cans or more of food – to charity. (*July - August*)
- FRIDAYS: Meschutt Beach @ The Beach Hut. Canal Rd. Hampton Bays, NY.
Public Gathering. FREE after 5PM
- SATURDAYS: Cedar Beach @ The Beach Hut. Ocean Parkway, Cedar Beach, NY
Public Gathering. FREE
- SATURDAYS: Super Stop & Shop. Rt 25 (1/4 mile east of the Bull), Smithtown, NY
Permission from Stop & Shop. FREE
- SUNDAYS: *AM Cruise* Ocean Pkwy, Captree Beach thru May, then at OBI. Babylon, NY
Public Gathering. FREE

What about Brooklyn & Queens? They are part of LI too!
Anyone have info about Cruise Nights being held there?

Tri-Fives Part One

By Lou Refano

Staff Writer

When you go to a typical classic car show (ones that are not restricted to just one make) you are bound to find a 1955, '56, or '57 Chevy. I refer to these as “The Beatles of Classic Cars”, so prolific, so universally loved by just about everyone. Over the years I have asked myself, what is it that makes these cars so popular? Can it be defined logically? Why are they so highly regarded, so collectible? What qualities set them apart from other classics? I'm not sure there's one simple answer....



Let's take a look at the 1955, which is my personal favorite of the “Tri-Five Chevys”. Two men at GM were largely responsible for the success of this totally new car: Designer Harley Earl, and Chevrolet Chief Engineer Ed Cole. These men made sure Chevy's stodgy image would be gone in a “heartbeat”. The new “Motoramic” Chevy was stylish and powerful, but came in a practical size for maneuverability and parking. The public ate it up like hotcakes. The total production run was a monumental 1,775,952 cars, including 366,293 of the top-selling Bel Air 4-door sedan. American auto production as a whole had a tremendous year in '55, topping 7.9 million cars, for a new record. With a production number like that, obviously many of those cars and parts are still available today.



Was it the styling? Mr. Earl's totally new design for '55 made the '54 Chevy look like an old man's car in comparison. The bulging rear fender look was replaced by smooth sides and a minimal amount of chrome trim. The front end design also represented minimalism, with a one-piece egg-crate grille flanked by small turn signal lights. It is believed that Mr. Earl's grille was inspired by Ferrari. This was also the first Chevy to have a wraparound windshield. On the hood was a handsome stylized chrome bird with jet wings. At the rear, small taillights that jugged out at the top of the fenders to strengthen the profile. Overall, the execution was clean and modern looking. You could get this package in a solid color, or nineteen available two-tones! Available accessories included grille and fender guards, and fender skirts.



Was it the interior? The instrument panel was a pleasing symmetrical “dual cove” design, and contained a wide horizontal metal strip with a pattern of little Chevy bowtie logos stamped out. The seats were handsome cloth or available pleated all-vinyl. There were a host of new options like air conditioning, power windows, and power seats. Other options included power steering, power brakes, automatic headlight dimmers, “Wonder-bar” radio which found the station for you, and a compass. So many new options were available that some referred to the car as “Chevy's little Cadillac.” Never before had so many options been offered on a car in the low-priced field.



Was it the powerplant? This was all-new too: A modern, high-comp, overhead valve V-8 was available, displacing 265 cubes, with 162 horsepower in standard form, or 180 with the Power Pack, which included dual exhausts. This V-8 was designed to be both powerful *and* light; in fact, it weighed 100 lbs less than the “Stovebolt Six” which was the standard engine! This was the first Chevy V-8 car since 1919. So well engineered, this engine became the foundation for Chevy V-8s for decades to come!



In the transmission department, a column-mounted three-speed Synchro-Mesh was standard, along with available three-speed with Touch-Down overdrive, or the fully automatic two-speed Powerglide.

Was it the array of different models and body styles? There were three trim levels to choose from. In price order highest to lowest, were the Bel-Air, 210, and 150. The Bel-Air series offered Convertible, Sport Coupe (hardtop), 2 and 4 door sedans, 2 and 4 door wagons, or the very fancy Nomad wagon. The unique roof design of the Nomad came directly from the 1954 Corvette Nomad, a “dream car” designed to be a concept sport wagon. The Nomad was regarded as one of the most beautiful station wagon designs of the Fifties, but sold poorly (8,530 units), partly due to its price tag (\$2,571), as well as its lack of four doors.



Speaking of prices, \$2,206 got you into a fancy Bel Air convertible. On the other end of the spectrum, the bargain hunters could pick up a new 150 2-door sedan for only \$1,784.



Maybe it was the sum of all these things I've mentioned that won so many people over. Or maybe it's the fact that the car was the symbol of a certain era – the start of the Rock 'n' Roll age, the Jet Age, and the Rocket Age; the days of car hops, drive-in movies, James Dean, Marilyn Monroe, slicked-back hair and leather jackets. Maybe it's the way the car brings to mind and heart nostalgia for a simpler time. Whatever it is, the '55 Chevy – with its style, performance, and ability to be personalized to suit just about any driver - was at the right place at the right time. And somehow, it still is.

Just like the Beatles.

Next time, a look at the '56 and '57 Chevys, which shared the same body, but had personalities all their own.

Sources: *Cars of the Fabulous 50's* by James H. Flamming & t Auto Editors of Consumer Guide, Wikipedia.org, nadaguides.com, trifivechevys.com



PS -

The marketing department and outside advertising agencies sure knew how to play up the changes that Chevy had for 1955. Back in the 50's, everybody wanted something "New" and "Modern". People felt the WWII era and the 1940's were over, it was time for change in everything, and motoring options that captured the spirit of America were no exception!

Big time ad budgets and TV exposure were to play a big part in getting the message and the image out to America. Also there were all the high profile shows and TV stars that were sponsored directly by the auto industry.

Here are two examples:



My Car Story



1974 Plymouth Gold Duster

By Ken Reynolds

Sometime in 2003, I decided to get a classic car and use it mostly for leisure and pleasure. After searching and considering for about 16 months, I finally came across Walt Kovalsky's 1974 Gold Duster in Woodside, Queens. As I drove up and first saw her parked in Walt's driveway, I looked up towards the roof of my '83 Monte Carlo and said, "I think the search is over. Thank you."

I fell in love with "Dusty" on the spot.



The 2-tones of gold, inside and out, and her body style immediately grabbed my attention-and continues to hold it. Almost everyone who has met Dusty loves the car, regardless of the person's age or background. Kind of a universal appeal if you will. She's 43-years-old and has about 67,000 miles on her, but she still rides like and looks like a dream. In and out the car is in great shape and performs like it's still 1974.

Walt was asking \$7,500 and I got him down to 7 thousand even. I also received some original parts manuals with the car which are now very hard to come by.

When I take Dusty out for a ride, we really go for a ride. A beautiful ride. Driving and riding in a car with such attractive design, cozy interior and smooth handling makes for a thoroughly enjoyable car experience. While I've had several offers to sell her, I have no desire to part with her. I think it's me and Dusty 'til death do us part.



Buying her was one of the best decisions of my life. She has never let me down.

The factory color of Dusty's exterior is Golden Faun; the interior colors are light gold, dark gold and dark brown. Her exterior was re-painted with the original color about 20 years ago. Over the last few years being a daily driver, she has undergone a few paint touch ups and they came out perfect! You can't even tell then were done. Maintaining a car as it is needed goes a long way to keeping it sharp! Once of prevention as they say.



The multi colored and rich gold interior is rare for sure! I have been contacted by several production companies who wanted to use Dusty in print ads because they were looking specifically for a gold vehicle in and out. We did several jobs, she can be seen in ads for Coach and a Brazilian fashion company, an Indian jewelry company, and a different jewelry company from Hong Kong .



I'll tell you, being on set with the camera crews, production personnel, and of course the models, was a pretty cool experience! It gets a bit unnerving when people are climbing around in your car and doing all kinds of layout work. I had to take the front seat out at one point so the photographer could get a better shot with the model sprawled out. Removing the bench seat was a breeze, and the resulting pics were worth the effort!



She has a 318 under her hood, a 3-speed automatic transmission with the column mounted shift lever, the original Chrysler solid-state radio in her dash with an Alpine AM/FM cassette under the AC vents (I intend to replace the Alpine with a unit that was contemporary in the '70s).



The wheels and tires are stock, with the original wheel covers recently polished and newly painted. The headliner, package tray, AC compressor, radiator, water pump, fuel pump, carburetor, resistor and exhaust have been replaced. She still has the original alternator, voltage regulator and electronic ignition! Mechanically she is sound and I use her as my daily driver!

I love going for long rides during Spring and Summer, especially to *The End*. (*Montauk that is.*) Being that I live in the Bronx, that lets you know a bit about Dusty's reliability! She is a great cruising car that you can take anywhere.

(Ken - thanks for letting me work on and drive it!) *Pete*



Rich's Tech Tips



By Rich Fiore
Staff Writer

In Your Wildest Dreams

If you are lucky once in your lifetime you might stumble upon the car only found in your wildest dreams. The scenario would be that it's a car you had many years ago ... and sold (possibly crashed), or the one you have always wanted, but was too pricey.

You are the first one to hear about it since it's a word of mouth thing. You show up and the old woman says "Just get that wing thing with the funny valve covers out of my garage! I'm tired of looking at it since my husband passed ten years ago." "He showed that piece of junk more attention than me". In addition she states, "There is also a ton of brand new original Mopar parts in the trunk and throughout the garage taking up my valuable space ". " How quickly can you get all this stuff out of here"?



At this point you would be trying your hardest to contain your emotions and tell her in a calm voice " I would be more than glad to help you out and have it gone within the hour". Whew! And you get it done.

This fantasy is of course in everyone's imagination... at least mine anyway.

So playing along with this dream - you now have it home. The only thing you know about this car so far is that it rolls. (Since you used a flatbed... right?)



This is a great start to the dream - but reality sets in and it's time to start thinking about what you have to do to get it running again without doing any harm to the precious engine that has been sitting for so long.

The first question is will it spin ? You put a large socket on the crank pulley with a breaker bar and .."wallah!" it turns. Great it's not seized. *(That was fun!)*



Next question I would have - how old is the gas? Remove the cap and give it a whiff. If it has that varnish smell (more than likely) it's time to drop the tank. Probably a good idea to just replace the tank since it is so old. The lines should be blown out and the carb should be rebuilt. Of course the fuel filter and engine oil with filter should also be changed.

Before start up, the plugs should be removed and fresh motor oil should be squirted into each cylinder. If ambitious a compression test would not be a bad idea at this point. New plugs are a must.

If the car has distributor points under its cap, it's a good idea to replace them along with the condenser and rotor, cap and wires. The air filter and PCV valve should also be inspected along with all rubber hoses. While you're at it inspect all of the underhood wiring and under dash wiring for rodent damage.



The water pump could be quickly inspected for wobble along with all of the fan belts for cracking and proper tension. Fluid levels on the master cylinder, power steering and the transmission should all be checked - be it a manual or automatic.

A thorough underside inspection should be performed on the exhaust, floor pans and fuel lines. While in the air the wheels should be pulled and check the wheel cylinders, calipers, drums and rotors along with all brake lines and hardware.



If you are close to initial startup I would find a way to spin the oil pump and prime the engine with the new motor oil. Fill the carb float bowl with new gas and prime the engine directly. Use a remote starter and have a fire extinguisher and a very large rag handy! Once started I would keep the engine idle up around 1,500 RPM while looking for leaks. Keeping a watchful eye on the oil pressure and temperature gauges is also crucial!

In conclusion, if you should happen to score the car of your dreams, and it has not been run for many years, a little planning can save your precious drive train -- and maybe even you !!
Dreaming is so much fun ... ain't it ?

Quick and Dirty: Do you have a checklist handy when inquiring about your next ride ?
(Hell, I can't remember everything.)





Here is where we keep the past records of all our old Newsletter editions. You will never find them on your own, as they are kept at a secret and secure location inside an impenetrable vault.

These are the latest pictures of our facility.



Once inside, access is only obtained by permission of our crack staff of security and record-keeping personnel.

WARNING: They are highly trained in all forms of martial arts and weapons use. Though they might not look the part, these are serious individuals. Be forewarned!



On occasion we will surreptitiously move the contents to other secure locations we have contracted to use. Our documents are very valuable and their protection is of paramount importance to the Collector Car Hobby.

Here is a picture of "Ed". He is one of our top Archivists. He is experienced, having been involved in the car hobby since 1947. He is also a former Green Beret and was an NSA auditor.



Here is a link you can use to view these old materials.....enjoy!

<http://www.liclassiccars.com/Newsletter/>

"Closing Comments"

'Bout time!!

By Peter Giordano
Editor

2017 is upon us - what will we do different this year? (*Car-wise I mean. I am not looking to be philosophical here about anything else*)

Are we standing pat with our current ride(s)? Are we looking to upgrade the condition of it, restore it, modify it? What about a new addition altogether? Increase the herd or downsize the collection? What about going racing?

All these are pertinent questions as we seek to leave winter behind us and get on with the upcoming car season.

For me, last year I bought three new acquisitions that added to "The Fleet". I ended up selling one and have another up for sale now - for financial reasons. Is that something that you are facing? Does the sad prospect of letting one of your babies go due to finances have you tossing and turning at night?

Most of us know that scenario at one time or another. Fear not - there will always be a time to get another classic! If things go as planned for me this year - I will probably seek to buy another car. But if not, there is always next year.

The point is, no matter what our particular situation is in the above areas, we can still enjoy the hobby and all the friends we have made that are involved in it. Always be a part of it! See you out there!

On another note -

We are looking for new writers who have ideas and would like to try their hand at it. You can write just a one-time column if you like, or a series, or even become a regular on a part-time basis!

Don't worry about being an English major or perfect writer or speller, that is my job. I will make you look good!

We are actively seeking submissions for the MY CAR STORY features!

If you have a classic or specialty car or truck - let us know. We would love to do a feature on it!

One more thing --

We have started a database of cars for TV, movie, commercial, print and production companies!

I get calls and emails many times during the year from production companies. They need specialty cars and will pay you for your time and vehicle usage!

So - go now to the "Register Your Car" link on the website's main page and put in your information and some GOOD pictures of your car! We will keep them on file (privately), and when these production companies call, they will get to see your vehicle. It's free to register! Don't wait, do it now! Right after reading this Newsletter!!

Thanks for reading!

Peter Giordano
Editor

