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This year's featured vehicle is Valery Wright's
1965 Chevrolet C10 truck

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1965 Chevy C10 'Patina': ready to cruise



VALERY WRIGHT gives a thumbs up in her '65 Chevy C10 she calls Patina.

PHOTOS BY ROXIE MURPHY

BY ROXIE MURPHY
REPUBLICAN STAFF WRITER
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Car buffs around Owensville may have noticed an old Chevrolet truck model join the classics scene in spring 2018 — when Valery Wright's 1965 C10 seafoam green lowrider hit the pavement.

As Valery drove around Owensville Friday morning, she returned enthusiastic waves and thumbs-up signs. Driving around town with her sunglasses on and window rolled down, she did a burnout in the parking lot at city hall and received another thumbs-up from a passing motorist.

"I haven't really named her yet," Valery said. "I am thinking about Patina, but I am open to suggestions."

Valery says 'Patina' because of the faded sheen of peeling paint on the surface of the hood of the truck that only comes with age. While she loves the truck the way it is, she says clear coat to protect the paint is in the plans.

Ed Wright, Valery's husband, spent years looking for the 1960s C10, putting it in work-

ing order and making it 'turn-key' ready for his wife — whom he says he 'loves to spoil.'

"It started in 1998 when we went to a car show in St. Louis and she saw this 1963 C-10," Ed remembers his wife saying she wanted one like that, and he made a note of it. "I have always been a car buff and I guess it rubbed off on her."

"He was always looking and I asked him to keep an eye out for one," Valery said.

Ed did a lot of commercial work and traveled for his job.

"I was on the road doing commercial work and in '09 I was in Wellington, Kan., at a Walmart and when I saw an ad in Oklahoma City for a 1965 Chevy C10," Ed says. "I called it and the guy still had it. The motor was bad that was in it. I didn't have time to run down there, so I kept in contact and kept on for six months."

Ed explained that while the body styles were similar between the 1963 and 1965, there was a small change in the cab design that had to do with the distance between the door panels and the dash board. In the

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Wright C10 • from page 2B

1963 model, the door shape and dashboard design tended to make taller drivers hit their knees on the dashboard. But because of the 'A' shape of the door in the 1965 Chevy, it was a lot easier to enter and exit without the 'knee-knocking.' Ed figured Valery would be just as happy with a 1965 C10, but he couldn't seem to get to Oklahoma.

He realized he would have to have someone else get the truck for him, and made an agreement with the truck's owner over the phone to make the purchase. June 16, 2010, he made arrangements for friends to pick up his wife's truck for a small fee.

"I knew he bought the truck," Valery remembers. "But it was still exciting to see it come down the driveway on the trailer. This is my baby."

The truck ran, but it wasn't really reliable. "It looked like what I had always wanted," Valery said. "He had found the perfect truck."

As soon as they had the truck off the trailer, Ed and his oldest son Dakota began

dismantling parts and taking out the old motor.

"The old motor was bad, and he helped me pull it out," Ed said. "I thought 'man, this would be a nice truck for a big block.'"



THE GAS cap is accessed in the truck bed with a special tool.

The Chevy C10s came stock with a 230 cubic-inch, three-gear manual transmission, which was nicknamed 'three on the tree' because of the shifter on the steering column. It was different in that the 1965 model had a transmission with an option for overdrive that allowed the gears to rev and reach higher speeds through shifting.

But the C10 didn't have the original motor. A previous owner had tried to replace the old motor with little luck.

Ed's idea to put a big block Chevy engine in the truck is a popular one, as the C10 and similar models are often customized with a more powerful engine and components to go faster with a smooth ride.

So Ed had a big block motor built, and installed it himself, along with vintage air and power steering. But the motor was temperamental at best, and while Ed could

handle it, he didn't want to worry about Valery on the side of the road somewhere when she drove it.

"After we had a little transmission trouble, we let it set from 2012 until 2017," Ed said. That is when Patina made a trip to Roy Belloir's 'BelloirAuto' shop and things started moving faster.

"We pulled it out of the corner and Roy and his men took a look at it," Ed said. "Instead of fixing it, we went fuel injected and modern with a modern 8.1L Vortec engine which is a 496 cubic-inch, fuel injected and

all stock motor. I just wanted something real reliable."

Ed still kept the motor semi-rare. The 8.1L he purchased for Valery's truck came from a 2002 Chevy Suburban from Steve Green, owner of Auction Auto in Wright City. The 8.1L Vortec engines were released by General Motors in 2001, then discontinued in 2009 when the newer models were released. Since it is no longer in production and only technically used for about 10 years,

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VALERY WRIGHT poses with her truck in front of Glenn Mercer's garage, "Papa's Past Gas" on South Walnut in Owensville as Glenn watches from the shadows.

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Roy Belloir said aftermarket parts are hard to come by or non-existent.

"Roy did all that work," Ed said. "I bought a motor and he put it in, made the wiring and computer work. Then it is kind

of history form there."

For the guys at Belloir Auto, there was a bit more to it than that. Every man at Belloir's Auto was excited about the Wrights' project truck and Valery said there wasn't just one guy working on it either. When Valery stopped in on Friday, all mechan-

ics on deck glanced out the bay doors to admire Patina.

"You're driving your little pick-up," came from one mechanic and thumbs-up

See **Wright C10**, Page 5B

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THE 8.1L big block V8 (above) from a 2002 Chevrolet Suburban was a little larger than the engine compartment of the '65 C10. So some adjustments had to be made. The Wrights still need a bumper for their truck (right).



Wright C10 • from page 4B

from another.

Roy said his brother Larry Belloir did most of the work, even though everyone had a part in it.

"I have never gone over that bill," Belloir smiles. "Eddie keeps getting after me. I said I will and I've got all the tickets."

Roy said there was a lot of modifying to get everything to fit. The engine compartment wasn't quite big enough to accommodate the 8.1L.

"You guys had vintage air put on the truck, and we incorporated the factory AC compressor to make things simple for the belts," Roy said. "Sometimes doing bracketry gets complicated, but we managed and probably drove Dalton up at CarQuest crazy while we

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were trying to get hoses to modify.”

He said a lot of times with the older vehicles, it comes to just making things. As far as space containment, Roy said, “yea, we had to make a little bit more.”

But going into it, Roy said he didn’t know if the modifications would work.

The 8.1L big block was just a little big bigger than the engine compartment and Roy said they had to make adjustments on the passenger side where the valve cover wouldn’t clear the fire wall.

“We had to get in there and kind of beat that back in there a little bit to get just enough room,” he said. “And literally, on that passenger side, I don’t think you could slide in this little note pad between it.”

They also had to go with a smaller brake booster, and found one that would have worked for a Chevrolet Corvette. The thermostat housing was another modification that had to be cut off and rotated then find a hose to fit the space. The older truck that wouldn’t have a computer, and the motor they were installing had a big relay box.

“We managed to get rid of that and go down to a simple aftermarket relay box,” Roy said.

If the Wrights had gone with an LS motor, they would have had their pick of aftermarket parts, but the motor would have been smaller with less get-up-and-go.

“We were lucky enough to use the original exhaust and headers that was on the motor that was in it,” Roy said. “The motor that was in it was really low miles but there was a problem with the cam. That is when Eddie said he wanted

one that Val could jump in, turn the key, and just go.”

Patina is now more driver friendly and has more horsepower than what she would have.

“She had all kinds of hands under the hood,” Valery said, pleased with the work.

Belloir’s rolled Patina out from the back of bay one in early spring of 2018. The work had taken nearly a year to complete, but when Roy pulled out of the auto shop’s drive and onto Highway 28, the tires spun with glee.

“When I took it on its first little test drive, I remember pulling out and you just touch that gas pedal,” Roy laughed, making the gentlest of motions like he was tapping the pedal. “The guys laughed and said something like ‘you get on that!’ I said ‘you get in it and drive it and see if you can take off without --’ that first time you touch the gas — it’s so jumpy!”

Ed added the 2000s model bench seat for safety reasons so Valery would have seatbelts.

The combination of classic and modern never fails to give Valery that sense of excitement when she drives her C10. Patina is a head-turner and people wave and give her the thumbs-up when she drives by.

“That is absolute best thing,” Roy said Valery told him she had gotten a thumbs-up earlier. “When you are driving along and everybody you meet is a thumbs-up. Or the younger ones that are like ‘what the?’”

Valery laughed and said the one guy waved at her and she didn’t think she knew him.

“Then he gave me the thumbs-up sign and I thought ‘ok, I don’t need to know who you are!’” she laughs. “That feeling you get when somebody does that, makes you more

aware when you see somebody else’s and want to give them a thumbs-up and make them feel good.”

Ed purchased a 1965 license plate for his wife to keep the classic feel, but she hasn’t called it in yet.

“I’m just going to put it on,” Valery said. “You can use the old license plates as long as the numbers aren’t already in use somewhere else.”

After getting the truck back last spring, the Wrights took it to the Spring Fest Car Show on Main Street.

“It has been very reliable,” Ed said. “She can just take it and go and enjoy and I don’t have to worry about her breaking down anywhere or needing help.”

Today, Valery’s C10 Chevy looks much the same way it did when it first drove up the Wrights’ driveway, but Ed said it still needs some cosmetic work.

“I need to add a bumper on the back and I would like to put a new floor in the bed yet, but we haven’t compromised yet,” Ed said.

The bed of the truck is made of wood. Towards the back, a silver cap, locked with a matching silver hand key, is where the gas tank is located. Ed would like to replace the wooden bed with barn wood, but Valery wants to use old license plates.

“I don’t know what we will do,” Ed laughs. “I will probably sneak it in one winter. It would look more like the truck. More like Patina. That is her baby.”

But just because the C10 is completed doesn’t mean the Wrights plan to sit back and enjoy. They already purchased their next project — A 1955 Chevrolet Bel Air from Allen

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How to recognize potential brake problems

Maintaining a vehicle is more than just a way to protect one's financial investment. Vehicle maintenance can protect against accidents and make the road safer for drivers and their passengers as well as their fellow motorists.

Fully functioning brakes are an important component of automotive safety. In its 2015 Crash Stats report, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said that brake-related problems accounted for 22 percent of crashes where vehicular failure was cited as the cause of the collision. Bad brakes are particularly notorious for rear-end collisions. Faulty, worn brake lines, antilock brake system malfunctions and worn brake pads and discs are some potential brake problems.

It is important that motorists learn to recognize the first symptoms of brake trouble so they can address issues before they put drivers, their passengers and other motorists at risk of accident or injury.

• Unusual noises: Screeching, grinding, rubbing, and high-pitched sounds are common indicators that brake pads, rotors and other parts of the braking system need attention. Worn pads can cause damage to other vehicle parts, resulting in more expensive repairs if they're not addressed promptly.

• Pulling: If the car pulls to one side when applying the brakes, this may indicate brake pad linings are wearing down unevenly. A brake adjustment may be necessary. Pulling also may be indicative of an object or debris caught in the brake fluid.

• Less responsive: If when pressing on the brake pedal the brakes just do not seem to be as effective as they once were, or it is necessary to press the pedal harder for the brakes to engage, there may be a brake fluid leak or an air leak. Check under the vehicle to see if any fluids are pooling.

• Pungent odors: Firestone Tire Company says a burning smell may be indicative of worn out brake pads and friction on the tires. Each of these issues require immediate attention.

• Vibrations: Certain vibrations may indicate brake issues. Rotors can become warped from metal-on-metal rubbing, potentially leading to a failure of the vehicle to brake properly. Vibrations also may indicate tires are misaligned. These problems can be properly assessed by a trained mechanic.

Do not let potential brake problems go unchecked. Keeping brakes in good working order helps drivers stop more readily and avoid collisions.



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and Michelle Lowder.

“It wasn’t six months after that, I ran across another one that was so identical I thought it was exactly the same,” Ed said. “I bought it and when we set them side by side, the paint is just a shade different.”

One is already restored to its classic beauty, but the second, Ed plans to modify and make it another daily driver.

“We have been in the process of making it more modern” Ed said about the second Bel Air. Fuel injected motor, vintage air, and a tilt column steering wheel. “It will be like the movie Grease when you have the good Sandie in the poodle skirt and Wicked Sandie in leather. One modern — one classic.”





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Buyers' guide to financing a vehicle

The price of the average car continues to rise. Analysts at Edmunds estimate the average transaction price of a new vehicle now hovers at roughly \$36,000. Few people can walk into a car dealership and pay such a price in cash, which means that savvy shoppers need to familiarize themselves with the financing process in order to get their dream rides.

In addition to finding the perfect car or truck, buyers must spend time researching the ideal way to pay for it. Car loans are key to the car-buying process. Too often shoppers wait until they're in the negotiating seat at the dealership before they even know what they can spend, and this can be a mistake. A poor financing deal hurts buyers over the long run and may lead to defaulting on the loan and dealing with the credit fallout that defaulting produces.

Vehicle financing is a step-by-step process that should begin long before consumers even pick out a car.

- Examine your spending and saving. Start by looking at your finances and establish a budget. How much cash do you have

on hand for a down payment? Also, how much can you comfortably devote to a new car payment and requisite auto insurance? You can use automotive loan calculators to get a rough idea of what a particular car will cost you in terms of monthly payments.

- Know your credit standing. Great credit will give you financing leverage. Understand your credit score and which factors may be bringing it down. Resolve any issues well before you apply for financing so a bad score will not hurt you.

- Visit lenders. The financing deal offered by the dealership might not be the best price possible. You can get preapproved/prequalified for an auto loan the same way you do for a home mortgage at banks and credit unions. This helps you secure the best interest rate possible. It also provides negotiating power. A preapproval letter puts you in the position as a stronger "cash buyer," states the financial resource NerdWallet.

- Set a firm buying price. Preapprovals and working with a third-party lender gives you a specific amount of money you know you can borrow. Use this as a tool to keep



the negotiated price low because you cannot exceed your preapproved amount. It also may be a way to push dealership finance managers to contact their own captive lenders to try to beat the rate offered by your

existing lender.

Work is needed to secure the best price on a new car, and that work begins long before visiting a dealership.

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MOTOR HEADS Todd Schoene, owner of Midway Pro Auto Body (left) and Eugene Rowden pose with three of their dragsters and the trophies they have won.

Two motor heads at Midway Pro Auto Body

Todd Schoene and Eugene Rowden like everything about the drag racing and cars

**BY LAURA SCHIERMEIER
MARIES COUNTY ADVOCATE STAFF
WRITER**

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There's a bulletin board on the wall at Todd Schoene's Midway Pro Auto Body shop full of photos, mostly cars and trucks. The people standing beside the vehicles appear proud to have their photo taken with them. They are smiling and look about the same way people do when they have their photos taken with big fish or a trophy buck. They look proud.

Eugene Rowden, who works with Todd, counts six cars pictured on that bulletin board that he sold to Todd. Eugene likes to buy and sell.

Todd, however, prefers to buy and keep the cars. He has seven muscle cars, all of which run, and says he can't sell them. "I get attached," he said.

Eugene, on the other hand, likes to trade and swap and has bought and sold so many vehicles that he can't count them all. He does admit, however, that there are some cars he now wishes he had held on to.

Still, he has a fine collection of 45 cars in all states of repair. Some of them run, oth-

ers don't, and some of them are parts cars.

Eugene is also known as "Nuclear Chewy." The nuclear part is because a guy named Floyd called him that when he burned out in an El Camino. Mike Stratman called him Chewy because of the way he chewed up tires.

Todd and Eugene are quite a pair and they have an awful lot in common. They both work hard at Midway Pro Auto Body, located along Highway 63 north of Vienna, not too far from Freeburg. They both own drag race cars and spend some time every summer at tracks where they put their cars up against those of other car enthusiasts, hoping to get a good start on the quarter mile race, not tear anything up, and hopefully win the race, some money and bring home the bragging rights trophy.

Todd said his dad, Don Schoene, didn't care a lick about a car so Todd came by his hobby all on his own. He and his brother, Mark, bought their first vehicle together when Todd was 15. It was a 1948 Ford pickup they bought from a man who lived on Paydown Road, Mr. Leonard Schwegler.

Eugene is a motor head by tradition. His dad, Melvin Rowden, liked vehicles too, and had a 1947 Chevy Coup he raced. Eugene

likes Chevy vehicles, cars and trucks. Todd said he's a Dodge man but has to keep his wallet in mind and then he's a Chevy man also.

For the past 10 years, the two Vienna natives, and VHS grads have been part of the Russellville Eliminators car club. The club members are like-minded people who love cars, enjoy racing, and have fun hanging out together at club events and drag races.

They travel extensively in the summer-

time, racing that one-quarter of a mile track. Two at a time they race and the racers keep racing until they're eliminated. When they lose they're eliminated.

If they keep winning races, they can win money or a trophy. The money is usually spent and then they have nothing to remember the race by. That's why they

See **Motor heads**, Page 11B

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prefer a trophy.

Todd and Eugene say they like drag racing for the thrill of it; they like to drive fast. And, when they come out as winners, that's nice, too. Their drag racing cars are hot rods and they make a lot of noise. These cars were built by them with some help from others who have expertise in automotive areas they do not.

Todd has a 1972 Chevy Nova and a 1975 Chevy Monza 2+2 Hatchback.

According to Wikipedia the Monza 2+2 debuted in 1975 as a single-model 2+2 hatchback. The Monza is 4 inches longer and weighs 180 lb (82 kg) more than the Vega from which it is derived. General Motors' John DeLorean nicknamed it the "Italian Vega", citing styling with a strong resemblance to the Ferrari 365 GTC/4.

Eugene races a 1965 Chevy Nova II, which is a car he purchased from Herb Williams who bought it new. "It's a Maries County car," he says.

Todd says for drag racing, they prefer a nostalgic car, and it has to be light weight with good weight distribution. They could use new cars for drag racing and people do this, but they like the old cars and that's mostly what they see at the drag races.

The cars vary in panels, rear ends, and engines. It all depends on what people want and what they can afford and that's what they bring to the race track.

There are different classes such as street class which has to be able to be licensed and driven on roads outside the track. A slick class which is street and drag strip, and



TODD (LEFT) gets some help from Eugene removing the hood on his 1975 Chevy Monza, know as the "Italian Vega."

pro and super pro. Both pro and super pro are strictly cars for drag racing.

The drag races are governed by many rules through the NHRA. The faster the car, the more rules and regulations there are to adhere to. It's about safety rules and safety equipment and the cars have to be certified to race. The cars have to be capable of running at high speeds and stopping. The drivers even have to pass driving tests and physicals to obtain the special licenses they need to drag race.

Todd says his fastest speed was in the Nova at 149 mph which he did in the index time of 929. If the speed is 150 mph or higher, there are even more rules and regulations such as a parachute to stop.

Eugene's best in his Chevy with a small block is 127 mph in 11 seconds. Todd has run the Monza at 133 mph

with an elapsed time (ET) of 1040. To go these speeds, they say they hit the floor with the accelerator.

All of the tracks are different. Some are a little "shy" on stopping room, which these drivers need plenty of at the speeds they race at. Some tracks do eighth of a mile races with the very fast cars so people don't hurt plus it moves the drag race program along.

All of the races are run in the spring and summer and weather plays a big role. If it's raining and cold, they don't go. Todd uses his car to do some advertising for his business with his logo is on the car. Eugene has his car named and that name is on the car—Novocaine.

Drag racing can be expensive. Eugene says they have good equipment and hope their cars don't tear up. "It all wears out," he lamented. Entry fee is about \$35 and they start with two timed trials and then move into the races where you either win and move on, or you lose and you're done.

They spend some money on motors. In his Nova, Todd has a 540 cubic inch big block Chevy engine on alcohol and it has 814 horse power. A regular car's horse power is about 100. Back in the day, the horse power on a car such as an Impala was 220 to 300. Todd says the motors he and Eugene use are "above our knowledge" and they reach out to others when they need help with the engines.

Both men admit they are motor heads and that they like going fast. They say drag racing is a fun hobby for them, the same way other people like playing sports or golf or fishing from a \$50,000 bass boat. They like the speed, the people they hang out with at the race track, and of course,

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Motor heads • from page 11B

the cars and hot rod motors. Todd says they talk about it every day, sometimes a lot. They also think about quite a bit. "It's addictive and quite pricey," Todd said.

Eugene said he "wastes a lot of money but it's no different from golf or fishing" from the financial perspective.

Back in 1994, they had a Vienna Hot Rod Association (VHRA), mostly with men who worked at Weidinger's. They put it together for fun and because they wanted to have a car show at the fair. Some of the members besides themselves included Paul Reeves, Mark Haller, Shane Backues, Tom Stratman, Jeff Huffman, Vessie Sandbothe, and more.

They disbanded the VHRA in about 2011 because the members grew up, had kids and were busy with their families. Still, they all had fun together and this also included their families.

Now they belong to the Russellville Eliminators and in 2017 Todd was second in points for the car club and Eugene was third. There were only three points difference between the first place and the third place.

The drag racers considered Mid America Raceway at Wentzville their home track. Todd said they were devastated when the Wentzville track closed. It was their home track and it was depressing not to be able to go there anymore to race. They knew the place and the people who came to that track were like family to them. "It made me sick," Eugene said.

They have traveled to many parts of the United States with their cars on trailers taking them to the drag race tracks. They take some extra parts "for small problems," Eugene says. "If you blow a transmission, you're done."

He's gotten a lot of races from his 1965 Chevy II Nova with a small block Chevy 355 engine with 525 horse power. It's the same chassis he's used all these years, but not the same motor.

As winter turns to spring, it's getting close to the time for them to get out to the track. The first race is scheduled for May 4 at the Smokin' MO-KAN Raceway. They are getting their cars ready. Eugene says a car's motor can last one minute to several years. Mechanical parts wear out so there is a lot of maintenance, adjusting valves and changing oil. Todd changes the oil before every race.

They race at tracks in Iowa, Indiana, Wisconsin and more. In 2015 they did Hot Rod



TODD LAUGHS a little by his 1972 Chevy Nova SS that he takes to the races.

Week, which is old school drag race cars with scavenger hunts along the way between tracks where they had to take a photo at the check points to prove they were there. They went with guys from the car club and they entered events at each race and had a lot of fun at the week that began and ended in St. Louis. There are Hot Rod Weeks each year but generally too far away.

The two men have helped their family members get hooked on the sport also.

Todd's daughter, Taylour, has been driving his 1972 Dodge Charger he's had since he

See **Motor heads**, Page 14B

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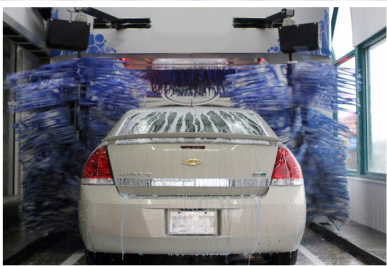
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EUGENE ENJOYS good burnout with his 1965 Chevy Nova II getting his heart racing for the start of another drag race season.

PHOTOS BY JACOB WARDEN

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Motor heads • from page 12B

was a teenager. Their kids and grandkids are all interested in cars. They have ride along Friday nights at the tracks to further help people “get hooked on it.” It keeps them out of trouble, the two say, and they learn to work on cars, and like Todd and Eugene, they talk about it all the time, and it’s like sports as its very addictive. At the races they want to win, but its still fun anyway if they don’t win.

There are heartaches with it, such as tearing up a car, seeing wrecks, and the price tag that comes along with the sport of drag racing. There are a lot of safety rules because the sport is dangerous so it is highly regulated. Todd and Eugene said they saw a bad wreck last year.

Still Shone Racing and Rowden Racing/Novocaine will continue. Eugene said he hopes he can keep racing until the day he dies. They see older men racing and think they can keep on racing as long as their reaction time is there. They can still win races if they “cut a good light” at the starting line.

In closing, these motor heads wanted to give a nod of thanks to their automotive teacher who died recently, Leonard “Pee Wee” Buschmann. He helped both of them learn the ends and out of motors and cars. Todd graduated from VHS in 1979 and Eugene graduated in 1981.

About Leonard Buschmann, Todd said, “He got me started.”

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- Read your owner's manual. A vehicle owner's manual is a great resource that can help drivers keep their cars and trucks running strong for years. Every vehicle, whether it's purchased brand new from a dealership or preowned from a preowned dealer or private citizen, should come with an owner's manual. Don't worry if you purchased a preowned vehicle from a private citizen who lost the manual, as many manufacturers have manuals available for free on their websites. Print manuals may cost some money. Drivers may be able to find their manuals elsewhere online on a site such as Justgivemethedammanual.com, which has thousands of manuals from various automakers available. Once you have the manual in hand or on your computer, visit the maintenance section to familiarize yourself with the manufacturer's recommended maintenance guidelines. Adhering to those guidelines is a great way to keep your car running strong for years on end, and it might just save you from the hassle of sudden expensive repairs.

- Protect the engine. The engine is arguably the most expensive part of your vehicle to replace, so protecting it should be a priority. Routine oil changes and oil filter replacements is a great way to protect the engine. Manufacturer guidelines vary in regard to oil change and oil filter replacement intervals, but such recommendations can be found in your manual.

- Hone your DIY skills. Drivers also can save money on maintenance by doing some of their own minor vehicle repairs. YouTube is home to many DIY tutorials that can teach drivers how to change their own oil and replace the filters on their vehicles. Routine repairs are relatively easy, and many tutorials can walk you through them step-by-step. Depending on how much you drive, learning to do your own minor vehicle repairs may save you hundreds of dollars per year.

- Perform routine inspections. Older vehicles may or may not alert drivers via noises or leaks that they're in need of repair. Routine inspections of hoses, brakes and tires, which should always be properly inflated, can let drivers know if their vehicles are experiencing problems before those problems grow and become something costly.

Vehicle maintenance costs tend to be most expensive when drivers ignore routine maintenance or miss signs that their cars and trucks might be struggling. By adhering to manufacturer maintenance guidelines and paying attention to their vehicles, drivers can reduce the cost of keeping their cars on the road.

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