

## Results Of A Search For A Convertible

Ron and Karen Roe decided they wanted a convertible. What they ended up with was a big project that turned into one beautiful mild-custom of a 1961 Chevy Impala convertible.

"It was a project car that a guy got discouraged on," Ron relates.

When he bought it in 1996, it came with some good parts. But it also came with a lot of rust in the floors, quarter panels and many other places.

As long as he was going to do body work on the car, Ron put his own taste into it. He shaved off the gun-site ornaments that were on top of the fenders, as well as the letters that had spelled Chevrolet on the hood. He finished it with a shade of yellow that was used on Corvettes in 1968.

"We saw a car at Back To The 50s (in that color) and liked it," he said. "Karen and I both like that color, and we both liked maroon for the interior. It was her idea to put the exterior color (piping) around the seats."

To power his open-air ride, Ron purchased a Chevy 383 from a machine shop, stroked it and put in a hotter cam and heads.

Ron also installed power disk brakes, 605 power steering and air conditioning. It also features air shocks, a 700R4 automatic transmission and a CD player.

"It took six years getting it on the road," Ron said.

While bringing this ragtop back to life was a big project, all the hard work didn't just surround the car itself. Ron had trouble getting the title from the person he bought it from. That person hadn't titled it in his name, so Ron had to do a title search and convince the person who last had it titled to sign the title over to him. It turned out that person was Bill Rook, who had been killed in a stock car racing accident. Since the last registered owner was deceased, Ron had to have the county send out a registered letter, so that when the letter came back undeliverable, he could claim the car. But the registered letter was forwarded to the deceased owner's sister, who signed for the letter and called Ron to find out what was going on. However, the county would not accept anything from a relative of the deceased, not even the widow, so Ron had to start over again and instruct the deceased's family to reject the next registered letter. Once that happened, Ron was finally able to obtain the car's title from the county.

Ron and Karen also have a 1940 Ford two-door sedan. While they probably are seen more often in their convertible, Ron will not say he favors it over the Ford.

"I think the '40 is more fun to drive," he confessed.

