

Smitty 1 is the fast one

It's big and low. It's sleek. It's yellow and it's fast. It's David "Smitty" Smedsrud's 1980 Chevrolet Corvette.

When he isn't cruising in his 1946 Chevrolet sedan, Smitty is usually found in his 1980 Chevrolet Corvette. Each has a "Smitty" vanity license plate with the number 1 or 2 beside his name. While he likes both, Smitty said his Corvette is his fast ride since the sedan still has the old stock, stove-bolt straight-six engine in it – so far.

"The Corvette will go faster," he said with a smile.

Sometimes Smitty would bring both cars to car shows. He would drive the '46 Chevy while his recently departed wife, Virginia, would drive the Corvette. Some club members remember seeing Virginia shining the Corvette at a show as though she were competing against her husband's other car for domestic bragging rights. But as the 2005 car show season was just about to get under way, Virginia Smedsrud passed away, leaving Smitty to care for both cars.

Smitty has had the Corvette for about 3 years or so. It replaced a black 1979 Corvette he had that wasn't in as good condition.

"At that time I had the '79 Corvette and it was needing some work, had hairline cracks in it," he recalled. "We figured I could put a lot of money in that or put it into buying one that was all fixed up."

So, when the previous owner of the yellow Corvette, who also lived in Luverne, MN, put a "for sale" sign in it, Smitty offered to buy it using the '79 Corvette as a trade in, and a deal was made.

The '80 Corvette has a Hi-po 350 engine with steel crank and gears and an automatic transmission. While many original owners of Corvettes wore out their domestic sports cars to the point that engines are often replaced, Smitty's still has the original motor and all serial numbers are matching.

As for the bright yellow color, Smitty said he isn't real partial to yellow, even though his '46 Chevy could also be described as being a very pale yellow in color. It was just happenstance that he ended up with two yellow cars. The Corvette was originally blue, but he has no plans of changing the color for now.

He has been considering selling it and moving onto other car projects, such as putting a larger motor in the '46 Chevy. But he likes driving it too much to simply park it with a "for sale" sign in the window. So expect to continue seeing Smitty in his '80 Corvette ... when he isn't in the '46 Chevy sedan.

