

Jim and MaryJo Christensen have had their 1937 Ford convertible for about three years now. It was added to their growing stable of hotrods for something to drive when the weather is poor.

They bought it a couple years after acquiring their 1932 Ford roadster hotrod, the original "Juice," named for its one-off orange color.

"The roadster is strictly a fair-weather car, with no top and no fenders, so the '37 we can drive in bad weather because it has fenders and a top, although it's by no means weathertight," Jim explained.

When he bought the 1937 Ford from a man in Watertown, it was basically just a chassis and body. Some of the body is fiberglass, but the fenders, runningboards and grill are all original steel.

With a lot of help with the body work and paint & assembly from Don and Mike Jones, Jim along with Bob Schmeichel boxed the chassis and installed a Mustang II front end, 9-inch Ford rear end and a ZZ-4 Chevy 350 crate motor with aluminum heads plus a 350 turbo transmission. The convertible roof is chopped 2 7/8 inches. The car also features power brakes, power steering, air conditioning and a Pioneer stereo CD player.

The car originally had a rumble seat, but that was a feature Jim didn't want on this car.

"I didn't want anybody to think about climbing over the fenders" to get into a rumble seat, Jim said.

The rumble seat was converted into a trunk, although the lid is still the size and configuration it originally was for the rumble seat.

The car is painted a one-off color that he calls Vanilla Pearl.

"We just mixed colors until we liked it," Jim said. He took painted cans outside in the

sunshine and the night to determine how the color was going to look before choosing the right shade.

But having one-off colors can have their downsides. Jim had originally planned to make the

car two tone, using the orange tone that he had used for the '32 roadster to accent the Vanilla Pearl, which is why he named the car "Juice 2." But when he looked at colors for the interior and convertible top, he couldn't find anything he liked that would compliment both the orange and the Vanilla Pearl. That is why the car wears the vanilla color only but a juice name.

While Juice 2 became their cruiser of choice in bad weather, a convertible is not always the best bad weather car. That led to Jim justifying the purchase of a 1957 Ford Ranch Wagon with an all steel roof.

But he didn't stop there. Now he is working on a 1933 Ford coupe that he wants to make into a rat rod in flat black. No fancy colors for this car.

"Three of those cars to wax and polish is enough," Jim said.

