

## He's a Hotrodder Now

Darwin and Jane Sletten like to cruise around in their antique cars. But motorists beware, because there's one car they sometimes bring out that is much more than an antique car.

Darwin got his 1935 Chevy coupe at the Russo-Steele auctions in Phoenix in 2005. It is the first street rod he has ever owned.

It was an impulse purchase. Darwin was at the auction, and while he had intended to purchase a street rod, he was looking for something that would seat four so he could take his grandchildren for rides. But when the '35 Chevy coupe came across the block, it really caught his eye, he said. The custom paint job and the body style really attracted him. So, he started bidding and came out on top.

"I'm a member of a street rod club, and when I go to a street rod run, I can feel right at home," Darwin said of his decision to buy a street rod.

He'll be getting to those street rod runs pretty quickly now. The little coupe has a 383 c.i. stroker with a B&M supercharger, coupled to a 350 Turbo automatic transmission. It also has a tube-axle front end, a Corvette rear suspension and 2 1/2 inch exhausts with Flowmaster mufflers.

It has four wheel disc brakes to bring it back to a stop. It also features air conditioning, AM-FM stereo CD player and Budnik chrome wheels. The body work and custom paint job was done by "The Lizard."

And how quickly will he be getting to those rod runs?

"It doesn't want to quit squealing (the tires) unless you let up on it," Darwin said.

"I like to drive fast, but I don't like to drive that car that fast."

He noted that he likes to "baby" his old cars, so he doesn't drive them hard, no matter how much horsepower they may have. He has six other old cars, but they are all stock.

"This is kind of a maverick, it's totally different than the other cars I drive," Darwin explained. "It's in a class by itself. It's the only street rod I've ever had."

"I love the classic cars," he said. But he added, "I like street rods. It's a cool car to drive."

Darwin still goes to the auctions in Phoenix, but this year he made money instead of spending it. He sold his 1979 Lincoln, 1976 Chevy Monte Carlo, 1959 Thunderbird and 1955 Ford Crown Victoria.

But he said he's also still looking for another car to fill one of the spaces vacated by those he sold. And he wants it to be another street rod. Maybe it'll have a back seat for those grandchildren.

