

Likes Different

By Bob Schmeichel

Randy Ludwig has never been a stranger to uncommon cars. He and his wife, Deanna, originally started the Canton Car Show, which has remained the state's largest car show since its beginning. To this day, Randy is still part of the car action at both the Barrett Jackson and Mecum Auctions, which are held all over the country. Randy has been with them since their beginnings. So, cars are never too far away from his mind.



A few years ago, shortly before Deanna's death, the 1951 Customized Chevy they drove on a regular basis was in an accident. It got crunched on both ends being in the middle of a three-car pile-up, which made it undrivable. Bringing the car back to its original customized state has been a long process that is still not done, even with Randy's son's help.

In 2009, Randy was helping at the Mecum Car Auction held at the fairgrounds in St. Paul at the Back to the 50s event. While moving cars around, his attention was grabbed by this bright green 1994 Lincoln Mark 8 car turned into a pickup that was in line to be auctioned off. Randy watched the car roll on and off the auction block as the bidding reserve wasn't met. Randy, liking what he saw and wanting a driver, walked over to the discouraged owner and made him an offer for the green attention-getter. The guy accepted, and Randy was driving the car/truck home.

The history of the car started in Denver with the back half of the roof removed as well as the rear seating and the trunk lid. With everything stripped out behind the front seat, a fiberglass insert was then installed into the cut-out areas of the body to give it a finished Ranchero box appearance. Many other little things were done to get it into a roughed-out appearance and into primer. The primered vehicle was then sold to a body shop north of Minneapolis and finished to the appearance you see today.

Randy says that driving the car/truck has been a blast from the beginning. Not only because of its appearance, but also the fact that the car came with the biggest turbocharged engine available in 1994 that makes the car, as Randy puts it, "SCOOT." Besides riding great with 17" custom wheels, the car gets 26 miles per gallon. What more can you ask for? Every place, and I mean every place that Randy stops when driving the car/truck, people approach him with loads of questions. What color is it? "It's 2008 Charger Metallic Green," he answers. What is it? How many did the factory make like this? And the questions go on and on. Most of the time Randy is smiling when he answers a lot of these questions saying, "It is the only one!" which leaves people scratching their heads as they are looking at it.

