

A Most Unusual Power Plant

No, it doesn't have a Hemi. But take a good, long look under the hood, because you're not likely to see another stock engine quite like this one.

That's one of the reasons Dick Gaddis likes his 1969 Plymouth Satellite. That and the fact that it's a Satellite, not another Road Runner.

That's not to say Dick wouldn't like to have a Road Runner. But he noted the Satellites aren't seen at cruises and car shows very often, partly because so many of them have been turned into Road Runner clones, a process that is as simple as adding a few trim pieces.

"It'd be fun to have a Road Runner, but you'd pay a lot more money for it," Dick said. He has plenty enough fun with his Satellite.

While it isn't equipped with the popular Hemi, it does have plenty of get-up-and-go. It is powered by a 383 with a two-barrel carburetor, an unusual combination that was used in only 77 Satellites in 1969. Dick finds that uniqueness far

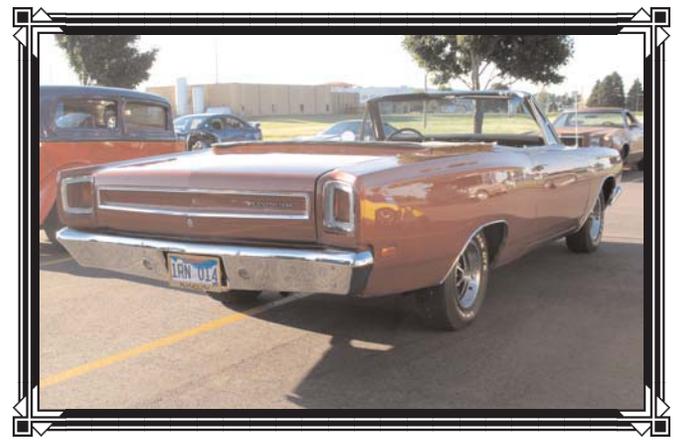
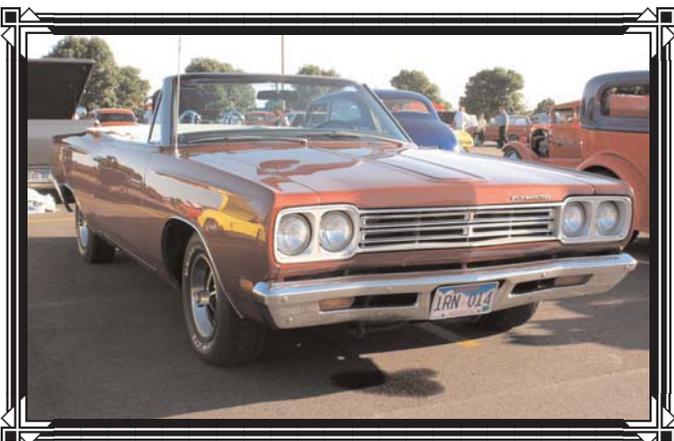
too interesting to consider modifying the engine any, much less replacing it with a Hemi.

"It's pretty peppy," he says of his 383.

"Everybody looks and says 'Oh, it ain't no 440,'" Dick said. But what they don't understand is that what they are looking at is an unusual part of automotive history in this rare combination.

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Dick got the car 28 years ago, after seeing it come into the car dealership where he has worked as a mechanic for 43 years.

“It came in trade at Billion Chrysler and everyone wanted it and I was 5th in line,” Dick relates. “But others kept dropping out and I got it.”

Since then, Dick has only changed one thing on the car. He changed the color from green to red. “I’ve always liked it staying stock,” he said.

In the 28 years he has had it, he’s taken it to a lot of car shows and cruises, but he said he’s only seen one other Satellite. While he enjoys the car shows, he said he enjoys visiting with other gearheads more, which is part of the reason he likes attending the Great Plains Streetrodders Wednesday cruises. But, of course, he also enjoys just getting in his Satellite with Judy Bentson and cruising.

“It’s just fun to have a convertible and get out and drive,” Dick said.

Letter To The Editor

(Originally sent to The Argus Leader)

Looking thru the Voices section (Argus Leader) today in regards to certain legality issues, I noticed the cartoon rendering of a hot rod revving up its engine and blowing the father and daughters hair around. I was keen to see how that related to anything that was written in that area that made any sense. After reading what was there, the only thing that related to sound was the mention of loud music as well as the title on that page above the grossly misrepresented cartoon, which has nothing to do

with loud music.

It was a stupidly poor choice for a rendering to represent LOUD MUSIC. That is the part that pisses me off, putting the message out there that the hot rod image is loud music, or as I interpret the cartoon, loud exhaust, of which both are so far out in left field. I can't tell you how wrong your choice was.

I have been an avid street rodder in this city for forty years, having many of your cartoon-like hot rods. I am one of many in town of a dying breed these days, but I can tell you in all sincerity that none of my hot rods or any of my friends' rods even to this day ever crank up the sound on their radios or stereos to gather attention. The same goes for loud exhaust as I can't stand noise. What is really ironic about these old and new hot rods in town, is that most are so quiet that you can hear the rocks crunch under the tires as they are driving down the street, or when stopped people will ask if the car is running. We all spend a lot of time and money creating old or new hot rods that don't have to do anything more than roll down the street to get attention. We don't need the loud music or noisy exhaust to get attention. The hot rods do it for us just sitting there in a parking lot, being totally quiet too.

So hopefully you will understand where this 60-year-old guy is coming from, and if you don't, check out what 90 couples in this town do at www.greatplainsstreetrodders.com.
Bob Schmeichel

P.S. A better cartoon choice for loud music would have been a Honda or some other import with loud music pushing the trunk lid open while rattling the dentures of some old lady walking with her cane on the sidewalk. Now, that I would have understood.

