

# Car leads couple into marriage

By SARAH HITE  
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When Bob Berkey first saw the 1923 Ford Model T Depot Hack in his girlfriend's uncle's garage in 1973, he knew he would do anything to drive it - or even just get a ride in it.

"You have to marry me," said his girlfriend.

And that's just what he did. Bob and his wife (and former girlfriend) Cathy have owned the car for the past five years, but it has been in Cathy's family for 33 years.

"If it wasn't for her, I wouldn't have the car now," he said.

Though the Depot Hack's body is detailed with wood and there's no glass in its windows, a little rain couldn't keep the Berkeys away from the Back Mountain Antique Car Show on Sunday, Aug. 15.

People often question Berkey when he drives the 87-year-old car onto a lot.

"A lot of people say, 'How'd you get it here?'" he said, laughing. "I drove it here!"

The Depot Hack was designed to transport train passengers from stations to their destinations. The car was also once used to drive wedding parties to ceremonies.

"It's just a fun vehicle," he said. "I get lots of looks, lots of thumbs up."

The car is local, too - Berkey says it was sold in Wilkes-Barre and its body was made in Lancaster.

It once belonged to former state Sen. Andrew Sordoni and

Cathy's uncle, Lambert Swindle, was the chief mechanic for Sordoni Construction for 50 years. When it came time for someone to choose one of Sordoni's antique cars to use in parades, Swindle always chose the Depot Hack - it was his favorite car.

"When (Swindle) retired, Sordoni said, 'As a retirement gift, take one of my cars,'" said Berkey. So Swindle chose the Model T and the rest is history.

Sordoni restored the car some time in the late 1940s or early 1950s. Much of the car's body is original and the engine was rebuilt in 2007. Sordoni says it's the 8,059,518th Model T made.

There aren't that many of Bob Franklin's 1949 Dodge Coronet Convertible around.

"They made 2,411 of them - there are 13 left," said the Trucks-ville resident. "Three in Pennsylvania and I've got one of them."

When Franklin bought the car, the convertible top didn't work and mechanical work was necessary. Franklin says he won't buy an antique car if it needs body work. This Dodge was in pretty good shape - even the clock worked.

"That used to be the first thing that went on it," he said. "Generally, when you got it (home) from the dealer, the clocks wouldn't work."

The car was built with a lot of stainless steel, so body rusting was never a problem. The 6-cylinder flathead engine can max out at 100 miles per hour but Franklin has never seen that odometer reading.

Even though you won't see



Bob Franklin and his friend from Trucks-ville had fun - despite the rain - in Franklin's maroon Chrysler at the Lehman Car Show which benefits the Lake-Lehman Band.

Franklin's car in the passing lane anytime soon, it doesn't mean the car isn't impressive.

"I had it out on the Fourth of July and I stopped for gas," he said. "A state policeman drove by and he was tooting and waving - even he noticed it."

Franklin plans to keep the classic car in the family and he's already got someone in mind to take over ownership. His son-in-law, Dan McCabe, took his 1947 Chrysler Windsor Highlander to the event at the Luzerne County Fairgrounds.

"We go every weekend to different cruises," said McCabe. "It's a good way to talk to other car owners and find out what's

available."

The 27th Annual Back Mountain Antique Car Show was sponsored by the Lake-Lehman Marching Band and featured vendors, music and food stands. Proceeds from the event will help fund marching band activities.

"It's tough for any school to completely fund all programs," said Jeff Gerlin, chairman of the show.

Gerlin believes even rain can't keep away car enthusiasts. "You still see smiles on people's faces."

Keith Swanson, of Vernon, exhibits for the first time at the Lehman Car Show which benefits the Lake-Lehman Band.



## CIVIC BRIEFS

### Legion conducts peach sale

Daddow-Isaacs Dallas American Legion Post 672 is conducting its annual Perfect Peach Sale. Orders may be picked up from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 28, at the Post Home.

Orders may be placed with any Post 672 committee member or at the Post Home. Further information is available from Clarence J. Michael at 675-0488.

### Old Noxen School open to visitors

The Noxen Historical Community Association, Inc. will hold an Open House from 1 to 4 p.m. today, Aug. 22, at the Noxen Historical Community Center (Old Noxen School), School Street, Noxen.

The art works of Chuck Kovalick and his students will be on display. Light refreshments will be provided.

Visitors will also have the opportunity to visit the Schenck Memorial Library.

For more information, call 298-2052.

### Sue Hand will conduct walking tours

John Heinz Institute will host Northeastern Pennsylvania artist Sue Hand at several informal "gallery talk" walking tours of her paintings exhibited at the facility, 150 Mundy St., Wilkes-Barre.

Each tour will begin at 7 p.m.

and last approximately 45 minutes. Participants may join or depart at any time. The tours are free and open to the general public as well as patients and their families and guests.

Meet the artist in the front lobby by the information desk on any of the following evenings: Tuesday, Aug. 24; Sunday, Sept. 5; or Friday, Oct. 1. Call Sue Hand or Heather Madeira at 675-5094 for more information.

### Beef dinner planned

The Sweet Valley volunteer Fire Company will hold a family-style beef dinner from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, Aug. 28, with takeouts beginning at 4 p.m.

Cost is \$8 for adults, \$4 for children between the ages of 6 and 11 and free for children under the age of 6.

### Alzheimer's Support Group plans meeting

Dallas Alzheimer's Support Group will meet at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, Sept. 2, in the chapel of the Meadows Nursing and Rehab. Center, 55 W. Center Hill Rd., Dallas.

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### Round Table schedules meeting

The Wyoming Valley Civil War Round Table will begin its 14th year at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 9, with guest speaker James A. Hessler presenting his program on "Sickles at Gettysburg" in the lower level of the Daddow-Isaac American Legion, 730 Memorial Hwy., Dallas.

### Farmers' Market continues to Sept. 25

The Farmers' Market will be held from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturdays through September 25 at the Back Mountain Memorial Library, 96 Huntsville Rd., Dallas.

## Dallas Days Photography Contest open until September 14

The 2010 Dallas Harvest Festival Steering Committee is conducting the First Dallas Days Photography Contest.

The contest is open through September 14 to any Back

Mountain resident who wishes to "capture the beauty and culture of the Back Mountain" in a still photograph.

More information and contest rules are available by con-

tacting Gina Major, photo contest coordinator, at gmajor@aol.com, Photography by Andy at 696-4646 or the Dallas Harvest Festival at 675-1950.

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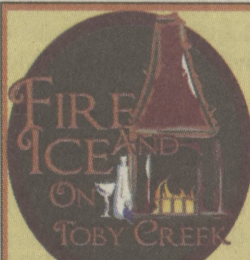
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