

# spring... ON THE ROAD

## General Lee, found in a barn



PHOTOS BY ROXIE MURPHY

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Ryan Scott has always loved the look of the classic Dodge Chargers. Maybe it's the slick bodyline, the ready-for-speed personality they project, or the way the engine rumbles beneath the heavy, metal hood. He speculates that his love for the 1969 Charger probably came from the famous TV series *Dukes of Hazzard*, which explains why Scott painted the car to have a General Lee of his own.

"I literally found it in a barn," said Scott, who owns Sunset Heating and Air Conditioning. "I had known about it for years."

The previous owner, Daryl Giedinghagen, had a nephew in the same class as Scott

Jeremy King, son of Giedinghagen's sister Marylis King, would sometimes talk about restoring the car, but he eventually moved away. The car's location was known, along with the knowledge that Giedinghagen wouldn't sell.

The two-owner vehicle was parked in its early days. The Charger had been purchased new in January 1970 from Wehmeyer Motor, Inc. in Rosebud by a gentleman who had bought it for his wife. However, his wife didn't like the car and they traded it back to Wehmeyer's in October 1971 with 163 miles on the engine.

A year later Giedinghagen came home from Vietnam with his army salary saved up.

"His dad told him to go down to Wehmeyer's and buy a vehicle," Scott said. "Daryl brought the car home and his dad ripped him up and down, 'I can't believe you bought a car that is going to drag the bottom all the way down the driveway.'"

The family lived on the outskirts of Belle on Highway Y, a mile-and-a-half down another drive, then another two miles to the bottom of a private drive.

Giedinghagen's father purportedly told his son to take his remaining savings back to Wehmeyer's and the second time he brought home a 1968 GMC pick-

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up truck. His dad wouldn't let him drive the car, so it stayed parked in the barn.

"Marlis King, his sister," said he only drove the car six times and parked it in the barn in 1977 with 325 miles on the 318 cubic inch engine," Scott said.

Hotrod red with a white vinyl top, the Charger was mostly protected from the elements in the barn, but as the owners got older, the barn began to deteriorate. Then about six years ago a truss in the barn broke and went through the side window of the charger.

"The barn was coming down on top of the car," Scott said. "Doug? Went to Marlis? And said 'hey, you want me to pull out that old car before the barn comes down?'"

They pulled the car out and haphazardly tarped it, but the broken window allowed the rain and moisture in. Eventually the seats turned green with mold. Still it sat.

Giedinghagen was starting to forget things and his sister Marlis was named executor and caretaker. In 2020 Giedinghagen's washing machine stopped working and Marlis called Scott to see if he could fix it.

"Me and Tanya (Scott's girlfriend) were on our way out there and I was telling her all about this car," he said. "Before we left, I told her I was going to make Marlis mad."

Scott asked Marlis when she was finally going to sell him that car and she said they were putting it up for sale the next day.

"I said, tell me how much you want for it and I will go to the bank right now," he said.

Marlis named a price and Scott returned that evening.

"I didn't have a way to get the car out, so I called Daryl White (Jr.) and asked him to haul a car for me," Scott said. "I didn't know he and Daryl, Sr., had tried several times to buy the car over the years and Giedinghagen always said no. He was silent for about 15 seconds and then asked, 'you bought that car, didn't you?'"

Scott said he had bought the car. "If you have ever seen anyone doing work with a disgruntled look on his face, it was Daryl White (Jr.)," Scott said.

Before dropping the car off, White parked it under the lights at Thomas Quick Stop and took pictures.

"I have had so many offers to buy that

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PHOTOS ABOVE BY ROXIE MURPHY, BELOW, SUBMITTED



**RYAN SCOTT** (lower left) sit proudly in his restored 1969 Dodge Charger. The Charger runs on a 362 small block V-8, bored 30 over with a hydraulic roller cam, an Edelbrock four-barrel manifold and a 750 CFM aluminum double pumper carburetor. It has been restored to resemble one of the first five General Lees from the 1979 TV show Dukes of Hazzard.



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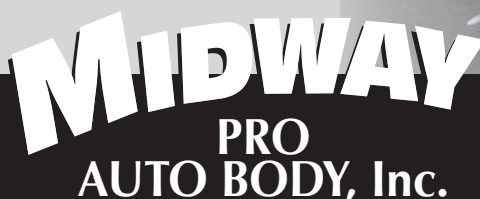


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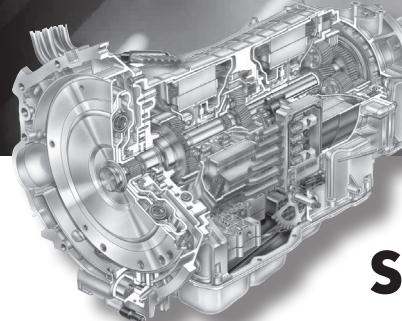


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