Car buffs turn old clunkers into gleaming show stoppers

By LOUISE OKRUTSKY

The '55 Chevy convertible which cruised the town's main drag has shifted from being the star of the strip to the darling of the showroom.

The nostalgia surrounding the Chevrolet ragtop and other cars has helped to add at least 10 percent to their value every year for about 20 years, according to Wally Donoghue.

The owner of Classic Auto Restoration in Farmington and Plymouth is among professional and amateur car buffs involved in organizing a collector's festival and auction April 26 and 27 on the Michigan State Fair grounds, Woodward near Eight Mile in Detroit.

The auction is another extension of Donoghue's long-time interest in classic and collector cars. He became therested in the older cars during light exchool. In 1952, between his junior and

After that experience he was booked. Restoring classic cars, those built between 1925 and 1948, furnished a way for Donaghue to enjoy himself and carn money for college.

He turned his restoration efforts toward a Model A Ford and used the car for everyday transportation for a few years while studying engineering at Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh.

HE STILL OWNS the car and takes it to road rallies. The rallies serve as a social event for car buffs as well as an opportunity for them to actually drive their cherished vehicles.

Antique cars are kept to be seen, not driven for most of the time, Donoghue said

said. To drive an antique car, those made

of a wallet.

Like good paintings, antique and classic cars are bought as hedges against inflation as well as for the enjoyment of ownership, he said.

And like their treasured art, collectible cars are becoming harder to find on

ble cars are becoming harder to find on the market.

"Twenty-five years ago, the only cars people thought were worth collecting were antiques;" he said.
"Then they began to collect classics, which were luxury cars and limited editions made from 1925 to 1948.
"But in the last 10 years, the number of those available has dried up. They're all in the hands of collectors;" he said. As the demand rose, prices followed suit. As time went on, more cars aged to the point where they became considered worthy of collection.

IT'S AT THIS point that the yen to own a Chevy, circa 1955-57, comes into play. The Chevrolets are joined on the (Continued on page 6C)

Complete with running boards, this 1933 Packard Super 8 is one of the cars which will be auctioned off at the Collector Car Festival. That's Wally Do-

noghue of Classic Auto Restoration behind the wheel.





A 1934 LaSalle goes through a complete restoration at Classic Auto. Wally Donoghue (left) checks the bood alignment of the car while Alan Stuart

(leaning on left) and Harry Roffie prepare to secure it.

THE INSIDE *

QUICK name the largest single preventable cause of ill health in the world. (All those who yelled out "inflation" go the back of the class.) The answer, my friend is blowing in the wind—smoking. And today is World Health Day, according to the American Lung Association, the folks who wish your cigarette was a silly millimeter shorter. They re urging everyone to kick the habit and throw out those ash trays. Angles give a solemn salute to all those cigarette smokers who stalwartly resist such approaches: COUGH, COUGH,

CALLING ALL WRITERS The Ridgewriters, a group of writers, will read their original poems, plays and short stories dealing with American rituals from 7:30-930 pm. April 16 in the Farmington Hills Library, 3:737 West 12 Mile. Participation in the evening is limited to the first 12 persons who sign up by calling the library at 53-9300 on the morning of April 14. The adult program is free but registration is necessary. Participants are invited to share some of their original writing with the group on whatever subject they please. They are asked to limit their reading to five minutes

TREASURE HUNTING means more than picking up the returnable bottles off the street. The Michigan Treasure Hunters will exhibit some of their finds from April 11 to 13 in the Livonia Mall, 29514 7 Mile.

YOU SAY you want to go on a vacation but refuse to spend more than 28 cents per gallon of gasoline. You say you want to eat gournet foods at thost restuaratis on the highway. You say you want a map which wont allow you to become lost and start an argument with your mate?

Cheer up buddy, you aren't living totally in a dream world. Michigan State University Evening College is offering a class in group tour organizing and escorting. It covers the basic considerations and techniques of planning and organizing group tours. It stresses concepts of tour escorting, preparation for tours, basic tour escort procedures and personal aspects of the tour escort. The class is aimed at persons responsible for organizing group tours for members of club, recreation departments, charches, companies, associations and adult to the control of the strength of of

THEY SCREAMED AND CRIED just like when Bert Parks used to crown Miss America. But instead of hearlding the acquisition of a beauty little, the sound effects preted the news that Gail Yurasek was named the Farmington Artist in Residence and Ber Ellis was recognized in the Service to the Arts award. For those of you who keep track of such things, Ms. Vurasek screamed and Ms. Ellis cried. (There they are, the artist in residence and the service to the arts award winners ... It thinks Bert would need a different tune for this event.)

THE FARMINGTON Community Libraries would like to alert all patrons to its summer hours beginning April 14 until fall: 9am. to 9 pm. Monday through 7 thursday 9 am. to 8 pm. Friday through Saturday. April 13 is the last Sunday until fall on which the library will be open. For further information call the Hills library at 553-0300.

DISCOVER there's more to Greek culture than Zorba or Melina Mecouri. The Nativity of Virgin Mary Church sponsors a Greek Festival April 19 and 20 at the Livonia Mall on 7 Mile and Middlebelt.

THE STUDENT Exchange Association, a Brazilian-American secondary school exchange program, has opened applications to all Michigan high cachol jusior and seniors between 16 and 18 who wish to be included in the tour leaving the U.S. the program will live with a Brazilian family and be enrolled in a local school, attend classes daily and learn to communicate in Portuguese. Applications can be obtained from local high schools or by writing to the Student Exchange Association headquarters to Richard Kennedy, Michigan State Director, SEA 2770 East Baseline, Mt. Pleasant 48858. Applications will close April 30.

ATTENTION Farmington PO: You may know something that the entire population of Farmington Hills hasn't tumble on to yet. The friendly carrier returned a letter to the Observer because the letter's destination, Trailee Trail, iddn't exist according to the post office. For the rest of us, it's a6 on the official Farmington/Farmington Hills map, (Shows how wrong we can be) of well, as Roy and Dale used to sing, "Happy trails to you

