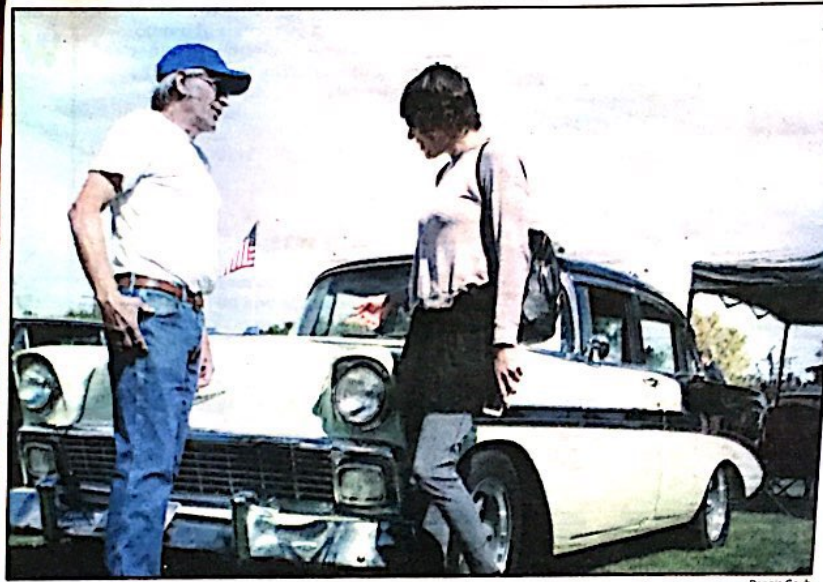


# BELGRADE NEWS

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Dennis Gaub

Arnie Houdek shows off his 1956 Chevrolet Bel Air to a woman during the Belgrade Fall Festival car show. At least 70 entries were out for display at Lewis & Clark Park Saturday.

## All in the Family

### '56 Chevy tied to three generations

BY DENNIS GAUB • STAFF WRITER

Lifetime Dry Creek Road resident Arnie Houdek displayed practicality with his entry in the annual car show at the Belgrade Fall Festival last Saturday.

Sure, Houdek was pleased to show off his 1956 Chevrolet Bel Air and answer questions about the well-preserved auto to passersby on a warm, sunny day. His Chevy, though, tells a three-generation story, and it serves him more than being parked, as it was that day, amidst dozens of other classic cars at Belgrade's Lewis and Clark Park.

"My grandparents bought this car new, and my dad inherited it," Houdek said, "and it was a daily driver when I took my (driver's license) test in it in the 1960s."

The Bel Air sports original paint. Houdek showed some minor chips in the two-tone – yellow body, black top – paint scheme. That barely mattered because he applied elbow grease and buffed the finish to a high shine, making his 62-year-old car a "looker" for many show attendees.

Houdek did have to replace the carpet and upholstery on the front seat, but the rest of the interior remains original, somewhat to his surprise.

"For some reason, the mice didn't get it," he said.

This is the third summer during which Houdek has driven the Chevy on a regular, almost daily, basis. He's racked up about

15,000 miles in that time.

"It might not have the ride of new cars, but it will put a smile on your face," he said. Anyone who thinks his antique

is a gas guzzler will draw a rebuttal from Houdek. Running a 350-cubic-inch V-8 engine that Houdek pulled out of a 1994 Chevy Caprice – a police car, he noted – the Bel Air averages 20 miles per gallon on the road. It does that with no aerodynamics, he said.

Houdek also has replaced the original transmission with a newer automatic setup.

The car show attracted at least 70 entries as of early afternoon on Saturday, up significantly from 2017 when rainy weather held the roster to single digits.

Jerry Gray won BEST OF SHOW honors, and 13 entrants received PEOPLE'S CHOICE honors. They included: Grant Callantine, Scott Restvedt, Dan Ruud, Cat Whitmer, Chuck Belgrade, Kevin Yulga, James DeMonte, Nick Stanislawek, Dave VanDyken, Bob Bradley, Ron Dye, Al Johnson and Stretch.