



Ernie Adams's dwarf 1949 Mercury "Rebel Rouser" stands next to a full-size classic auto at a local car show. It's patterned after the Mercury driven by James Dean in the movie "Rebel Without A Cause."

Dwarf Car Builder Still Going Strong

Texas FARM SHOW subscriber Ray Rodriguez sent us a letter recently explaining how impressed he was with the dwarf cars built by Ernie Adams of Maricopa, Ariz., and he wondered if Ernie had been written up in our magazine. We ran a story on Ernie in 2010 (Vol. #34, No. 6) and decided to see if he was still building vehicles today.

"I've been building vehicles since I was 11 years old and I don't intend to quit anytime soon," was the response we got from the 80-year-old Adams. He says that in the past decade he's built three new cars, a museum to house his dwarf car collection, and together with his son Kevin and daughter-in-law, built a vintage filling station, gift shop and old time barber shop at their historical village. And in this age of high technology, he also has two websites.

His museum attracts a steady stream of

visitors who he visits with nearly every day. "Everyone has questions about how I build the cars, which I've answered hundreds of times, and a lot of people ask if they're for sale, and I tell them no, because I wouldn't have near this much fun with a pocketful of money," he says with a laugh.

Unique custom vehicles often attract big money, especially at televised auctions like those in Phoenix, but Adams isn't swayed by the many 6-figure offers he's received. "These are like my kids, and I wouldn't part with them for any price," Adams says.

The cars have also spawned a bonafide business including movies, books and memorabilia in the last decade.

Viewers can watch "Ernie Builds a Dwarf", which traces his creation of a 1934 Ford sedan. They can follow him as he cruises Route 66 in his 1949 Mercury and see his



His 1904 Oldsmobile Campbell's soup vehicle is used only for parades.

life story building dwarf cars in "Halfmoon Road: The Ernie Adams Story". The notoriety of Adam's autos are also well-documented in a hard cover book, on his websites, in auto magazines and on popular programs like Jay Leno's Garage, My Classic Car with Dennis Gage, and the Discovery Channel.

His love for small cars began in 1965 when he built his first dwarf car, patterned after a 1928 Chevy. "It was a 2-door sedan with a 2-cylinder Onan engine that I rescued from a 1964 mail car," Adams says. "I used parts of 9 old refrigerators for the body, cutting pieces with a homemade hacksaw, a hammer and a chisel." Today that vehicle, which he still owns, is known as "Grandpa Dwarf."

In 1979 and 80 he and his friend Daren Schmaltz built two dwarf race cars, which led to the start of Dwarf Car Racing in 1983 on an oval track in Prescott, Ariz. "Eleven drivers participated, Daren and I won two heats, and that was the start of a whole new type of fun," Adams says. "It continues to

this day under the banner of Legend Cars."

A few years later he began putting his metal shaping and design skills to work building a fully functional and fully replicated 11/16th scale car. After more than 2,000 hrs. of work Adams had created a street legal dwarf 1932 Ford. Others followed including a '42 Ford ragtop, a '39 Chevy sedan, a '49 Mercury sedan, a hillbilly Model A, a '34 Ford, and a '40 Mercury chop top coupe. "That one's painted candy brandy wine red and even has AC and power windows," Adams says. All of his creations are proportional to the original with working gauges, doors, lids, windows and amazing detail. Powered by different types of engines, most use Toyota drive trains and are fully licensed for road travel. He's driven his '39 Chevy more than 54,000 actual road miles.

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"It lets you open a coconut without making a mess, and also remove the coconut meat in a controlled fashion," says David Wolfe about his new "slide hammer".

"Slide Hammer" Opens Coconuts Easily

Did you ever bring coconuts home from vacation and wonder what to do with them?

David Wolfe says his new "slide hammer" makes opening coconuts a fast and easy job, without making a mess.

"It works somewhat like a slide hammer that body shops use to pull dents out of cars," says Wolfe. "It's much easier to control than a conventional hammer, so you can use it on a coconut in your kitchen without pieces flying all over and making a mess."

The slide hammer consists of a 12-in. long metal rod with a handle at one end, and a 5-in. long square metal hammer that's free to move up or down on the rod. A threaded receiver at the bottom of the rod is designed to accept 2 different attachments - a small pointed "eye puncher" and a blunt nut cracker that looks like a big thumb screw.

To open the coconut, place it inside a 3-in. dia. metal ring (supplied) with the coconut's black dots, or "eyes", facing up, then use

the eye puncher to knock the eyes out. After draining the water into a drinking cup, replace the eye puncher with the nut cracker. Hold the handle with one hand, and use your other hand to slam the hammer down against the coconut until it cracks. Keep working your way around the coconut with the hammer until the coconut splits into 2 pieces. After flipping the pieces over, attach the nut cracker and pop bite-size pieces of meat off the shell.

"It lets you easily remove the coconut meat in a controlled fashion," says Wolfe. "The metal ring keeps the coconut from rolling around as you hit it with the slide hammer."

The slide hammer comes in a flat storage box that will fit in a cabinet drawer. It sells for under \$35 plus S&H.

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One-of-a-kind cultivating tractor was built to run between the 48-in. rows in Davis's garden.

Cultivator Resembles Allis Chalmers G

William Davis of Masontown, W. Va., built a one-of-a-kind cultivating tractor to run between the 48-in. rows in his garden. Using salvaged materials, he kept the cost to about \$2,000.

"It looks somewhat similar to an Allis Chalmers G but is much longer. The operator sits in the middle of the tractor on a cushioned boat seat and has a great view of the cultivator up front, without having to twist around to see the work being done," says Davis. "My nephew and I use it on our market vegetable garden where we grow peppers, onions, garlic, tomatoes, and other vegetables, all on 48 in. rows. We built it about 8 years ago after adding to our acreage."

The tractor is built on the running gear off a small Kubota tractor. Davis lengthened the rear half of the tractor and mounted it to face backward. The tractor's hitch is bolted to a home-built, 4-in. channel iron frame that's connected to the tractor's front steering axle. The tractor's original 3-pt. hitch and cylinder mount over the axle, and support a toolbar-mounted cultivator that's raised or lowered hydraulically.

The tractor's original 20 hp. engine and

transmission were worn out, so Davis replaced the engine with a hydraulic motor and connected it to the hydrostatic transmission and 30 hp. engine off a junked skid loader. "The motor operates a hydrostatic steering unit salvaged from an old Ariens riding mower purchased on eBay," he says.

The tractor is equipped with a moveable pto shaft that's driven by a secondary hydraulic motor and can be installed on the front, back or side of the tractor. "The variable speed pto can drive an implement at any speed," says Davis.

An aluminum box in front of the steering wheel contains the tractor's ignition switch and gauge panel. A lever next to the steering wheel controls the 3-pt. hitch, and other levers control the tractor's throttle, transmission, and a pair of hydraulic pumps.

Davis used 1/8-in. thick steel to build fenders for the rear wheels and also to build a big hydraulic reservoir. The side-mounted exhaust pipe came with the skid loader.

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