

HE SPECIALIZES IN HARD-TO-FIND PARTS

Here's Where To Buy Parts For Old Pickups

By Frank J. Buchman

Randy Rundle had a hard time finding parts for a 1951 Chevrolet pickup he restored in 1970's. After a long search he found the parts and before he knew it people were calling him to help them find parts to fix up their own vehicles.

"There are a lot of old farm trucks around that farmers would like to use at harvest time, and for errands, if they just had the parts to fix them," says Rundle. "They started calling me to help. It was just a hobby at first but it grew into a business."

He advertises in national antique car and truck magazines and does about 70% of his business by mail order. But he also has many customers who stop in at his business which is operated out of his home and garage in Clay Center, Kan.

Although parts for old pickups usually aren't available in auto parts stores or dealerships, new parts for nearly every pickup ever made are being remanufactured. "I buy the parts new from manufacturers, and also sometimes I buy out the parts stock when an old dealership closes down," says Rundle, who also buys old pickups at farm sales and strips them down for parts.

Specializing in Chevys built in the late 40's and 50's, Rundle also offers a wide variety of parts for GMC's, flathead Fords, and other models from 1930 to 1962. However, the widest variety of parts he has in stock are for Chevrolets. "I pretty much have a complete line of common Chevrolet truck parts from 1947 through 1959 in stock," he says.

The most widely requested parts are brakes, starters, generators, door latches, and other interior parts, as well as owners manuals and shop manuals. He also sells technical bulletins that tell how to change electrical systems from 6-volt to 12-volt.

One popular part is a short-shaft water pump that lets owners install a later model 6-cyl. engine with a full pressure oil system from 1955 through 1962 in a 1937 through '54 pickup without having to cut the latch panel and move the radiator forward, as in the past.

Rundle has done considerable research on old pickups and the bookcase in his home is full of manuals for old vehicles including old dealership's parts and accessories catalogs for Chevrolet pickups from 1929



Rundle offers a wide variety of parts but specializes in Chevys built in the 1950's.

through 1956. To better communicate the technical information he's learned about older parts, he put together a parts catalog listing some of the parts he stocks and information on installation and utilization.

"After explaining the same things over the phone a couple thousand times, I decided it would be easier to write and print something that the customer could refer back to," Rundle says.

Although he does rebuild waterpumps, fuel pumps, carburetors, starters and generators, Rundle generally doesn't do repair work on vehicles. "It's a full-time job locating parts and mailing them out.

Parts orders are processed the day they arrive, and customers usually receive them within two weeks. He sells his parts catalog and gives free price quotes.

One popular new product is a 6-volt alternator with an output rating of 50 amps, which is nearly 60% greater than most original equipment type generating systems. It allows recharging at idle and low rpm.

Other most popular parts listed in his catalog are Fenton dual exhaust headers, Offenhauser two- and three-carb manifolds, cast aluminum Ford and Mercury cylinder heads, Wayne polished aluminum rocker and pushrod covers, and Howard cams. "Many of the parts are made from original castings acquired from the companies that produced them," Rundle points out.

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The seats and top 3 ft. of the bus were cut off back from just behind the driver's seat.

HAULS 264 SQUARE BALES OR 8 ROUND BALES

School Bus Makes Great "Hay Hauler"

"My converted 60-passenger school bus hauls up to 264 small square bales or 8 big round bales. It makes a great, maneuverable over-the-road hay hauler," says Don Brown, Jr., a Davis, Ill., dairy farmer and custom hay grower.

Brown, who paid \$1,200 for the bus, figures he spent about \$3,000 on it altogether including modifications.

"I priced long bed trucks set up for hauling hay but discovered I could rebuild a bus for less money," says Brown, who rebuilt the "hay hauler" a year ago. "I had been using my pickup to pull a 16-ft. cage wagon pulled behind my pickup but I wanted more capacity. I didn't want to use a gooseneck trailer or a semi truck because they're too hard to maneuver in farm yards. Besides, a good used school bus is usually in better shape because they're serviced at regular intervals."

Brown moved the wiring for the bus's brake and turn signals from the ceiling to under the floor. He removed the seats and rubber mat from the floor and cut off the top 3 ft. all the way back from just behind the driver's seat. He used an industrial loader to lift off the top of the bus. He used some of the cut-off metal to build an insulated wall behind the cab and installed a 2-ft. sq. window in the wall. He bolted a passenger seat to the floor, using a swiveling pedestal seat from a fishing boat. He chains a 26-ft. long hay conveyor to one side of the bus, which is painted green and white.

Brown also converted a rusted-out 1969 16-ft. passenger van into a hay hauler. "It weighs less than the bus so I can use it in the spring on roads where the bus can't run yet."

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Hay Bale Retriever, Stacker

"I've used it every year since 1974 with almost no trouble at all. Lets me retrieve and stack bales by myself," says Frank Murphy, Steamboat Springs, Colo., about the bale stacker loader he built from an old farm truck.

Murphy says quite a few local farmers made similar truck conversions 20 years ago or so but that his is about the only one still running.

He started with a 1 1/2 ton 1938 International truck. The cargo box was discarded and he moved the front axle back about 4 ft. to shorten the turning radius. He junked the original engine and transmission, replacing them with the 396 cu. in. engine and 4-speed 400 transmission from a 1967 Chevrolet car. He flipped the truck's 2-speed rear end over to change the direction of travel. The cab was turned around and all controls were relocated and re-routed to be operated in the rear-facing direction. The engine mounts behind the cab as far as possible to provide a counterweight for the bale loader at the other end of the machine.

A Dual loader is mounted on the truck frame, fitted with a 12-ft. wide bale fork that Murphy uses to scoop up square bales in the field after baling. "I can pick up ten to twelve 75-lb. bales at a time and carry them to a stack where I can climb out to unload them. The loader can lift bales up 13 ft. high. Lets one man do it by himself, or one man can retrieve bales with the stacker and another can stack. For the past several years I've had the help of a young woman who drives the stacker while I stay at the stack."

Murphy left the old truck wheels on the loader, fitting the drive axle with duals. For hydraulics, he put a sprocket on the engine crankshaft that chain-drives an 18 gpm pump. Murphy says the converted truck has plenty of power with the car engine and transmission and that the 2-speed rear end gears it down far enough for up-close maneuvering. "It'll spin its tires if you gun it," he says.

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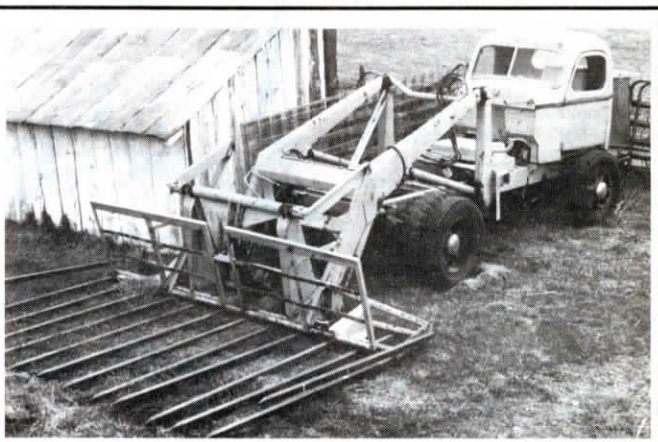


Photo by the Tupper