MARIES Advocate

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General Lee, found in a barn

BY ROXIE MURPHY **ADVOCATE STAFF WRITER**

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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-

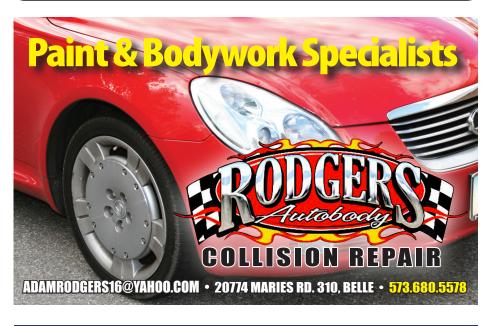
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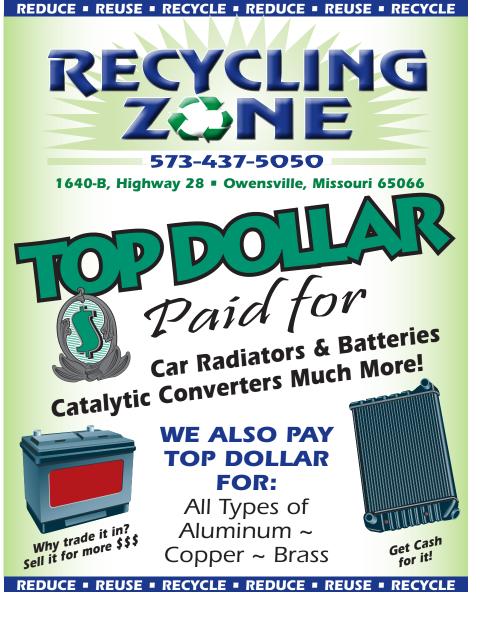
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up truck. His dad wouldn't let him drive the car, so it stayed parked in the barn.

"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 tarpped 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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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



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car I can't count them all," Scott said. "The next day, so many people stopped, literally put on their brakes in the middle of the road."

The car was still all-original from the day it came out of the factory, including the two barrel carburetor and 318 motor. It had minor imperfections from sitting in the elements. Some rust on the driver's side and rear quarter pannels, and Scott later found that the motor was frozen.

"It was originally locked up tighter than a jug," Scott said. "We worked on it but never could get it to loosen up. We put a battery in it and every light come up, everything still worked."

He decided that he wanted a to swap the 318 with a 362 small block engine anyway.

"It was a 362, but bored 30 over, so it is actually a 392 engine," Scott said. "It has a hydraulic roller cam in it, an Edelbrock four-barrel intake manifold, a 750 CFM aluminum double pumper carburetor with 440 Source aluminum heads. I get a lot of comments on my exhaust."

It was obvious that the car was a high-end package.

"It had all the creature comforts," Scott said. "But Giedinghagen drove that GMC pick-up till the wheels fell off of it."

Tanya spent 13 hours scrubbing the seats from green mold back to pristine white.

"They were like-new," he said. "But after we started driving the car, the seat started to deteriorate and the driver's side ripped. That busted out window was really hard on them."

Scott decided to restore the Charger to look like one of the first five General Lees in the 1979 Dukes of Hazzard television series where 317 Chargers met their death, consequences of the many jump scenes. That meant when the upholstery was redone, he changed the color from white to Saddle Tan.

"The General Lee went through a lot of phases, mismatched colors," Scott said. "But this one is an exact duplicate of Lee One. "

Almost exact replica. Scott clarified that he didn't put the rollbars inside the cab.

"They were fake anyway and it makes it harder for the kids to get in and out," Scott



The doors aren't welded shut either.

"That was a gimmick on the show," Scott said. "They weren't really welded shut."

The original radio is also still in the car, although Scott said it doesn't work.

"I like to listen to the pipes," Scott said when asked if he would replace the radio. "The exhaust is my music."

Down to the Dixie Horn, Scott accumulated and replicated every source about the first General Lee that he could get.

Herron Custom Paint and Body painted the car orange.

"We were originally going to do a vinyl wrap, but couldnt' match the color," Scott said. "Zack Fletcher of Fletcher's Performance and Paint matched the orange paint."

The Confederate Battle Flag is actually a decal purchased from Luetkemeyer Signs in Jefferson City.

"It took some work, but not as much as it could have been," Scott said. "(The Chargers) weren't designed to get rid of water and moister. A lot of the rust issues are common, but luckily this car was parked in a garage for years, since 1977. That helped. I got pretty lucky with the restoration process. I got lucky with a really solid car."

The new engine only has about 200 miles on it, but Scott he and Tanya will be able to go on a trip to Pigeon Forge, Tenn., soon and see Cooter's Place with all of the Dukes of Hazzard memorabilia.

"I was there for the first episode and saw the first jump in 1979," Scott said. "We have all the seasons. I have been watching ever since."

Many Dukes of Hazzard fans have noticed the General Lee since Scott put historical plates on it in May 2021, including Jodi Johnson, KZNN oldies DJ of the radio show Saturday Morning.

"Jodie Johnson is an absolute Dukes of Hazzard fanatic," Scott said. "She's got lunch boxes, TV trays, all kinds of stuff."

Johnson has two sons, Wylan and Wyatt, who shoot archery. She has always called her sons the Duke Boys. A 105.3 KZNN DJ on the Saturday Morning Oldies Show heard about it.

"He got wind of it and called her boys over during an archery tournament, calling them the Duke Boys, and he calls them out on the radio on the Saturday Morning Oldies Show, 'Hey, I got one for the Duke Boys in Belle, Missouri,' and he does that every weekend," Scott said. "We got invited over to KZNN on April 22 so the Duke Boys can be with General Lee. They've got it all on the radio and they are gonna talk about it and the whole nine yards. I don't know what they are gonna ask me. I guess we will figure it out when we get over there."

Scott and his family, Tanya and children Lee and ---, are looking forward to many adventures in the General.

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Regional jail • from page 4

federal entities pay for transporting prisoners. "If you have a federal inmate who has to go to court in Kansas City, they pay your employee's wages for the entire day plus some,

and they pay mileage for the vehicle," he said. Schulte asked what would happen if the jail were profitable.

Bonham said the statutes allowed for profits to return to the counties, but the details of how much went to each county would ultimately be up to the commissioners to decide. John said the jail could also use the cash flow to maintain facilities and upgrade equipment as needed.

Based on the counties' sales tax revenue from last year, a half-cent sales tax to support the regional jail's annual costs would generate about \$2.3 million. John mentioned a jail commissary, where inmates can purchase goods, as a way to contribute to the costs of running a regional jail. He said that the commissary at the Maries County Jail generates about \$35,000 each year.

"I'm having a hard time seeing where it's not going to financially be feasible," John said. "If there's a sales tax in place, with the ancillary funds like the commissary in place, even if we don't get a fed bed contract, I think we can make it work."

John said it would be at least a year before the counties could really start looking at putting the tax funding on the ballot. They would need proposals, engineering and architectural plans and price quotes before thinking about going to the voters for approval.

Prigge said that the USDA funds some feasibility studies, so there could be options for paying costs to research the jail project.

Griffin asked how the counties would determine what portion of the jail's resources each county would be able to use when the counties would contribute different sales tax values to the jail. Bonham said that his suggestion would be to allocate beds and have counties pay extra if they go over their allo-

The law enforcement officials compared the average number of people held in their respective jails at any time. John estimated about 18 in Maries County and Bonham estimated about 12 in Osage County. Gasconade County does not have its own jail, but Eiler estimated there were about 17 Gasconade County detainees between the jails in Osage County and Crawford County.

Eiler said that allocating beds would put the counties at the mercy of their judges, and each judge is not consistent with another when it comes to sentencing. He mentioned a sentence in Gasconade County that he had never seen before. The judge sentenced the person to one year in county jail.

"That's a whole year of someone that I have to pay for in someone else's county jail," he said. "And I just tied up their bed for a year."

Schulte said that last year Gasconade

County spent about \$188,000 on housing prisoners without factoring in other costs such as

Drewel asked what would happen if one county dropped out of the regional jail sometime in the future.

"If any one county drops out that's the end of it because the other two couldn't afford it," he said. "I'm kind of leery of it now." "Unless you could get another county to

come in there," Griffin said. Bonham said that more counties could join, but they must border at least one of the

counties already involved in the jail. "The more counties you've got, you still have basically the same electric bill and the

Bonham said that the three counties present made sense because of their "three corners" spot in the Belle area, but if anyone knew of a bordering county that would want to participate, they could include them in future discussions.

same water bill," Drewel said.

If the commissioners had an interest in pursuing the regional jail idea, Bonham said one of the next moves would be to determine where to put the jail. The three counties meet in the area of Belle and Bland, so the majority agreed that area would be the ideal spot. Bonham said that Belle Mayor Daryl White had already called him to express interest in building the jail in Belle.

"If you have a mayor already interested in having it, that's a big step," Bonham said. "Usually it's anti (jail). 'I don't want this in my backyard."

Fagre asked if Bonham had a specific spot of land in mind for the jail site. Bonham said that he did, but he doubted it would be available by the time the counties would want to commit to purchasing the land.

Drewel asked if the airport in Vichy would be a better spot because it already has the infrastructure and it would make transporting federal prisoners easier.

John said that building the jail in Vichy would put it too far away from Osage County and Gasconade County. At that point, it would be easier for them to transport to other county jails rather than the regional jail. Using land at the airport would also require Phelps County to join in on the project, but it is unlikely Phelps County would want to participate because it is already working on constructing a

Bonham said that it would create jobs and help relieve some of the struggles that Osage County and Maries County have had finding and retaining jail staff. He said that statute would not force the counties to close the jails that they already have and that if there were a regional jail, the jailers would transport detainees from there to their court appoint-

John said that two people would be enough to staff a state-of-the-art jail at any given time because of their many security measures.

Another possibility for the regional jail would be establishing a video courtroom at the location.

"That cuts our liability of transportation," Bonham said. "It cuts our transportation costs down, bailiff costs, and so on, etc."

Bonham said that he did not want to get too far ahead in thinking about the project, but the counties would also have an opportunity to combine their public safety answering points (PSAP), which is where emergency services receive 911 calls. He said that there is money available through the state for new PSAPs.

"Didn't we (Maries County) just spend \$600,000 or \$700,000 on that?" Drewel asked because Maries County recently upgraded its 911 dispatch equipment.

John said that the money spent was only on equipment and software, which they could move into a new PSAP.

"The writing's on the wall," he said. "They (state officials) are eventually going to mandate that you have regional PSAPs because they've restructured their PSAP districts. It's almost impossible to get a grant for your PSAP right now unless you are a large PSAP or you are a PSAP that's working with another PSAP."

John said that two years ago Maries County applied for a PSAP grant on its own and received no funding. When it partnered with Phelps County the next year, it received the

"During the building of this it would be a good idea to have in mind to expand it to put a PSAP there and dispatch all three counties," John said.

Griffin said Osage County would not want to give up its 911 center because the people who work in dispatch are protective of the community and they would not want someone from outside it handling emergency calls.

"I'm a numbers guy, and I'd have to look at a lot of spreadsheets for me to say yay, nay or maybe," Holland said. "I'm not saying I'm opposed to it or for it. I just don't know enough about it."

"I didn't bring the numbers because this was a meeting to kick the can around and say 'if you're good with it, we're good with it,"" Bonham said. "I think it's a great idea," Schulte said. "I

do. But is it going to be good right now or in the next two years to go to the voters? I don't think the appetite is there for it." "I think it's a good thing to think about

and talk about because there's no doubt that the jail is a drag down on the county," Griffin said. "It isn't up for me to decide. Put it out for the voters and they decide."

"The ball is truly in your court, and we (the sheriffs) recognize that," Bonham told the commissioners. "I know you guys have a lot to think about, and just know that we're not telling you one way to do anything."



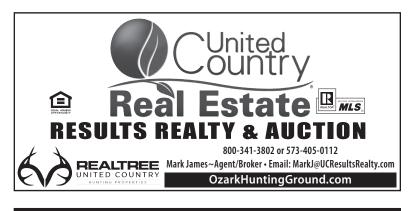




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