

City revs up for biggest car show in the West

BY MICHELE MCDOUGALL

The countdown is on for the biggest car show on the Prairies, with 600 classic, vintage and antique vehicles expected to cruise into Brandon next week for the Western Canadian Nationals Car Show.

During the weekend of Aug. 2-3, vehicles of all makes, models and ages will be on public display at the Keystone Centre grounds, said event organizer Dave Burba. That's when people can browse through the hundreds of cars, trucks, motorcycles and even a snowmobile display.

"People will be able to see lots of beautiful,

high-end vehicles and a lot of everyday drivers that are fixed up and so special," said Burba, who is also president of the Road Rebels Car Club.

"You'll also see vintage trailers and tractors and machinery from the Pioneer Power and Equipment Club. We've got a pinup competition, battle of the bands, valve-cover racing and a burnout contest. And we'll have food vendors and a beer garden."

Fans of the automotive industry and restoration world will recognize two celebrities who have been booked for appearances and meet-and-greets during the car show.

Mike Hall has a television show called "Rust

Valley Restorers," and Avery Shoaf has "Wild Man Garage" on YouTube.

Three provinces away, Souris-born Jim De Vries is trying to decide which one of his classics he's going to bring for the road trip and show and shines once he gets here.

"I've got several cars," said De Vries, "and I've been trying to get a car ready that I brought last time, so I really don't know which one I'm bringing," he told the Sun on the phone from Langley, B.C.

Car enthusiasts might remember the event under its old name, Super Run, which began 18 years ago. From then it rotated on a three-year basis with Saskatoon, Sask., and Red Deer, Alta.

It was last held in Brandon in 2022, but the show came to a sudden stop in 2023 when Saskatoon and Red Deer dropped out.

De Vries, now 87, said he hasn't missed one yet: "I've been to every one since 2007."

The first year he brought his 1956 Chevrolet Nomad, which has the look of a station wagon, "and then one year I came in my 1940 Ford pickup, and another time was with my '56 Chevy Tudor, which is an ex-race car," De Vries said.

If he can fix a leak in the intake manifold in his 1984 Hurst Oldsmobile, De Vries said that's what he'll bring to the Wheat City. "It's got air conditioning," he said as he chuckled.

» See "Cruise" — Page A2



Jim De Vries (right) and his son Luke pose for a photo next to their 1984 Oldsmobile Hurst/Oldsmobile during a past Super Run event held in Brandon in 2022. (The Brandon Sun files)

» Cruise Night will expand for event

Continued from Page A1

The Sun caught up with YouTube star Shoaf in B.C., not far from his home on the north shore of Shuswap Lake.

"When we come to Brandon — both Mike and I — we'll meet the people, walk around and look at some of the cars, then go back to our booth, sell some swag and sign autographs if people want," Shoaf said. "And if we have time, enjoy a little bit of the city and look for some touristy things."

Shoaf and Hall each have their own YouTube channel and have had views that range from 100,000 to 400,000, with each one co-starring on the other's platform.

"I'll tell you something funny, we are both pretty humble," Shoaf said, "and we look at each other and go, 'My goodness gracious, why do people like us so much?' We have no idea what our popularity is, it's just how we are in our natural element."

When the Sun asked Shoaf what that natural element was, he exclaimed, "Surrounded by junk."

"I do all kinds of mechanical stuff, but I don't do body work. The only thing I do with body work is make dents," he said with a laugh.

Leading up to the weekend show, there are cruises and get-togethers planned for the reg-



Mike Hall (left) of "Rust Valley Restorers" and Avery Shoaf of "Wild Man Garage" have been booked for appearances and meet-and-greets during this year's Western Canadian Nationals Car Show from Aug. 2-3 in Brandon. (Supplied)

istrants from Monday to Friday, including road trips to Dauphin and Riding Mountain National Park and south to Boissevain, Souris and Treherne, with several pit stops in between.

Burba said he hopes that on Thursday, July 31, there will be a record turnout for Cruise Night,

which will expand for WCN, taking over Rosser and Princess Avenues between Sixth and 13th streets from 6 to 9 p.m.

"On a typical Cruise Night, we get up to 350 cars, so we're really hoping to get up to 600 downtown on Rosser and Princess and the connecting streets. This will really be something for spectators to see and come and talk with the car collectors," Burba said.

That's one of the things that De Vries said he was looking forward to — seeing restored vehicles that are new to him and "connecting with other car people."

"I like going to Brandon because I lived most of my life there, so it will be like a reunion, seeing old friends. And I'll take a trip to see where my parents are buried in Souris," De Vries said.

"I go to all the shows in Langley, and I'm used to seeing the same cars, so I'm looking forward to seeing different cars when I come back."

The gates open Saturday and Sunday at 10 a.m., with the show running until 5 p.m. on Saturday and 4 p.m. on Sunday. Cost of admission is \$15 a day or \$20 for a weekend pass. Children 12 and under are free when accompanied by an adult.

For more information, call or text 204-729-5808.

» mcdougall@brandonsun.com
» enviromichele.bsky.social