

RALPH AND SHARON DICKMAN

OUR CANON CITY MEMBERS

Ralph and Sharon live on a beautiful 18-acre parcel of land, literally across the street from where he was born – in Penrose, Colorado. He did odd jobs in high school and went on to college at CSU in Fort Collins where he majored in Geology. He graduated in 1960 and worked for Ideal Cement (now Lafarge-Holcim) for 38 years, first as a chemist and later as a quality control manager at Ideal's Montana operation.

Sharon lived in many places, including Costa Rica, finally ending up in Penrose. She met Ralph on a blind date in Fort Collins. They were married in 1966 and have lived happily ever after since then. They have three children, six grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

Ralph grew up in an Oldsmobile family. His first car was a 1947 Oldsmobile which he purchased for \$600 in 1954. It was a black 4-door sedan. Ralph customized the car by adding fender skirts and a sun visor. He added whitewalls by *painting* the tires white (see pictures). He traded the '47 for a 1956 Olds 88 4-door sedan (blue and white) which he drove through his college years.

The next Oldsmobile was a 1962 Starfire 2-door hardtop which Ralph and Sharon drove on their honeymoon when they were married. It was painted Pacific Mist with a white top and came with a 345 CID engine. They kept that car for eight years.

As the family grew, they needed a more practical car. They traded the Starfire for a 1970 Vista Cruiser with a 350 CID engine. They lived in "Big Sky" country (Montana) at the time and drove the car extensively over long distances. When they traded in the car for a 1994 Delta 88 4-door sedan 20 years later, the Vista Cruiser had racked up 300,000 miles on the odometer.

In 1985, Ralph thought his kids needed a car to drive in high school, so he purchased a 1969 442, painted Crimson with a vinyl top, equipped with a 400 CID engine. He restored the car to original in the late 1980s and showed it at the Oldsmobile 90th Anniversary Nationals in Lansing, where it received a 1st Place award. The 442 also received Best of Class in the Oldsmobile Seniors Preservation category at *both* the Albuquerque (2017) and Wichita (2018) Oldsmobile Nationals.

Ralph and Sharon still own *five* Oldsmobiles. In addition to the 442, they have a 2002 Collector's Edition "Final 500," Intrigue, (Dark Cherry Metallic), a 1964 Dynamic 88 Holiday Coupe (Regal Mist with white top, 394 CID), a 1955 88 4-door sedan and a 1953 Super 88 Holiday Coupe (Agate Red with white top), which he towed from McCook, Nebraska to Montana in 1978 to restore.

Ralph's father had purchased the '55 by picking it up in Lansing. It had been sitting in a barnyard on the family property in Colorado for years and cows were using it for a rubbing post. Ralph towed the car to Montana, restored it and took it to the Oldsmobile Nationals in 1982 where it received a 2nd Place award. The '53 Super 88 has been a work in progress and is 90 percent completed. The '64 Dynamic 88 belonged to Ralph's mother. He has all the paperwork, including the check, associated with the purchase from the Linder Chevrolet-Oldsmobile dealership in Canon City.

Of all his Oldsmobiles, Ralph's favorite is the 442, followed by the Vista Cruiser they once owned, mainly because those two cars are more connected to the family over many years.

Ralph and Sharon joined RMOC in the early Eighties based on an advertisement in JWO magazine. In the late Eighties, Ralph met Greg Childs, former OCA Chief Judge and past President. Together, they established a Utah-Montana Oldsmobile chapter called the Rendezvous Rockets, which is still listed as an OCA chapter out of Riverton, Utah with eleven registered members.

Also in the late Eighties, Ralph became an OCA Master Judge and served in that capacity at many events over a 20-year period. They have enjoyed *both* clubs – RMOC and the Rendezvous Rockets – for the camaraderie and friendship they have experienced over the decades. “The people are super,” said Sharon. They also praised Larry Ruppel for his leadership as President over the years.

The Dickmans have a long and delightful history with Oldsmobiles at many levels. They had (and still have) some amazing cars and are still active in the club. Every year, the Friday night before The Holy Cross Abbey car show in Canon City, they open their house (and garages) for all of the RMOC members who attend and treat them to what is effectively a second car show/party, complete with food and drink.

Thank you Ralph and Sharon for all you have done for the old car hobby and for RMOC.

