



Greg Severt has a special appreciation for Peterbilt semi tractors, so he and mechanic Mark Kalina converted a new Dodge 3500 Ram pickup to look like one.

Peterbilt Pickup Is A Real Eye-Grabber

Greg Severt gets more than enough attention when he drives his Peterbilt-style pickup to work. Owner of a trucking company, he had a special appreciation for Peterbilts.

"I have mostly run Peterbilts, and after seeing a Peterbilt-style pickup in California, I thought it would be fun to have one myself," he says. "Lately I keep it in the garage. It gets almost too much attention. Most people just want to know what it is. They've never seen anything like it."

Severt had an extra card up his sleeve when it came to working with Peterbilt. His head mechanic, Mark Kalina, previously worked for Peterbilt in their body shop for 20 years.

The base for the project was a factory-fresh Dodge 3500 Ram pickup with a Cummins turbodiesel and 4-WD. Other components Kalina started with included a 1994 Peterbilt cab and hood and an after-market bed designed for a full size 1953 Chevy pickup.

The experienced body man started by stripping the pickup down to the engine and chassis. Severt had picked the Dodge for its engine.

"I'm a Ford guy most of the time, but the Dodge Ram with its in-line engine looked more like a big truck engine," says Severt. "It had a cleaner look without so much stuff coming off it."

The first addition was 20-in. Weld Racing Rims with 40x13.50-R20LT Mickey Thompson Baha ATZ tires to give it a big truck look from the ground up.

The next step was positioning the tilt front-end wheel openings over the front wheels. The cab was then added and the entire unit attached to the chassis. "I had to move the radiator back a little to make sure there was room for the tires," says Kalina.

The bed required additional modifications, including adding a pair of cut-down Peterbilt front fenders and running boards.

"Fabricating the running boards was probably one of the biggest challenges," says Severt.

Other challenges included shaping sheet metal to fill the gap between the running boards and front fenders and adding a splashguard around the rear.

The bed, though complete, had arrived in pieces. Kalina adjusted it so the middle stake pocket was centered on the rear wheels.

"I had to make a mount for the bed so it would set down on the frame," he says. "I wanted the top of the bed to ride even with



Pickup is fitted with an aftermarket bed designed for a full-size 1953 Chevy pickup.

the line on the door and the hood."

The Dodge exhaust system was modified to fit the bed. Kalina made special panels so the 4-in. diameter stainless steel dual exhausts coming from the muffler would exit behind the tires.

The cab itself required minimal, though very painstaking, adjustments. To install the Dodge dash and auxiliary gauges, Kalina fashioned a new aluminum dash for the Peterbilt cab. He then covered it with a 3/16-in. wood veneer for trim, stained to match Peterbilt's after-market rosewood and chrome armrests.

The rest of the cab remained largely stock, including use of the Peterbilt air-conditioning system. Air ride seats were installed and, like the air-powered windows, used the functional air tanks mounted beneath the doors.

"We didn't add air horns or lights above the cab as we wanted it to look like a pickup," explains Kalina. "We are planning to put air ride suspension on it in the future, though. It rides smooth on the highway, but can get a little rough on bumpy city streets."

While it does get driven to work occasionally, there is no doubt this is a showpiece. The custom wood bed has stainless steel chrome strips, and the paint job is an attraction in itself.

"The colors are the original Peterbilt Galaxy Silver, and the fenders are Black Lilac Pearl," says Kalina. "The dark purple really sets off the fenders."

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"Kids like it because it's small enough that it doesn't intimidate them," say Jim and David Polacek, who built this mini ferris wheel that stands 10 ft. high and rides on a trailer chassis. It has four seats with seat belts and holds up to 8 kids at a time.



Portable Mini Ferris Wheel

"Kids love it," says Jim Polacek, Phillips, Wis., who with son David built a mini ferris wheel for his grandkids.

The ferris wheel stands 10 ft. high and rides on a trailer chassis. It has four seats with seat belts and holds up to 8 people at a time. Painted orange with Allis Chalmers decals, the seats mount on an 8-ft. dia. wheel that originally held plastic natural gas pipe line. A solid steel tube serves as the axle. Power is provided by a 12 hp Briggs & Stratton engine which belt-drives the rear end off an old Allis Chalmers riding mower. The rear end belt-drives a variable speed friction transmission off a Dixon riding mower, which in turn belt-drives a roller chain system that results

in triple reduction. "Using this system I can make the ferris wheel go forward or backward, and precisely control the speed," says Polacek.

"We built it five years ago, and it took a lot of work. We started on Thanksgiving weekend and finished the following Easter. I took it four years ago to a 'Gathering of the Orange' annual show in Minnesota. People are always amazed at how small it is. Kids like it because it's small enough that it doesn't intimidate them."

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Powered "Lazy Boy" A Hit At Parades

"I call it the original couch potato. It's a lot of fun to ride in parades," says Tim Reisenauer, Kennewick, Wash., about the Lazy-Boy chair he mounted on the frame of an old electric wheelchair.

The Lazy-Boy chair is operated by the wheelchair's original controls. Reisenauer moved the wheelchair's steering and control arm out 9 in. and up 1 ft. to make it easily accessible to the driver.

At parades, Reisenauer has all the amenities a real couch potato could ever want. Metal baskets on both sides of the chair hold a soda drink cup, potato chip bag, etc. Another basket, behind the chair, contains a fake satellite dish and 6-packs of soda and beer. There's a portable TV in front of him, resting on a 6-in. high wooden pedestal mounted solidly to the Lazy-Boy's footrest. A color print of Scooby Doo and friends is glued onto the TV screen, making it look like the TV is on. A notebook computer sits in Reisenauer's lap.

There's an American flag on back of the Lazy-Boy, attached to the wheelchair's high/



"Everyone who sees it smiles," says Tim Reisenauer, about the Lazy-Boy chair he mounted on the frame of an electric wheelchair.

low range shift, and car license plates on both the front and rear.

"Everyone who sees it likes it, and a lot of people give me the 'thumbs up' at parades," says Reisenauer. "If I put the wheelchair in high gear, you have to walk at a fast pace to keep up with me."

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