

Section C

Wednesday, September 20, 2017 | The Silsbee Bee

Welcome to the 2017 Cruise 'n Silsbee

Cruise 'N Silsbee is fun times with a purpose

History of the event goes back to 1999

Cruise 'n Silsbee began its organization in 1999 with a sole purpose on its plate.

While the paper mill in Evadale had formed a charitable organization called Helping Hands, it was a perfect opportunity for Cruise 'N Silsbee (CNS) to contribute to its cause.

CNS wanted to ensure money donated was going to a proper cause without getting misused. And because Helping Hands was working on strict guidelines, the partnership was formed.

The first CNS event included "Old Time Drag Races" held at the Ben Bruce airstrip in Evadale.

The event became so popular through publicity that it drew over 5,000 spectators.

While some law enforcement

agencies were reluctant about the crowds that caused traffic jams, one officer was willing to help with no questions asked because he knew CNS was a part of Helping Hands.

Today, CNS is no longer affiliated with Helping Hands since 2008.

Since that time, CNS worked to become a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization while maintaining its purpose to help those in need.

With the growth of CNS, sponsors were needed to pay for the event, which couldn't be supported off of car entry fees alone.

CNS needed to pay for restroom facilities, trophies and awards, sound systems and DJ's, security, advertising and promotional items, and many other things to help the event run

smooth and safe.

Later, CNS found that sponsors wanted to see something for their efforts, such as donations, by way of advertising and other promotional endeavors.

The CNS committee utilizes its funds to begin the next show for the upcoming year, but it has been fortunate enough to continue distributing extra funds to those in need.

CNS will distribute those funds to families that have had life altering mishaps and illnesses within a five-county radius, particularly children.

The committee has made donations in the past to children's families where expenses were too great to bear.

CNS has also helped fund many community events that

help others.

Fire departments from three local towns have benefited from three local towns as well as Sils-

bee Police Department.

The Christian Care Center regularly receives a donation as does the much needed charity Meals

on Wheels of Beaumont, which provides food for seniors that can't get out.

See CRUISE on Page 6, SEC. 3



The Burn Out event at the Silsbee Cruise is always one of the most fun events to watch. It is the perfect opportunity for sensible adults to act like juveniles. See story on Page 5 of this edition.

Cruise activities to be centered at Kirby Memorial Stadium

The annual Cruise 'N Silsbee is Friday and Saturday, Sept. 22 and 23 at the Kirby Memorial Football Stadium, 1005 N. 7th, in Silsbee.

Kicking off the event is a pre-event concert on Friday night with the Tim Burge and The Reckoning.

Registration for the car show begins at 8 a.m. Saturday.

About 200 cars appeared at last year's event.

At 10 a.m., a Hula Hoop and Bubble Gum Blowing Contest will be held.

Judging for the event begins at 11 a.m. with more than 20 car and motorcycle classes. The classes include pre-1930, 1930s, 1940s, 1950s, 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, 2010 and up, for most cars.

For trucks there are two classes - pre-1980 and 1981 and up.

There are also two classes for Corvettes - 1953-1996 and 1997 to present.

There is also a class for muscle cars, Mustangs, imports, Jeeps, Rat Rod, motorcycles, 4x4, air suspension and all others.

The "Burn-out" Contest is at 2 p.m. at the old stadium.

The awards ceremony is scheduled for 3 p.m.

Booths include 105.3 FREE FM from Beaumont, a rock and blues FM station, Lipsense with Katie and Lindsay and Truck n' Dollz of Nederland.

In case you get hungry, there

will be food vendors from Southern Comfort Catering, Carter's Country Cooking, Rockin' Poppin' Kettle Corn, Kona Ice and Rudy's Kaboob.



The Ford-a-lac owned by Ronnie Herrera is one of the unique cars that will be shown at this year's Cruise 'N Silsbee event. See story inside this section.

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Doug Wright plans to show his 1972 GMC Jimmy and his 1966 Corvette at Cruise 'N Silsbee if he can find a way to drive both of the vehicles to the show. He is enjoying the good life after working for over 40 years for a drainage ditch company in Port Arthur.

Retired life with hot rods is better than dealing with storms

Doug Wright found the good life in North Hardin County

By Danny Reneau
publisher@silsbeebec.com

Doug Wright has his thoughts split in recent days between his passion for automobiles and the way that Hurricane Harvey has affected this area.

He spent more than 40 years working for Jefferson Drainage Ditch No. 7. He worked his way from a laborer to the assistant manager of the operation. At the end of his career, he was the assistant manager and the Emergency Management coordinator for the organization that has been the point of many complaints in the Port Arthur area.

He remembers that the organization has several rain gauges that register the amount of water that falls in the district's territory and in two places during the recent storm they recorded over 60 inches of rainfall.

Wright has been retired for four years but still stays in contact with the organization and its workers and says there is not much that could have been done. He says, "It is a mess."

He grew up in Louisiana and says he was always a country boy at heart so when he retired from the organization he started looking for an acreage. He looked everywhere from Hamshire to Buna before settling on a location in the north part of Hardin County on County Line Road.

Like most auto enthusiast his interest started when he was a young man. He remembers, "I had old cars because that was what I could afford."

His first love was a 1955 Chevrolet.

In his early years, he drove that type of cars for transportation. Later he restored them and now says he has had a spectrum of all type of automobiles except the really high-end cars.

Right now he has three automobiles that he has restored. He says it is hard to drive more than one to a show but he will have one at the Cruise



This 1966 Corvette Convertible is a thing of beauty. Wright recently traded a truck that he built for the Corvette. He says it was something he always wanted and is quite unique in several ways.

'N Silsbee.

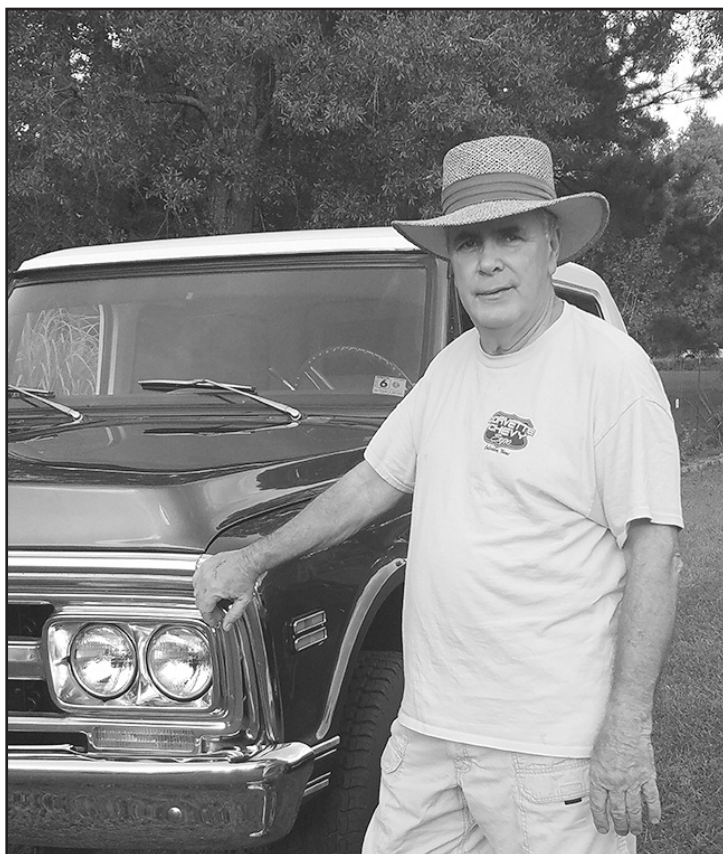
Right now, Wright has a 1966 Corvette Convertible, a 1972 GMC Jimmy and a 1968

Chevy Truck.

The Chevy Truck has a lot of personal sentiment associated with it. He and his

teenage son built the truck about 20 years ago. The young man drove it through high school but later he was killed in an accident.

Now it is his connection to his son and he says "I will al-



Doug's favorite vehicle is this 1972 GMC Jimmy that has won or placed in several auto shows including some big ones in Houston.

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See WRIGHT on PG. 6, SEC. 3



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Odom turns from a dreamer to a car enthusiast

By Danny Reneau
publisher@silsbeebec.com

Dewy Odom is a car enthusiast. He started working on cars when he was 18 years old and has been doing that for the past 48 years.

He recalls when he was a "kid," he was a dreamer.

"I had car pictures all over the walls," he said.

At age 17, Odom found a Ford Coupe and he bought it.

Since that time, he has been building cars.

"I'm not sure I ever finished one," he said jokingly.

He builds the car until he gets tired of it and then sells the car hoping to get his money back. Usually, Odom makes a little money but occasionally loses a little money.

He said he never tries to rip people off when he sells cars. He just tries to make a little money or break even.

Odom remembered one car that he got \$40,000 involved in before he got burned out and got rid of it.

He estimates he's had 30 cars in the last five years. Usually, he has two or three at a time.

Right now, he has a 1930 Model A Coupe that he will probably have at the Cruise "N Silsbee show. He also has a 1972 Chevrolet Super Sport that he might have there and has another vehicle that is in someone else's shop.

His description of his way of doing business is, "I like to say I relocate cars."

He said the coupe is the nearest to being finished. It has a new interior, a decent red paint job, and primer on the gray fenders. The vehicle has a lot of chrome on the motor and is very nice to look at.

Odom is a "jack-of-all-trades" but, master of none, who can do mechanical and electrical work. He was a

member of Local 195 for years before he retired about five years ago.

He said none of the cars he works on are originals. He likes to build street rods. A street rod is a car that you update to today's standards so that you can drive it down the road. He surmises I would not want to own a car that I could not drive 70 miles per hour down the road.

"You may take a Model A with a Model A front end and update it with disc brakes" (to make it a usable vehicle)," said Odom.

The two favorite vehicles he has owned were a 1969 Charger RT and a 1971 Cougar XR7. The XR7 was loaded with a 428-cubic-inch engine, a sunroof, and all the goodies.

In the old days, it was hard sometimes to find the parts that he needed to build a car. He would search through newspapers and junkyards looking for the parts he needed. That is no longer true. Now he can find most of the things he needs on Craig's list and there are even retail outlets available for some items.

Odom is quick to joke: "My wife supports me and my car habit."

He has a four-bay shop. "My wife thinks I need one more car to fill up my shop," he said.

Odom said building cars is his hobby.

"I don't hunt or fish and I view it like others would hunting and fishing," he said.

He may lose a little money on a car but hobbies cost money.

Odom recalls that others he went to school with spend money on partying.

"I spend my money on cars and it is addictive," he added.

He and his wife of 34 years, Cindy, have two sons and a daughter – all grown.



Photo by Danny Reneau/Silsbee Bee

This 1930 Model A Coupe is probably the favorite car that Dewy Odom has in his collection. He says he is not sure that he ever finished a car but he works with them until he tires of the project and moves on to the next one.



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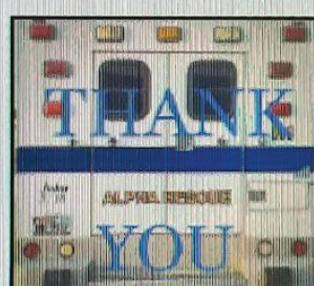
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Morgan has 1954 Chevy truck riding like a 'Cadillac'

By Dannie Oliveaux
editor@silsbeebec.com

Dennis Morgan likes finding old cars and trucks, fixes them up and sells them.

Recently, he finished a project that involved a 1954 Chevrolet 3100 series truck.

The project took countless hours, but the result is one unique truck.

It has a Chevrolet 355-cubic inch motor under the hood, a Ford II Mustang front end, rack-and-pinion steering and 350-turbo transmission.

"It runs pretty good," said Morgan. "And it rides like a Cadillac."

Morgan said he did all the work restoring the truck's body, but had help from friends with the red and black leather interior and painting designs and pinstripes on the body.

The truck has yellow flames painted on the front of the hood.

The truck also has an oak wood bed.



Photo by Dannie Oliveaux/Silsbee Bee

Dennis Morgan spent about a year fixing up an old rusted 1954 Chevrolet truck into the beauty it is today.

Morgan said he found the truck about two miles from his home in Vidor.

"The truck was out by itself in a field by an old barn," he said.

Morgan said that a family had bought the truck from a man in

Lufkin with plans of restoring the truck.

"After getting the truck, a week later the father passed away," he said. "The son parked

it by the barn and left it."

He said the truck was in "pretty rough" condition. "It didn't have much rust, just surface rust."

It took about a year to restore truck.

As far as finding parts for older trucks, Morgan said there are a lot of business and inter-

net site where truck parts can be found.

Morgan, who retired five years ago, said he has already restored and sold five automobiles.

"I build them and sell them," he said.

He also has a 1932 sedan that he takes to car shows.



Photo by Dannie Oliveaux/Silsbee Bee

The interior of the 1954 Chevrolet truck has red leather seats and door padding, along with a black dashboard and carpet.



Photo by Dannie Oliveaux/Silsbee Bee

Dennis Morgan has built an engine area in this 1954 Chevy Truck that is beautiful to look at. You can see it at the Cruise 'N Silsbee event.

Burn-out still popular at Cruise 'N Silsbee

Plans are to hold the burn-out at the 2017 Cruise N Silsbee event on the street next to the site at the westside of the old Kirby Memorial Football field.

The burn-out is scheduled to start promptly at 2 p.m. The event is free to enter.

The event is sponsored by Adam Smith at Modica Brothers and Steven Harrison of Biscamp Electric.

The site provides a great deal of safety for viewers and a very good spot to spin the tires.

The cars will set up on two

large medal sheets so that they will not damage the streets as the tires spin.

The new location will be convenient to people touring the cruise location on old school grounds.

They have put up a prize of \$500 and new tires for the win-

ner.

In addition to people who bring their cars from home, Smith is hoping to entice many of the exhibitors at the car show to participate in the event.

Those exhibitors will receive a gift picture of their vehicle doing the burnout which the

regular entries will not receive.

There is no charge for entries from either the public or the exhibitor sector.

One thing is sure – the event will produce a lot of noise, a lot of smoke and many many happy fans.

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CRUISE

Stable Spirit of Vidor also benefits, which is an organization that provides mental health services to people that may have experienced the effects of crime, crisis, trauma and many other issues.

The Humane Society of Southeast Texas has also been a recipient of donations from CNS.

CNS also gives out several scholarships to local high school seniors, as well as

helping out organizations such as Tiger School Box and Operation Graduation.

Private donations to families in need have been done in the past, and CNS vows to keep those donations private.

Cruise'n Silsbee is constantly moving throughout the year to keep the event promotions going for its one week-end of the year show.

But in the hearts of committee members, helping those in need continues to be a strong suit of the organization.

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WRIGHT

ways have it." He has had the 1966 Corvette for only about a year. He traded a 1936 Ford Street Rod for it. It is are that even though it has had a lot of owners he has all the paper work for it and all the numbers on the car match.

One guy had the car until 2004. Most of the work on this car was done by someone else but it was a car that he always wanted and he was fortunate to get to own one.

You can tell when he starts reminiscing about his auto building days many of them are special and when he talks about the 1972 GMC Jimmy you quickly come to know that it is special.

Wright remembers that when he was working in Port Arthur he was a member of the Gulf Coast Cruisers Car Club.

He says there was a guy there who had owned a body shop. It had a lot of good equipment in it. The guy even-



Photo by Danny Reneau/Silsbee Bee

Many of the car enthusiast have other crafty skills. When you visit Dewy Odom's home the first thing you run into is a pair of antique trucks. Then you seen many other crafty items.

From Section 3, Page 3

tually got into several other businesses and turned the body shop into a private garage to work on cars. A group of guys would meet there and work on their cars. At one time they rebuilt a 1948 school bus. He says we would go to shows and it was

He twice has entered Super Chevy Shows in Houston and where he competed against 4x4 utility vehicles, and people with customized Hummers and won both times. He says there is no dress up the chrome on the vehicle and he once asked the judges after a

show why it won.

They told him it won because it was exactly like the manufacturer built it.

He did not say which car he would have at the show but is looking forward to participating.



Photo by Dannie Oliveaux/Silsbee Bee

Tommy Bohler's orange and black 1968 Plymouth Roadrunner is one of the many muscle cars that will appear at this week's car show.

hot so we built the bus. That had to seat 12 to 14 people. It had a generator and an air conditioner to use while you were at the event and when traveling down the road it used the automotive air conditioner system.

It was a club project. It had a 454 Chevrolet engine and a heavy duty front end off one-ton dually crew cab. You could drive it down the road 70 miles per hour and one time the group went to a show in Oklahoma City and drove it all the way.

Eventually, the group got old and split up. Some of the individuals like himself are still involved in the hobby.

Wright finally got around to talking about the 1972 GMC Jimmy. This car has been to shows all over the country.

He took it two Autorama at the Brown Convention Center and it won a class. It is a four-wheel drive vehicle that is restored exactly like it came off the showroom floor. It won Best of Show at the Autorama.

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Double pleasure for Bohler with his '56 Fairlane and '68 Roadrunner

By Dannie Oliveaux
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Tommy Bohler will show two of his classic automobiles during the 19th annual Cruise 'N Silsbee car show on Saturday at Kirby Memorial Football Field.

Bohler, a Silsbee native, has a 1956 Ford Fairlane Victoria and 1968 Plymouth Roadrunner.

He has owned the Fairlane for about four years.

"In it's day, this was the car," said Bohler. "Everybody wanted one, if they had the money."

Bohler's Fairlane is a two-tone, two-door hard top coupe which consist of blue and white. The interior is also the same colors.

The Fairlane features an 8-cylinder 302-cubic inch motor, power steering, power breaks, disc brakes, automatic



Photo by Dannie Oliveaux/Silsbee Bee

Tommy Bohler stands aside his 1956 Ford Fairlane Victoria which will be one of the many automobiles at the Cruise 'N Silsbee.



Photo by Dannie Oliveaux/Silsbee Bee

Bohler's 1968 Roadrunners has a 383-cubic inch motor under the hood. This is one of the many muscle cars that can be seen at the car show this week.

overdrive transmission and air conditioning.

"It's nice for cruising," he said. "The drive train is newer and you can cruise down the highway 70 miles an hour, all day."

Bohler said only the car's exterior is original, but the interior was redone to as close as the original.

"Basically, it was like it is now," he said. "I've done some work on it, but not enough to take any credit for."

Bohler said he drives the Fairlane about 3-4 times a week.

"It's a nice drive," he said.

The Fairlane (1955-57) was named for Henry Ford's Dearborn estate and debuted alongside the original Thunderbird in 1955. Only 603 people bought the 1956 model.

"You see a lot of 1955, 1956 and 1957 Chevrolets, but you don't see that many Fords," he noted. "These are pretty rare."

When he found the car, Bohler fell in love with it.

"I love this car," he said. "When I saw it, I just had to have it. I went and got it, and I haven't regret it."

He recalls the car from his younger days.

"When you get older, you try to relive your youth, I guess," Bohler said. "When I was a kid I always wanted a Model A with the rumble seat in the back. I had one for about 20 years and sold it to a friend of mine. And I always wanted a Ford like this."

Bohler said he's a "Chevrolet" person, but he likes the Ford Fairlane.

He said the car weighs about 3,400 pounds.

"It's not a race car, but a cruiser," said Bohler. "But it will get up and go." Real smooth and shifts real nice."

Bohler purchased his 1968 Roadrunner sedan a few months ago in Dallas. The body is orange with black racing stripes.

"I wanted an orange one or green one," he noted. "It was the first year the Roadrunner came out."

The car has a 383-cubic inch, 8-cylinder motor, 727-transmission with positive traction on the rear. It has power steering, but no air conditioner.

"I bought it from a man that

had a trucking company and it was set up for racing," he said. "It's also a good driver and it runs real smooth. It is fun to drive."

He said the car was turned into a quarter-mile racer with a big overhead cam.

"It has a 3-speed automatic with a reverse valve body on it, to jerk it back into forward."

"When you lay back in the seat, you just jerk it back," said

Bohler. "It's got a hunk of motor in it."

He said lots of people come up to him and ask to take photographs of both of his classic vehicles.

"Every body comes over and looks at it. That's all you want," Bohler said. "That is the whole purpose of this is too keep people interested in the old cars."

Bohler said the car weighs about 3,000 pounds.



Photo by Dannie Oliveaux/Silsbee Bee

The interior of the 1956 Ford Fairlane Victoria is blue leather with white trim.

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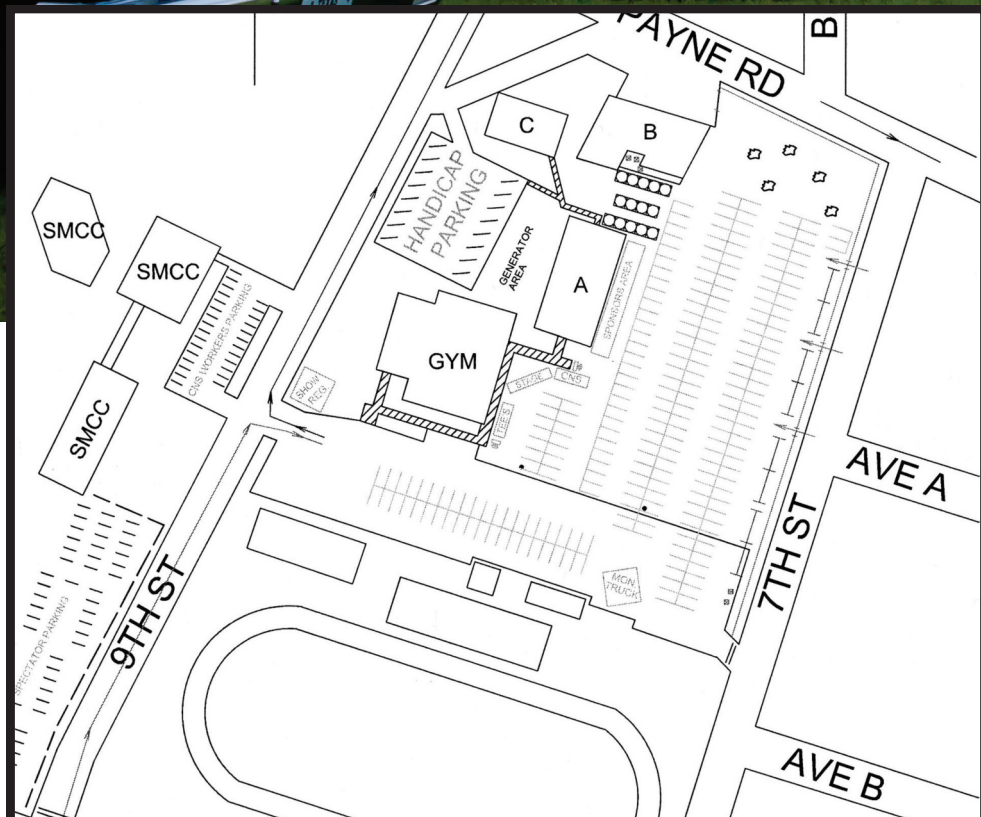
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**10 am - Hula Hoop/Bubble Gum
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11:00 am - Judging Begins
Noon - Registration Closes
2 pm - Burn-out Contest
3 pm - Awards Ceremony
4 pm - Cruise 'N Silsbee

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This year we have waived the entry fee and are only asking for Cash donations to enter vehicle in show.
Donations will help fund Hurricane Harvey Relief and Jay Hinkie Memorial Scholarship.

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