

Villager Fine Tunes the Race Car of His Dreams

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By Maddie Cutler



Hal Lynch, of the Village of Virginia Trace, stands proudly next to his 1970 AMC AMX. Lynch inherited the AMX from his uncle who always wanted to rebuild the car into a high performance racer. Lynch did just that and even had the engine signed by race car driver Bobby Allison. Photos by George Horsford | Daily Sun

Growing up, Hal Lynch spent time in his uncle Don's garage, watching him work on cars and eventually helping him with rebuild projects.

When his uncle died in 1984, Lynch inherited a 1970 American Motors AMX. His uncle always wanted to rebuild the car into a high-performance road car that could compete against other road cars like Ferrari.

"I knew exactly what to do with it because of conversations with my uncle," Lynch said. "I started tracking down parts, and I built the car with a lot of authentic parts from that era."

AMC built the AMX between 1968 and 1970. In 1970, they built 4,000 cars. Overall, just about 20,000 AMX cars in total were built during the years of production.

The standard for building a road car in the 1980s was set by the Trans Am racing series, so Lynch started collecting Trans Am road racing parts from cars from the early '70s. The '70s was also the last decade in which race cars were built off production cars and chassis before the industry pivoted to custom builds.

Lynch, of the Village of Virginia Trace, made sure to incorporate as many of the parts from the road racing series while still keeping it street legal.

"I put a NASCAR racing engine in, a dry sump oiling system to maintain oil pressure during turning, road racing brakes and a roll cage," Lynch said. "It also has a fuel cell, safety harnesses and an on-board fire system."

Lynch left things like all the interior lining, the factory lights and turn signals and other parts that are removed from race cars.

Because race cars travel faster with less weight, things like lights are removed to make them lighter; this makes them illegal to drive on streets, though.



"There is almost everything you need in this car to make it a race car," Lynch said. "The biggest difference is just that there is probably 500 pounds more in my car than a regular race car."

Lynch is a member of The Villages Classic Automobile Club and The Villages Motor Racing Fan Club, and he brings his car to Cruise Ins and car shows to support both clubs.

It's long been a dream of Lynch's to bring the AMX to a track and dial it in to the exact performance he wants from it. In the nearly 40 years he's owned the car, moving around the country, he's taken it to several tracks but has never had the time to make the fine-tuned adjustments needed to make it perfect.

Now that he is retired, Lynch has started making plans to take the AMX out for track days and run laps so he can take notes on things like handling, braking and speed.

"Then I can bring it back to my garage and adjust the brakes, shocks or maybe get different tires in order to get the best time on the track," he said. "I'm finally learning how to drive and fine tune my cars for the track, and I'm excited about it."