

Adirondack A's "Youth Program" The Restoration of 1929 AA Truck from Hank Ashton, Region Youth Program Director and Marv Livingston, Region President



What I'm about to describe is the Adirondack Model A Ford Club's third endeavor in our youth program. It is our third build but our first full restoration. The vehicle is a late 1929 Model AA Ford truck, flatbed with stake bed sides, and dual wheels. A late truck in the build year is a special breed. Henry Ford decided to mix 1929 and 1930 parts, added a heavy front axle, a four speed transmission, with the thought of turning the AA into a real truck, capable of handling the abuse. Even the wheels were changed.

We acquired the truck through a silent bid auction and took possession of our beauty in December 2012. It sat in storage at our club president Marv Livingston's property all winter. We formed a small group to evaluate the truck before we presented it to our youth group. We didn't want any surprises. Good thinking as it worked out. We took pictures from every angle including underneath. We each took a portion of the truck to evaluate. We found broken wheel studs, worn out brakes, bent fenders, right and left hand threads on the wheel studs, and a very stubborn right rear wheel hub. The hub eventually had to be cut off. The engine roared into life and the truck moved under its own power. Now all we had to do was put our youths and mentors together.

Well, we finally got everyone together and we had seventeen youths, including three girls. The first morning was dedicated to meeting, signing the proper paperwork, meeting with the parents, explaining what we expect and don't expect, and safety. We lost two boys within the first month, because of a lack of interest in the program.

We gave out hearing protection, eye protection, and gloves to each participant. A notebook with hand outs was next. They have their names on the bag that we also gave them to keep their safety items in. We explained that we would provide lunch and drinks at every build. We have had chili, hot dogs, goulash, salads, pizza, and home baked cookies. No complaints yet. We formed them into three teams and then sometimes we pick a member from one of the teams for a special detail or job. Each team gets to

encounter a section of the truck to restore. Each team also has to attend any classes that we have i.e., generators, how they turn mechanical energy into electrical energy, and then how to disassemble, repair, and re-assemble the generator. Math skills are utilized by making sure the wheelbase is correct for our model of truck, if the frame was square, size of rims, size of nuts and bolts, wrenches and sockets, etc. Science knowledge was also tested by making a rust fighter to loosen rusty bolts and nuts, using acetone and transmission fluid, oils, greases, paints, paint strippers, etc.

They are also trained in using hand tools, power tools, torches, welding equipment, air compressors, paint brushes, and sand paper. They must also keep track of their tools, clean them before they are placed back in the toolbox, and also clean the work area before we leave.

We disassembled the truck, taking pictures, measurements, and bagging and tagging all loose parts. One group took the flatbed off and took it apart. One group removed the cab and fenders. The other group removed the engine and running gear. They formed a cohesive group and accomplished their goals, sometimes becoming late for lunch. It was important to them and was rewarding for them to reach a goal they set for themselves. Soon, we had what was previously a truck, was now a pile of parts. They took to cleaning and disassembling each part. The engine, transmission and rear end were rebuilt. The flatbed was found to be made of southern yellow pine and wasn't restorable. New southern yellow pine was located, sized, cut, scored, and hand fitted into place. The flatbed frame was tweaked and had a piece missing. The piece was cut from stock and welded in. The frame was straightened. The yellow pine was sealed and stained. The side boards were planed until flat, stained, and varnished. The pine was then varnished and all the hardware was stripped and painted black. The cab was stripped and primed. The old roof was too far gone and was replaced. The fenders were stripped, repaired, primed and painted.



The doors were fixed with repair panels. The cab floor was replaced and welded in. The wooden floorboards were replaced. The cab, fenders, flatbed, running gear, doors are all back on the truck's frame. Electrical wires have been traced and run. The hood is done and has to be fitted. The door panels have been made and need to be fine tuned before they are covered in vinyl. The glass in the doors has been replaced and the windshield needs to be reinstalled. Two of the six wheels have been painted and are ready for the new tires. The bumper is done and has to be installed. Lights are all painted and ready to be replaced. We have the top kit and vinyl for the seats, door panels, and kick panels. We are 95% there and the tedious features of a restoration are beginning.

Here are some observations from a mentor and program director. I turned on an electrical tool and air powered tool and you would



AA Truck Youth Team

Andrew Schnitzer (13), Bridgit Bruen (16), Charlie McCormick (14), Cody Belden (12), Jack Glogowski (17), Josh Parker (14), Kyasia Brant (13), Kyle Baxendale (18), Michael Hawron (14), Morgan Snyder (15), Stephen Gnat (15), Tomas Baxendale, Tyler Ruhle (17), Noah Chaskin (14), Billy Smith (13), Dylan Craig (15),

Adirondack A's Mentors: **Team Leaders:** President: Marv Livingston; Youth Program Director: Hank Ashton; Chassis: Joe Farina; Engine: Jim Barody; Wood: Gene Giuliano; Electrical: Bob Hatt; Sheet Metal: Tony Cavotta; Bill VanDorn, Bob Nevin, Dick Allen, Dick Andrews, Dick Noonan, Gary Quesnel, Jo Giuliano, Joe Pollard, Mark Belden, Robin Howes, Ross Sangster, Sean Gnat, Woody Sloat. Engine machining and bearing reabbbiting done by club member Al Clarke, Go Devil Garage, East Schodack, NY

to ear. Because of the heavy use of lubricants in the rebuilding of the engine it also created a great cloud of smoke that caught their attention and made them giggle.

They ask questions of us and are proud to show their parents what they have done each work session. They now realize that they can accomplish anything they put their mind too and with the proper training, can do.

Flexibility has become a factor in our program.

We attempt to set guidelines for each of our sessions and find that each group is different. Some are faster than others so we add tasks to place our goal further along. If they are slower in forming their teams and obtaining their goals, the sessions don't suffer because we have the built in flexibility. We are continually learning ourselves and have changed up our thoughts on timing and training. Example: after teardown, we should start the bodywork sessions immediately and don't wait. It throws our timing off because when blasted free of old paint we found more problems than we anticipated. We also want to teach every member of the program about engines, transmissions, body, painting, welding, etc. Time constraints hold us back as well as spare engines, body parts, and professional trainers. Nothing happens over night and we will forge ahead with our program making it fun and rewarding. Streamlining our program is always ongoing. We have knocked off some rough edges but there is always room for advancement.

have thought we were handing them a snake. They recoiled and we found that they had never seen, heard, or handled anything like that. Safe handling and use of the tools were explained. Gas torch

was another item. They were afraid of fire. We were three build days into our restoration and we found that when we need a torch, the girls would push the boys out of the way to use it. Our girls also liked the belt sander and air powered disc sanders.

An engine is pretty docile and cold made up of bits and pieces, but, when fired up without a muffler, their eyes lit up and smiles were ear