

Small Town Cruisers of Tulare Have a Big Heart

*By Nelda Ray
aka Mrs. David Turney*

It all started back in 1991 when Dennis Picanso's love of old cars won him accolades for a 1991 Corvette and Best of Show for a 1940 Ford pickup owned by Larry Parks, then in 1999 Dennis entered Mike Shannon's 1956 Chevy and it won first place in the Volney Brown Car Show. Dennis knew he was onto something sweet as he made the rounds of the car show circuit.

Eight years ago in Dennis's living room a small group of car lovers got together and formed the Small Town Cruisers of Tulare County, but this was no ordinary car club. One of the unique aspects of this club was the inclusion of women, wives and lady friends, of the guys interested in cars. Those were some savvy men. Rather than locking themselves away in the proverbial garage with the boys (well, they of course still do that!), they incorporated the ladies so the gals had a vested interest in the goings on of the club, which, naturally, caused the women to actually be supportive of their men's love of cars. (Who'd-a-think we gals were capable!) Seriously, it was a love of family and cars that caused the club

founders to structure the club in such a way. Sweethearts and car lovers themselves Judy Williams, treasurer, and Shirley O'Neal, secretary, have held those positions since the inception of the club.

Dennis Picanso and Louie Lermos are past presidents and Charlie Howard is the current president.

The Small Town Cruisers is a club of camaraderie and trust. The club's motto is: If you can go, go! At this year's Kingsburg car show the club entered 24 vehicles and all parked together. Yet the motto has another meaning: if you can make the shows, that's great; if not, that's okay.

The club also has a big heart for charities. Because of loyal community support the club is able to donate funds to entities such as the Miracle League, Tulare District Breast Cancer March, Roush Burn Victims of Tulare, Tulare County Hospice and this year the club is focusing on the Tulare County Fire Department for the purchase of Jaws of Life. All of the charities supported by the club are within the County of Tulare, so the community benefits from its own charitable heart.

The club meets faithfully at Aero Dogs, 240 N. "L" Street, Tulare. Member-ship is only \$5 per lifetime with a pre-1975 year or older vehicle. Business meetings are the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Cruise nights are held the second Saturday of the months March through October and begin at 5 pm. Children under 12 receive free raffle tickets with the drawing at 8 pm (parents, don't even think about living early 'cause those kids will not budge and be deprived of their potential winnings).

ANNUAL CAR SHOW will be held on SEPTEMBER 12TH this year. The ladies will be the judges for automobile interiors. These gals have an eye for beauty; being beauties themselves they know what to look for so shine 'em up! Come on down to the Small Town Cruisers!

HAPPY

ANNIVERSARY!!!

Couple Cruise to Wedding

Tulare - Fred and Judy Williams enjoy their time with their Small Town Cruisers gatherings so it just seemed natural to hold their wedding in front of their fellow cruisers – at a cruising event. The couple, which has been together 22 years, tied the knot at the July Cruising Night event at Aero Dogs. "We've been together 22 years and we've never made it legal," said Judy. "It just never seemed like we found the time." On July 12, they found the time. Surrounded by family, friends and fellow cruisers, they exchanged vows. "It was fun," said Judy. The couple decided to wear pink for their wedding. Judy explained they did that in honor of breast cancer awareness, saying that cause is important to both of them.

Also, because they have been together so long, she said they did not want gifts. So, anyone wanting to could donate money to the pediatric ward at Tulare District Hospital. More than \$250 was collected.

The couple then drove off in their restored 1949 Chevy Business Coupe.

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