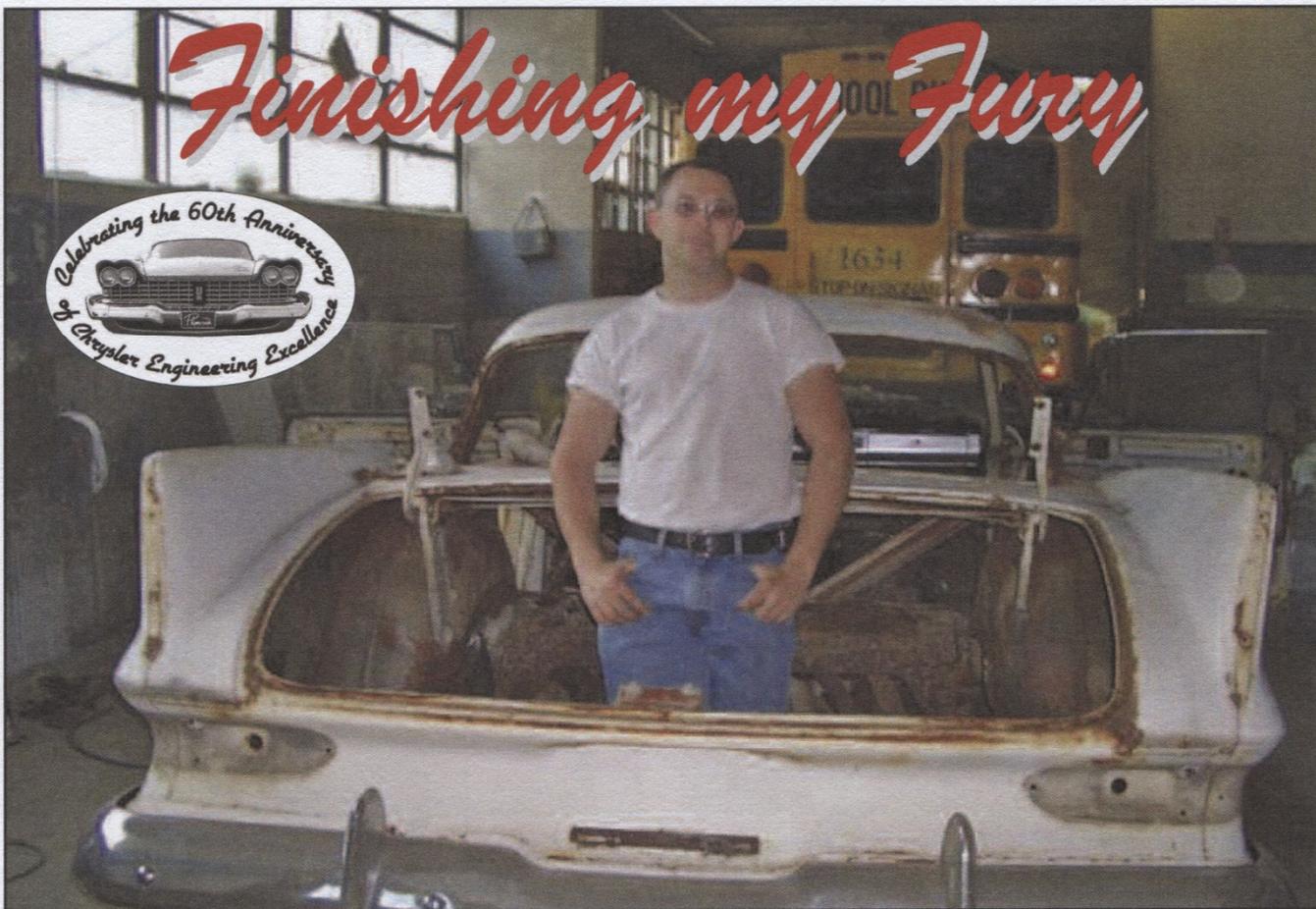


Finishing my Fury



by Frank Worsham
Baltimore, Maryland

My love affair with cars began when I was ten. My father had taken me to the Street Cars of Desire car show at the Maryland State Fairgrounds. A plethora of large engines, chrome, and beautiful paint jobs was on display throughout the complex, but one feature always caught my eye: tailfins. I was enamored with them; I connected with them and the era they represented. I wanted a fin car.

A co-worker of my father's had a '59 Galaxie—nice car, but

it didn't strike me as "the one." I was then vectored by the media: '57 Chevys were the hot ticket—*good luck!*...unaffordable for my dad's blue-collar budget. A '56 Buick four-door hardtop came into play a year later. The owner wouldn't budge on the price. Rightfully so, as it had a rebuilt engine, transmission and brakes, plus factory air conditioning and power steering, seat and brakes—an unusually well-optioned low-line Buick, never to be mine.

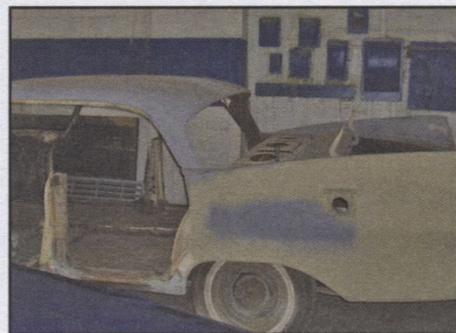
One day we rented a movie, *Christine*. That was the car, and the search began. Just like '57 Chevys, the '58 Plymouth was out of the budget. *Oh well, maybe someday.*

One day in October, 1994, a local Mopar racer and co-worker of my father's, Jack D'Angelo, found an ad for a '59 Fury. I figured, "Why not look at it?" It was love at first sight. It had "Christine" colors and interior, the owner even called it *Christine*. He said it was ninety percent done. For a naive and uneducated teenager, it seemed ready to go. The saying, "If I knew then what I do now," came into play.

My father purchased the car for me. We discovered it needed everything mechanical. Slowly but surely, the engine and brakes were rebuilt on a small budget. Several lawns were cut and all odd jobs were taken. Dad worked overtime to help as much as he could.

A '57 Fury intake manifold was located at Chrysler Carlisle and installed





Roof repair

Roof and quarter panel repair

during the rebuild with a custom Racer Brown cam. Low-restriction mufflers were installed. The first time I heard her run, I was in adrenaline heaven. She sounded mean—"Mean Christine."

The bodywork started to fade, and a decision to repaint was made. We went from one shop to another. All promised good results but always failed to deliver—flat rate work always took priority. Finally, a body shop was found. The owner was a local Mopar nut who had two AAR 'Cudas he had restored for his personal collection. This had to be the right guy to paint my car—unfortunately, not.

Years later with many promises broken, no progress had been made. My dream of driving my '59 to the high school prom never happened.

I joined the workforce in retail. Years passed; I worked at Radio Shack with no direction in life. Mostly, I was focusing on acquiring parts for the car and dreaming of getting it on the road.

In 2003, I had come to the conclusion retail wasn't my path in life. Pulling in more income on my commissioned sales pay check than most managers earned, proved it. My best friend had a similar feeling. He was working as apprentice mechanic at the local Dodge dealership. He had ended up joining the Maryland Air Guard. When he returned from basic training, he told me of his enjoyment of military life. I thought I would check it out; what could it hurt? I spoke with a recruiter the following week and joined the same day. I was assigned to an A-10 Avionics shop. That fit my other interest: electronics.

Electronics had been an interest of mine from a very young age. My father had purchased a radio kit from Radio Shack when I was seven. This was due to my being sick at home, recovering from being hospitalized from pneumonia. I had read books on science and motors previously, and I was intrigued with making my own radio. Several project kits, purchased test equipment, antique radios and attending a trade high school where electronic engineering was instructed proved I had a knack for building, repairing and modifying all things electronic, especially antique car radios. I repaired and modified a few radios for members of the Forward Look Network. One of the founding members, Dave Stragand, even made up magnets to promote my work.

I excelled at my military life. I enjoyed the structure, comradery and fitness demands of my new career. I stayed in my original shop until 2011 when I moved to Quality Assurance which, at the time, was a highly sought-after and difficult-to-obtain position. During that time I also retrained to be a Crew Chief as well as an ejection seat technician. In 2015, I had an incredible opportunity to become what only a handful of people can claim to be in their military careers. I was selected for a competitive four-year tour, becoming the Career Field and Functional Manager for all things Avionics in the Air National Guard. It was a whirlwind of phone calls, emails, travel and issues, but all of my knowledge and experience seemed to make me a perfect match. The tour ended and I returned to my home unit to become the superintendent of the very shop I began with in 2003. In between those years, I man-

Forward Look Frank

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I can also add a line-in jack and power supply so that you can use any portable CD or MP3 player.

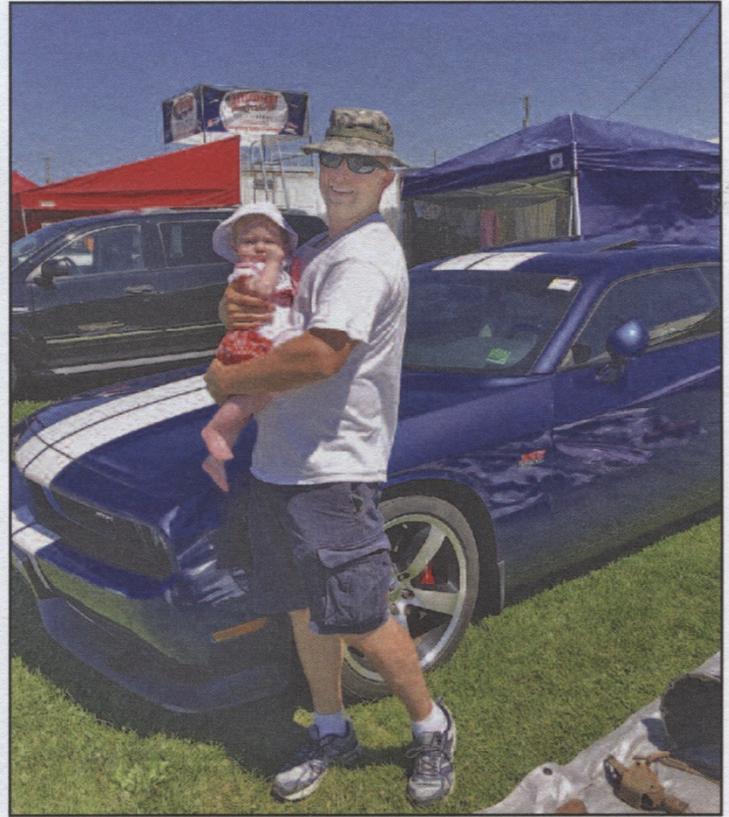
Email FWDLKFJW@verizon.net for more info.

Radio Repair, Restoration and CD Conversions

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With Grace and the Challenger

aged to deploy to Iraq once and Afghanistan three times, performing various roles. Not the nicest places to visit by far, especially with a few close calls, but I was fortunate to never have received a combat injury. Others were not so fortunate—I consider myself blessed.

My knowledge of Mopar has vastly improved since that purchase of a '59 Fury in 1994. Collecting, poring over and memorizing service, owner, parts, crash and technical service bulletins greatly enhanced my knowledge over the years. Knowing Mopar gurus and making friends with the likes of Jack D'Angelo, Jim Dowell (Racer Brown owner), Bill Beansach, Chris Suminski, Gary Pavlovich, Don Hudson, Burke Brown, Dick Young, Dave Stragand, Matthew Keij, Dan Morton and Jeff and Jessica Nichols have made the knowledge pool even greater as we share our wealth of experience and knowledge gained over the years.

I feel blessed—and sometimes overwhelmed—to have all

of the parts, information, accessories and knowledge that I do. Hopefully, in time, I will be able to finish my '59 Fury (I'm building one out of two, now), my '65 Valiant 200 and my '57 D-100 pickup. Time will tell.

Right now I am focused on finishing up my house so I can sell it and get a larger place for my family (and maybe my cars too!).

After a failed marriage in 2012, I found new love with my second wife, Kristen. We were blessed last November with our firstborn, Grace, two months before I deployed. It was difficult for us both, but friends and family made it work. We are hoping to have another in the near future. Again, time will tell.

For now, I will keep progressing at home and work, keep learning and keep supporting and restoring Mopar. Until the antiques are ready, my 2011 SRT Challenger and 2014 Avenger R/T will keep the Mopar fire alive.

PB

