

WinkWorld March 2009

Notes from the Real World: Cars

I hate to think that my ~real world~ has come to a story about cars, but apparently, there is a bit of truth to this. A goal for writers is to simply tell the truth, so...

'Lil Red Chile and 'Lil Teal Seal

Some of you know the *'Lil Red Chile* which has lots of miles from its commute between CA and SD for 7 years, so I bought the *'Lil Teal Seal*, which has very few miles. I will drive it next week, when I go to TESOL in Denver and on to CA, with a stop in Winnemucca to meet up with the beautiful boys of Boise.



'Lil Lime Green Chevette

However, those of you who have known us longer may remember another little car from the Yankton days. At the time, we had an old 4-door Chevy tan sedan, which was not working well, so I took it to the dealer to be fixed. In the driveway of the dealership, the car just quit-would not go frontwards, nor backwards, and I bought the gorgeous 'Lil Lime Green 1976 Chevette, which had caught my eye in the lot. At that time, I had no idea what a transmission was and certainly it was at a time when a "good wife" did not just go out and buy a new car. Wink learned when he saw me later driving down the street with Dawn and Bo in the backseat. One problem, the car was so small that Wink could not hold his head up straight. However, the 'Lil Lime Green Chevette went on to have a great life.



Timeline of 'Lil Lime Green 1976 Chevette 1976 to 1985 - The kids and I used it to go back and forth on the 25 mile dirt road from Cascabel to Benson everyday to school. In addition, every teeny-bopper in the area learned to drive in this car out on the ranch. We can only hope we don't learn all of those stories.

1982 - "It floats. It perches," Dawn recalls learning while in high school. It seems she was driving home a wee bit too fast on the gravel road after a dance, and hit loose gravel and did a complete 180 degrees before the Chevette landed, er "perched" safely in the middle of a large mesquite tree. She ran the rest of the way home in the dark, while trying to watch for cows, snakes, and javelina. I very well remember that night when she came running into the bedroom to wake us. Another time she learned that "it floats," when she tried to cross a wash running hard after a desert monsoon rain; she floated down Broadway in Tucson for a city block before feeling the tires hit dry ground again.

1986-1991 - The Chevette went to UC Davis with Dawn.

1987 - The 'Lil Lime Green Chevette went to Bo at Davis Union High school and transformed itself and its name. Or, as Bo now tells is:

- 1) E-brake 360's were, in fact, possible but only on gravel roads.
- 2) Felts, my friend, and I could change a flat tire in under 8 minutes, if needed.
- 3) It was the easiest car to find in a crowded, Sacramento parking lot.
- 4) Perhaps entering into the 'Sport/Customized' category of the DHS Car Show was aiming a bit high.
- 5) Plaid seat covers do not attract high schools girls, outside of Davis.
- 6) An abnormally large rock, hidden under 18" of muddy water, will dislodge a radiator from the body.
- 7) People would be telling stories of the Turbo Turtle 20 years later.

1988-1990 - Turbo Turtle went back to Dawn who took it with her to San Francisco. The hills of San Francisco magazineusa.com/us/San_Francisco_Hills offered new challenges, and Lombard St. [en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lombard_Street_\(San_Francisco\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lombard_Street_(San_Francisco)) was great fun.

1991-1994 - I have no idea where the Chevette was, but it somehow came back to me in Turlock in 1994.

1994 - I convinced Wink to tow it to SD, so I could save it for the grandkids to learn to drive on the prairies. That persuasive speech was some of my best work.

1995-2008 The Chevette sat on the prairies without use. Rodents moved in and set up residence.

2008 - One fine day last week, Cousin Zane and I got the Chevette on the flatbed of a trailer by using the tractor, some chains, a come-along, and a bit of ingenuity. I'll spare you the details of cleaning out the inside of the car, but I did cover my eyes and nose. Incidentally, the bunny did not go to town. The last word from the auto repair shop is that the grands may be driving on the prairies soon.



Stay tuned. Of all the WinkWorld readers, there are probably only 10 of you who knew the Chevette. That one's for you.

Prairie Pedagogy

As I write this (3.11.09), it is -18 degrees. Winter is beginning to lose its charm. Last month, we had floods in front of the house, www.joanwink.com/newsletter/2009/news0209.pdf and today the bitterly cold weather is so hard on animals, machinery, and people. I need to run to Howes today to mail some letters, and I'm hoping my new 'Lil Teal Seal won't fail me. Our friend, Representative Wink, is missing the fun on the ranch, as he is busy in the legislative session, where they are making decisions regarding (a) Seat belts: Yes or No?; (b) Smoking: Yes or No?; (c) Guns: Yes or No?