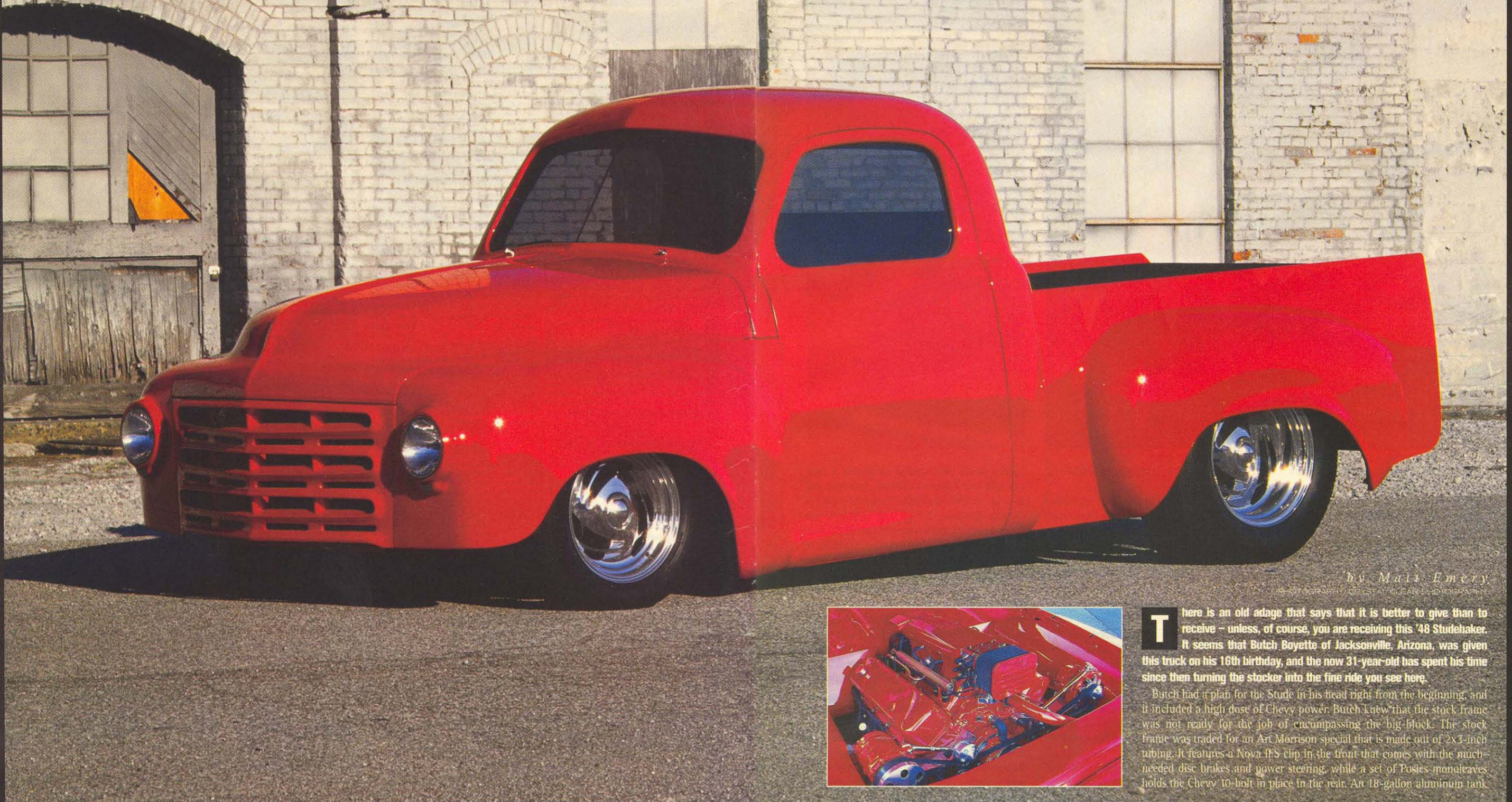


# Big Boy's Toy

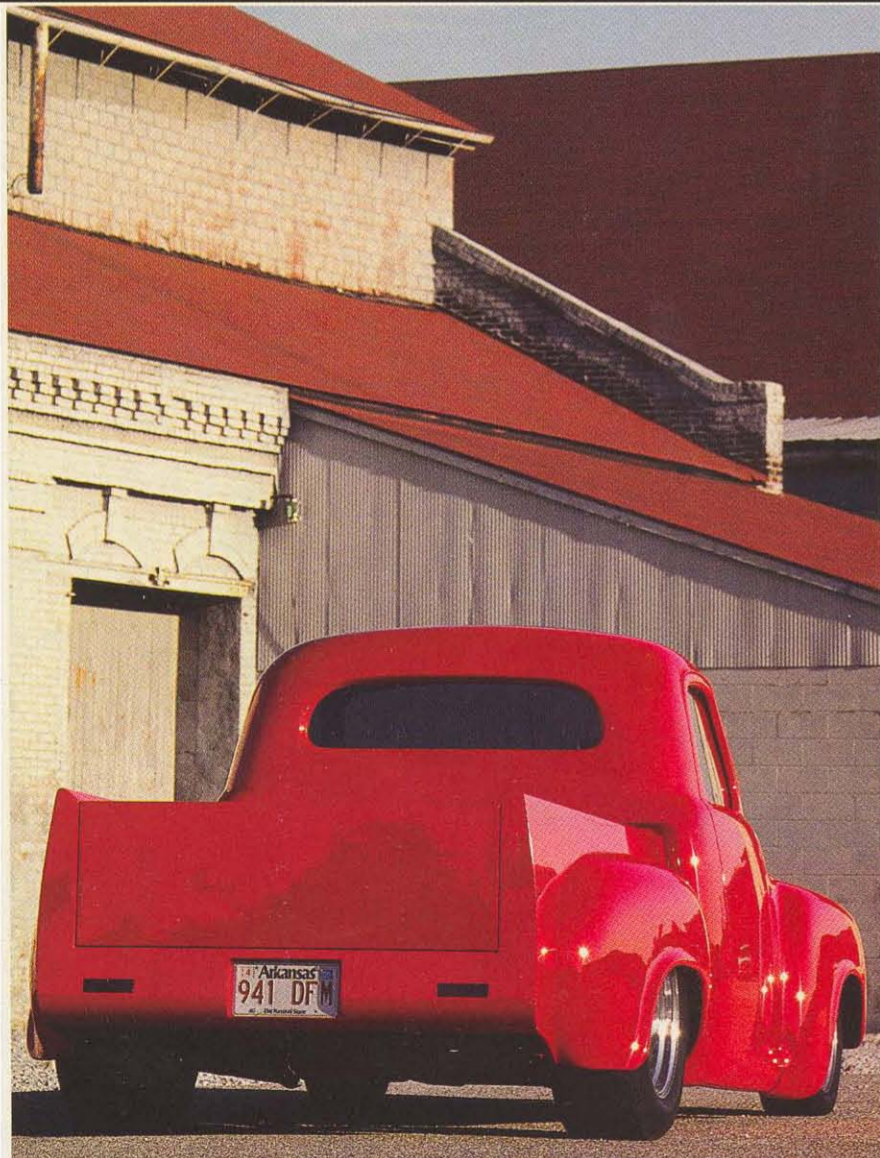
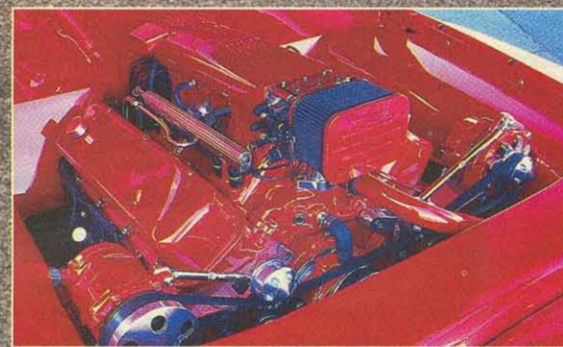
It Was a Very Happy Birthday



by Matt Emery

**T**here is an old adage that says that it is better to give than to receive – unless, of course, you are receiving this '48 Studebaker. It seems that Butch Boyette of Jacksonville, Arizona, was given this truck on his 16th birthday, and the now 31-year-old has spent his time since then turning the stocker into the fine ride you see here.

Butch had a plan for the Stude in his head right from the beginning, and it included a high dose of Chevy power. Butch knew that the stock frame was not ready for the job of encompassing the big-block. The stock frame was traded for an Art Morrison special that is made out of 2x3-inch tubing. It features a Nova IRS clip in the front that comes with the much-needed disc brakes and power steering, while a set of Posies monoleafs holds the Chevy 10-bolt in place in the rear. An 18-gallon aluminum tank



was installed between the framersails to provide enough fuel to the thirsty mill.

And it requires a lot of fuel. Beginning with a 396, Butch had Cabot Automotive in Cabot, Arkansas, punch it out so that it now displaces 402 ci. With the machining done, Butch put in all the good stuff, in the form of 10.25:1 Speed Pro slugs with SP rings. Clevis bearings are in place, as is a Melling high-volume oil pump to keep them slippery. A Cam Dynamics cam has a whopping 512 lift, and the Chevy heads were cut with a three-angled valve grind. A Street and Performance TPI unit feeds the fuel to the engine, with K&N providing the clean air. Sparking the beast is a GM HEI unit with Taylor wires that provide the path to the plugs.

Dale Wolford, also of Cabot, has modified a Chevy Turbo 350 tranny to handle the horses

put out by the engine. A custom driveshaft was also installed.

While the sheetmetal of the Stude may have come from the factory, Butch did a lot of work to the metal before the PPG Performance Red paint was applied by Robert Rolling of Little Rock, Arkansas. He began by suiciding the doors before shaving the door handles and the emblems. The driprails were molded and the cab seams were filled and smoothed. The leading edges of the hood were modified, and panels were fitted to the underneath of the hood. The bed was shortened 5 inches, a roll pan was fit, and the tailgate was smoothed. The bedcover was the work of Butch and was covered by Jim Sherman.

If a former Stude factory worker would have a hard time determining all the changes to the exterior, he probably wouldn't recognize the

interior at all. Butch began by having a long talk with Paul Atkins of Cullman, Alabama, and the pair decided that leather is good. A pair of Chrysler Concord seats got the nod and was covered with the tan leather that covers the door panels as well as the headliner and the dash. A full complement of Dakota Digital gauges were installed along with an AM/FM/CD unit that pumps its sound out from 10 – count 'em, 10 – speakers. Specialty Power Windows provided the mechanicals that operate the one-piece glass as well as the windshield wipers. The cold air that the Vintage Air unit pumps out comes into the cab via a set of hidden vents. Speaking of hidden, the electrical wiring of the Ron Francis system was installed by Butch.

This may have been a present at first, but this truck has not been free for Boyette. That is not to say that the price hasn't been worth it to Butch, though – the Stude has racked up an impressive list of trophies, not the least of which was a coveted *Classic Trucks* Top Five award at the 1999 Goodguys Lone Star Nationals. **TR**

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