

March 2021 Client Corner: Always Tinkering

Long time clients and friends Greg and Kris Smith picked up their lives in California and moved out to Franklin, Tennessee in 2007. Though we miss them in California, we are able to connect with them virtually “by phone” often and they are having the same wonderful impact on their community in Tennessee as they had when they lived in in Southern California.



When Greg and Kris answered the phone on the Friday we chatted, they made sure to let us know about the new car they were driving around in. “It’s a real fancy one, one of those new Lincoln Navigators,” they boasted. As we congratulated them on the new car they laughed and let us know that we should not worry, it was only a loaner and they didn’t make any big decisions without consulting us. Greg and Kris have always had a wonderful and joking demeanor and that energy exudes on the people around them. We hear a lot of great stories every time we talk to them. The most recent story was about Greg sharing his love for mechanical tinkering with a neighbor’s son.



Greg’s love for working on anything mechanical started at a young age. In his young teen years, he really felt the need to make sure the family lawnmower was in tip-top shape. Ultimately he wanted it to “go faster.” Of course he was not going to sit idle and let the slow moving lawnmower limit his ability to cut the lawn in a manner of imminent speed. So he took it upon himself to take the motor apart, file down the heads, add a straight pipe, and tune the machine up. For us non gear heads, he made it into a “hot rod” lawnmower. Greg continued his

mechanical education in high school auto shop, became a metal fabricator, took up arc welding, and used that knowledge to help catapult him into his role at Chevron, where he grew in the management role that he enjoyed so much.

Fast forward to the current landscape, Greg is still working on the family motorhome, friends’ travel trailers, and anything else around the house that Kris requests, but the recent joy has be set around a 2.9 liter Ford Ranger engine. A very quiet and shy young man that lives a few properties over from Greg and Kris recently showed interest in learning about engines and cars. Greg and Kris have taken the time to help not just teach this young man about safety, tools, engines, and more, but about interacting with others and quality time with each other. The father of the young apprentice has also been involved in the breaking down and re-building of the motor, allowing for education for him and family time for the two avid learners.



There is no current plan for the motor, just a canvas for education and time to be spent on the nuts and bolts of life. The young teen is so ecstatic with the process that he often brags to his older brother about the accomplishments that he has on a daily basis.

In a recent chat with Greg, he noticed the torque wrench that they were using on the Ford Engine was extremely similar to the one used on the Mars Rover that just began sending the world incredible images of the red planet. A

great connection to the brilliance of learning at a young age and the relevance to world that is possible for each of us out there.

We certainly loved hearing about Greg and Kris opening up their house to mentoring a curious teenager that will have many fond memories because of their open hearts and minds. Thank you for sharing your story, Greg



and Kris, we look forward to hearing more about the growth of this relationship!