



Josh Wolfe/DN

**MEL AND CAROLYN BOWMAN** cruise O Street in their 1956 Ford convertible Friday night after the Americruise parade. Many of the cars from the parade cruised into the morning hours on Friday and Saturday.

## Americruise tour roars into Lincoln

By Melanic Mensch

Staff writer

Automotive eye candy filled Lincoln streets last week as more than 2,000 hot rods from around the country gathered at the State Fair grounds for Americruise 2000. Vintage cars and trucks, with paint names like viper red, metallic blue, zenith gold and tangelo perle, showed off fast engines and sculpted bodies to spectators on downtown streets July 21-23.

Sponsored by Rod and Custom Magazine, Americruise made its third visit to Lincoln for the "central location and community support," said Mark Essman, director of the Lincoln/Lancaster County Convention and Visitors Bureau. The tour last stopped here in both 1995 and 1996.

Hot-rod owners traveled from four different points on both the East and West coasts to Lincoln for the 10th annual event for a chance to share the stories and the passion for restoring vintage automobiles.

"Cars you would not normally see around here come out to the show," Essman said. "It's a chance for owners to project themselves and show off their mechanic skills and ideas with these cars."

But not anyone with a supped-up ride can cruise with these hot rods. Cars must be a 1963 or older model, and trucks must be a 1972 model or older to register for the tour. Cost for the hot rods are in the \$20,000-\$100,000 range, depending on the rarity of the vehicle and authenticity of its parts.

Steve Sutch, of Myrtle Creek, Ore., said he spent the last 16 months building his 1937 Ford pickup and has been to several car shows this summer. This was his first time at Americruise.

"You can't afford to do this until you have gray hair," he said with a laugh. "But the fun part is engineering and building it yourself the way you like it. I assembled this car in my mind first, then had to go out and find the parts. I've built it right from scratch."

Not only did Americruise bring car enthusiasts together, but it became a family affair for Rich Wilson and his five brothers, who live in Oregon, Washington and Missouri.



Steven R. Bender/DN

**SPECTATORS** appear in the reflection of a 1933 Desoto Sedan owned by Mike and Linda Shiflett of Otis Orchards, Wash. The Shifletts participated in the Americruise 2000 car show held July 21 -23 in Lincoln.

The five Wilson brothers decided last year to travel the Americruise tour together in the year 2000.

"I can't believe we all showed up," said Wilson, who owns a black 1959 Chevy. "It's been about 27 years since we've all been together, so we said this sounded good. It was really good to get the five brothers together for this, because we all share the hobby. And there are a lot of nice cars here. Each car has something nice about it."

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