

Surprise of

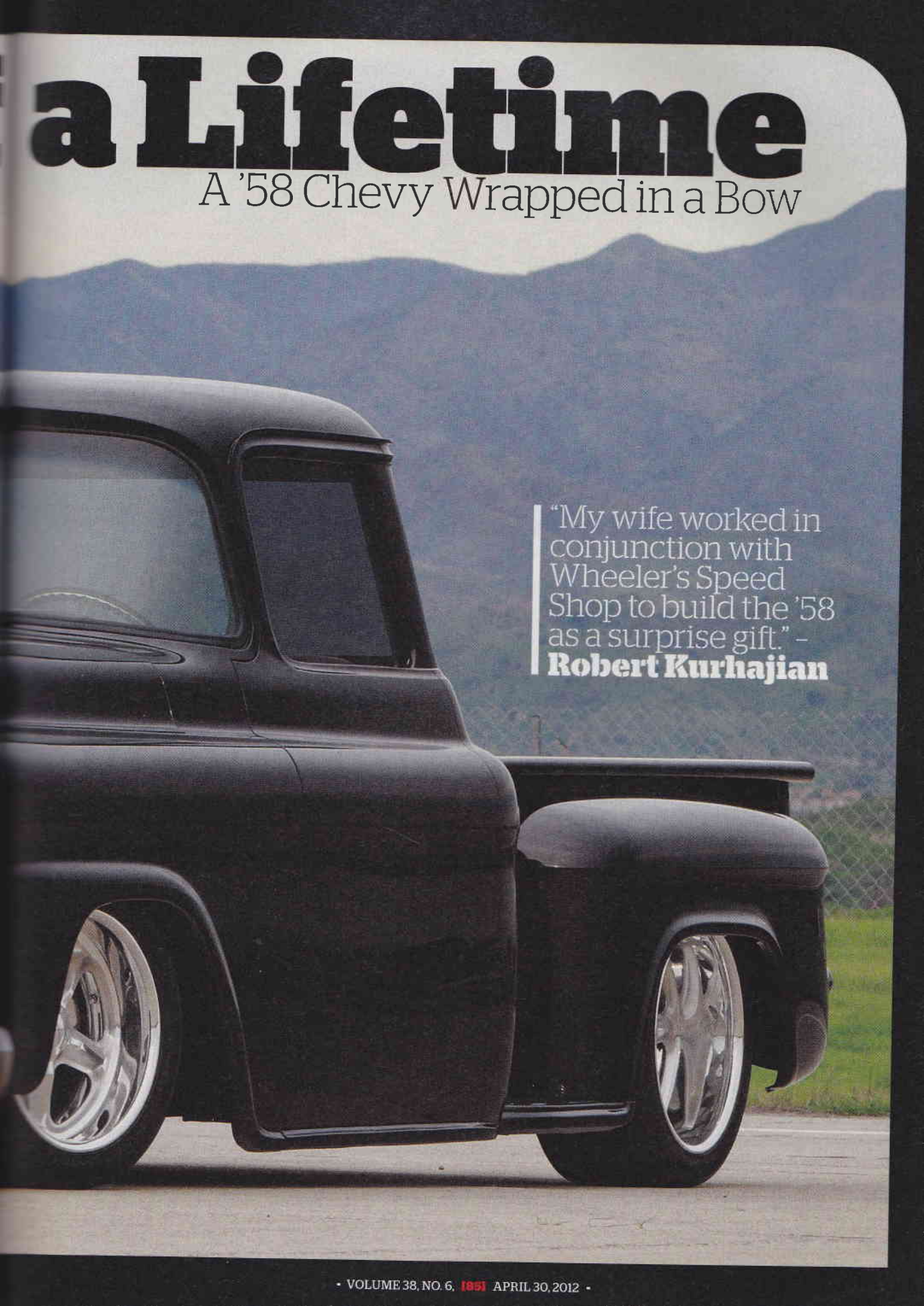
BY **MAXWELL MATTHEWSON**
PHOTOGRAPHY: **TRUCKINSTAFF**

In 1983, Robert Kurhajian bought a 1958 Chevy Stepside pickup with hopes of building a clean, classic cruiser. The Chevy sat for almost 25 years and hadn't been finished. As a surprise, Robert's wife, Dava, secretly sent the truck out to be built for her husband. After three years and three months, the truck was complete and Robert received the surprise of a lifetime when it was unveiled at the 2010 Grand National Roadster Show.



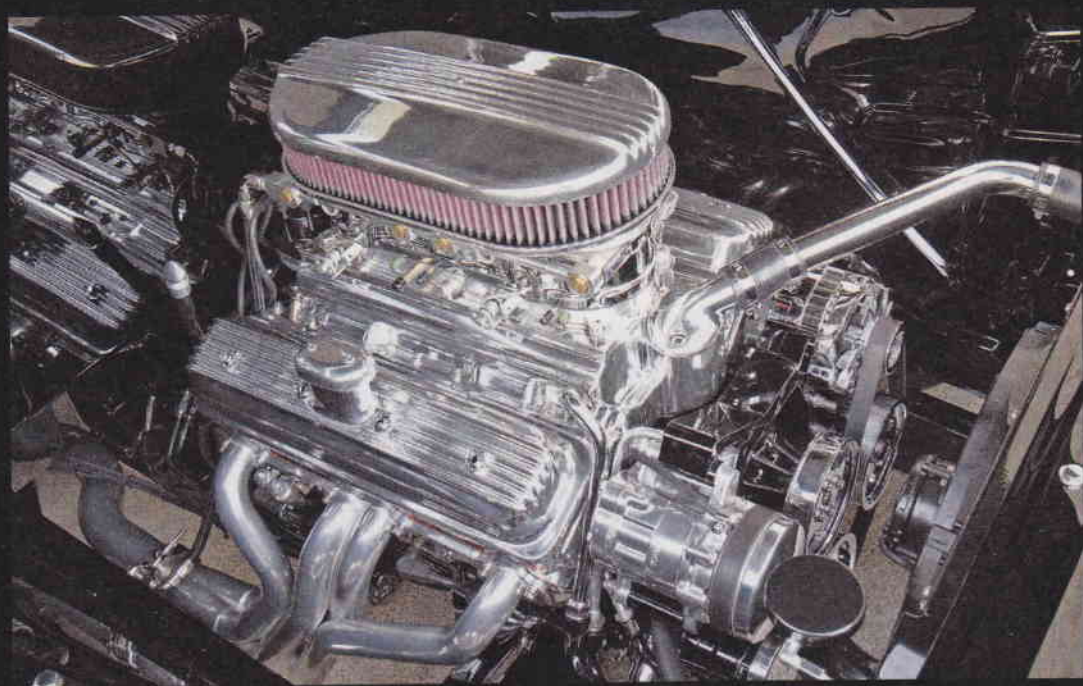
a Lifetime

A '58 Chevy Wrapped in a Bow



"My wife worked in conjunction with Wheeler's Speed Shop to build the '58 as a surprise gift." -
Robert Kurhajian

Surprise of a Lifetime



Ultra sanitary with all wires and lines hidden, the ZZ383 is gorgeous thanks to billet everything.



Taking the truck to Wheeler's Speed Shop in Huntington Beach, California, Dava Kurhajian asked the Wheeler's crew to make the truck stand out in the crowd. They got started by pancaking the roof and chopping the top of the cab two inches for a slimmer profile. Next, they turned their attention to the bed. Wanting this truck to have a lower than factory stance, the bed floor had to be raised and the fenders needed to be tubbed to make way for the rear frame and axle. Back up front, the stock bumper was flipped over and the center of the hood was raised slightly. The hood was then reshaped to match the pancaked roof and chopped cab. The quad headlights were left factory,

but the taillights were swapped out for a set of '46-'48 Ford lights that were frenched into the rear fenders. To finish off the body, the door handles, mirrors, and hood emblem were shaved for a clean look. Finally, Nick Jenkins from Pomona, California, doused the body in PPG Black paint.

Moving to the frame, TCI Engineering in Ontario, California, was contacted for a custom chassis for Robert's Stepside. Under the reworked hood sits a GM ZZ383ci small-block with a Barry Grant BadMan inline four-barrel carb. The engine has been dressed up with a Vintage Air Front Runner pulley setup and several billet pieces. Moving the 425 ponies is a GM 700-R4 transmission built by OC

Transmission in Costa Mesa, California. That trans spins a set of Budnik Illusion wheels wrapped in Avon Tech M500 tires. To give the engine a nice rumble that warns would-be racers, the guys at Wheeler's made a set of 1½-inch diameter long-tube headers that flow almost seamlessly into MagnaFlow mufflers.

Westminster Upholstery changed out the old, ratted bench for a Glide Engineering seat frame wrapped in beige leather. Brown wool carpet was laid out on the floors, and the headliner, door panels, and just about everything else besides the dash is covered in the same beige leather that adorns the seat. The dash has been painted to match the truck and fitted with a set of

Classic Instruments gauges. For a really clean look, the crew at Wheeler's made a one-off door in the center of the dash that covers up the Vintage Air A/C controls and Kenwood head unit. Along with the head unit, Pat's Mobile Service, of Orange County, wired up the rest of the speakers. Westminster Upholstery also built a custom sub enclosure that sits behind the seat.

Seeing his truck for the first time, Robert was extremely happy with how it turned out. At the GNRS in 2010, it won Second Place in the Radical Pickup Class 1957-1972. Robert wants to send a special thanks to his wife Dava, Brian Wheeler, Troy, Chris, Andi, Mike, and Tyler for all of their help.

Trucking



The rear wheelwell openings have been cut, raised, and reshaped to match the front openings.

Surprise of a Lifetime



Inside the Build

YEAR MAKE MODEL:

1958 Chevrolet Stepside

OWNER AND CITY/STATE:

Robert Kurhajian Huntington Beach, California

ENGINE:

Type: ZZ383ci

Exhaust: Custom headers, Magnaflow mufflers

Built by: Wheelers

DRIVETRAIN:

Transmission: GM 700-R4

Rearend: Currie Ford 9-inch with 3.75 gears

CHASSIS:

Front suspension: TCI control arms and spindles, Ride-Tech Shockwave 'bags

Rear suspension: TCI four-bar, Shockwave 'bags

Brakes: Wilwood discs and calipers

WHEELS & TIRES:

Wheels: Budnik Illusion wheels, 17x8.5-inch and 18x10-inch

Tires: Avon Tech M500 235/45R17 and 275/40R18

