



Hup, hup and away!

For their silver anniversary, a Verdigris Valley couple returns to the Mother Road in a one-of-a-kind 1926 Hupmobile.

STORY AND PHOTOS BY JILL MEADOR

Chicago to Santa Monica, 2,448 miles through cities, woodland, prairies and deserts. The trip would take about one and a half days to complete if driven continuously in a modern vehicle. Now, imagine driving those miles in a 100-year-old car with zero space for luggage, no air conditioning or heat, not even a windshield wiper.

Ed and Jackie Fogle, who are members of Verdigris Valley Electric Cooperative, have called Route 66 home even before they were married in 2001. This won't be the first time they embark on a trip down Route 66 in a classic car, but it will be the first in a restored 1926 Hupmobile.

"Our first trip down the 'Mother Road' was for our honeymoon," Ed says. "We did it in a 1959 Cadillac Convertible, and that year marked the 75th anniversary of Route 66. This time around, Jackie and I will be celebrating our 25th wedding anniversary and it's the centennial celebration."

The plan is to start in Chicago and end up in Springfield, Missouri, by April 30 because that is the designated location for the Centennial kickoff celebration, he adds.

"Springfield is considered the birthplace of Route 66; however, Tulsa is considered the capital," Jackie says. "I

grew up in Springfield and never really thought of 66 as much more than the road we always traveled down."

The Orphan Car

The couple is about 60% confident the 1926 Hupmobile will make the full trip. Several challenges include speed, lack of a fuel gauge and no space for luggage.

"I've always had a thing for orphan cars," Ed says.

"Orphan cars are vehicles by a company that is no longer in business. So, for months I searched through tons of ads looking for a 1926 model, and this specific car stood out to me because of its green color.

"I bought our Hupmobile from a gentleman in Arizona about five years ago," Ed says. "He was the owner of a museum in Omaha, Nebraska, where two Hupmobiles were on display. What was fascinating is there were a lot of '25 and '27 models, but very few '26 models. So, it took me much longer to find the perfect one for our trip.

"We have no idea how many miles to the gallon it gets because there's no fuel gauge, so as we stop, we will put a stick down the fuel pipe to test it," he says.

The engine of the car has been replaced with a late 1980s Chevy Blazer engine, increasing the likelihood of the car making the full trip. Also, with the newer engine the Hupmobile now has automatic gear shifting.

"I'm grateful for the automatic engine, so I am able to

drive it a little bit," Jackie says. "Also, my favorite feature of the car is the window shades, however I'm a little nervous they might disintegrate because it is the original upholstery."

The car does not have a trunk, and the front seat has less room than the backseat. While Ed and Jackie could easily fit one bag each in the back, the space will be taken up with spare parts and tools in case they need to make a quick repair.

"We haven't even booked hotels because we don't have a set schedule of how far we will travel each day," Ed says. "The car is very slow with a high speed of 45 miles per hour, so we are hoping to have someone in a sedan following us to ensure we don't get run off the road and so our luggage can travel with us."

The couple is looking forward to seeing all the stops they made 25 years ago and how much has changed. But even more than the historical attractions, they are excited to have conversations with a variety of travelers.

"Our hope is to be able to meet as many people as possible," he says. "Although we don't know where we will be stopping, we know for sure we will run into some fascinating characters along the way, and we genuinely



anticipate some even wanting to join us for part of the drive.

"If you're going to make plans to drive the entire route, this year is the year to do it," Ed says. "Just get in the car and go. Because the road's there, it's just waiting."

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Follow Ed and Jackie's Route 66 Centennial adventure by scanning the QR code to join their Facebook group.



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