

# COOL CARS & Hot Happenings

Summer 2009



**POWER HOUSE**

**Hot Rods & Performance**

**SWAP  
TOUR**

SYRACUSE  
**NATIONALS**



**2009**

**MORE CARS  
MORE VENDORS  
MORE FUN!!**



Here a '70 Nova is mounted to our chassis jig table to make sure everything stays level and square.



Power House has plenty of room to accommodate the many projects going on in the fabrication area.

"We don't want people coming in here and running the risk of being injured," he said.

That's not to say they don't want owners coming in to check on their cars, because they do, and Bertolini said most people come in often to watch progress.

To make sure everything stays

in house they also have a speed shop on the premises that sells just about anything any car will ever need. And if for some reason they don't have a part, they can make it, he said.

When people talk about how tough it is to do business in New York State, Bertolini said they have found it's

a pleasure to run a business here.

"We like our customers, they love their cars and they want only the best," he said.

As for the climate, well, the shortened driving season only makes people that much more interested in their rides, he added.



The 1970 Nova project includes a 1 5/8 inch tube chassis with rear 4 link.



Look at the workmanship on these dual funny car cages for the interior of the Nova.



something you don't see often...a '57 prosteele wagon with Morrison chassis.



Mike Bertolini's '67 Nova will have an LS 6 engine and six speed tranny.



Check out this '55 Chevy chassis with 350 cubic inch engine with Holley fuel injection.



And...this '71 Chevelle and '55 Chevy chassis getting prepped for paint.



Double blown '32 Ford project with a polished aluminum 565cu.in. big block, c&c custom manifold & complete stainless steel suspension.

renovated to their specifications. Bertolini said every aspect of a custom car build takes place under one roof, from A to Z, from top to bottom and start to finish.

That means they build cars from the ground up, they do the transmission work, engine work, drivetrain, and fabrication.

"We have this covered. You can buy anything here, but it's all strictly custom work," he said.

They even dabble in interior work, although a lot of that is farmed out, some to vendors in New Jersey and some to local shops, he said.

So far Bertolini and Lister say the experience here is satisfying, but it's a big change from what they knew in New Jersey.

"In New Jersey we had a different type of clientele," he said. "People wanted cars that were completed and didn't necessarily want to be involved in the build process. Here, people want to be involved in their cars from the beginning," he said.

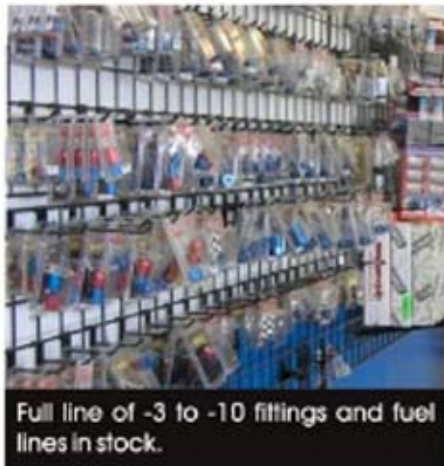


If your looking for horsepower...Power House is the place!

In other words their experience in New Jersey focused on people who wanted to walk in the door, pick out a car that was already completed, write a check and drive away.

In Central New York most owners bring in a car and want it rebuilt, restored, or customized. And they want to consult and be consulted along the way, he said.

For their part, Bertolini said he finds the work here more satisfying. "There just wasn't a big demand for restoration work there (New Jersey)," he said.



Full line of -3 to -10 fittings and fuel lines in stock.

Bertolini and Lister began setting up shop during January 2008 and by March they were open and ready to go.

Since then they've seen a steady stream of business and a lot of work they



Dan Willam's outlaw '41 Willy's project.

have been proud to send out the door.

Bertolini said some of their favorites have included a '69 El Camino, a '32 Ford coupe, a '41 Willys, a '67 Nova, a '55 Chevy wagon, and a '69 Chevelle.

The El Camino, for example, called for a complete custom build. It's a pro-street car that required chassis and transmission work.

So far the work is done by Bertolini and Lister, but in the future they plan to add employees, especially when they get the paint building constructed.



Chuck Lister's tube chassis pro-street '69 Chevelle.

"Right now we're at a point where we're nine cars deep. But we won't take on more than we can handle because we don't want people waiting forever for their cars," he said.

Bertolini said most people understand that custom work takes time, "But we emphasize that what's important to us is quality.

"If the quality isn't going to be there we don't want to do the work," he added.

Unlike some shops that encourage owners to come in and work on their cars, Bertolini and Lister prefer to do the work themselves, if for nothing else than insurance regulations.

# POWER HOUSE

## Hot Rods & Performance

# SHOP TOUR

Story By: Kenn Peters

It isn't often you hear a businessperson say he or she moved to Central New York for the climate.

Well, there is a relatively new business in the area that did just that, for the business climate, that is.

The business is Power House Hot Rods & Performance, on Route 49, in Central Square, owned by New Jersey transplants Mike Bertolini and Chuck Lister.

Bertolini, who has spent his childhood and adult life working on performance cars in the Jersey Shore area of New Jersey, decided a couple of years ago to pull up stakes and move to New York State where he believed he would have more freedom from governmental regulations to do the kind of work he enjoys.

"I've done this since I was 12 years old and Chuck has helped me for many years," he said.

Lister is married to Bertolini's niece, so that makes him family. He formerly worked in the residential and commercial heating and air conditioning business, but worked with Bertolini during evenings and weekends.

"When I finally decided to make the move I said to Chuck, 'I'm doing this, do you want to be part of it?'"



(left to right) Steve Reeve's, Chuck Lister & Mike Bertolini



### SHOP CONTACT INFO:

Power House Hot Rods & Performance  
Central Square, NY  
315-668-1416  
powerhousehotrods.com



Speed shop and showroom, featuring finished projects and a full line of high performance parts.

Lister said yes, so the two men enlisted the help of a Realtor and eventually found the spot they would like to relocate to. Bertolini lives in Bernhards Bay, while Lister lives in nearby Cleveland.

The 5,000 square-foot building they're in was formerly occupied by a pool contractor, but it's probably better known

as the former home of Randy Cramer Motorsports.

Bertolini said Power House easily filled the entire 5,000 square feet of space and is already looking to expand.

"Right now we're dealing with the environmental issues but when that is completed we hope to build

another 5,000 square-foot building to house a spray booth," he said.

Establishing a new paint shop is not an easy thing to do in terms of bureaucracy, but when the necessary steps are finished a new paint shop will be built, he said.

Until then Power House will make do with the building they ns.