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VOLUME 44 NUMBER 8

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AUGUST 2017



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Brooks, Oregon

**Leslie & Son**  
SUMNER, WA  
SINCE 1919



# FEATURED IN THIS MONTH'S ISSUE

## LESLIE AND SON

Nik Leslie has a collection of **five trucks** that he keeps on his **rhubarb, pumpkin and corn farm** in Sumner, Wash. Leslie spends his spare time restoring the trucks and attends **six truck shows and parades** a year with his trucks.

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## IN THIS ISSUE



**ON THE FRONT:** Nik Leslie poses in front of his 1980 Kenworth W900 out on his farm in Sumner, Washington. Leslie has been collecting and restoring classic trucks since the late 90s and the results are astonishing.

See "The Truck Farm" starting on Page 4

### 4. THE TRUCK FARM

LESLIE AND SON *by Brandon Hansen*

### 10. RANDOM TRUCK SHOTS

WHO KNOWS?

### 19. ADVERTISERS INDEX

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# The Truck Farm

**Nik Leslie grows rhubarb for a living, but his real passion is restoring classic trucks**

Story by Brandon Hansen  
Photos by Kevin Core  
*For Log Trucker*

Sumner, Washington farmer Nik Leslie likes trucks.

He likes trucks so much that they've turned into a hobby for him. Actually that would be an understatement. Trucks have turned into a collection for him.

Leslie has five A-model Kenworths with long hoods and a Peterbilt 359 that have been restored. He keeps them all around his western Washington farm, sharing shop space to stay out of the weather and working on them with friends during the weekend and the farming off-season.

The Leslie Family immigrated from Scotland in the early 1900s and instead of coming through New York, they took a route through Canada and then down into the states through Vancouver. Nik's great grandpa started a rhubarb, hops and berries farm in Sumner in 1919 while also doing masonry work.

The family did so much masonry work, that his granddad added a brickyard on the farm



and that lasted until 1988. The farm continued to grow and as a kid Nik began working in the farm's shop learning to work on trucks and equipment.

With his dad Ron driving truck, Nik would get up early and come out to the truck to ride out into the woods. After one load of logs in the woods, they would stop by a general

(Continued on Page 5)  
**See "Leslie"**

## SIDE BY SIDE

Here are two parts of Nik Leslie's truck collection - a blue 1976 Kenworth W900 (also known as the "Queen Mary") and a black 1980 Kenworth W900 - parked undercover at Leslie and Son farm in Sumner, WA. Nik drove truck for several years before coming back to the family farm. Leslie kept his interest in trucks and actually began working on them on the side. Then in 1998, he got his first truck, and then another, and another. (I'm sure several people reading this magazine are aware of this phenomenon.)

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## Leslie

(Continued from Page 4)

store to get a berry pie. Nik remembered one time he had fallen asleep and thought they hadn't picked up a berry pie. He said he was visibly mad at his dad, but after several minutes of a quiet drive up a logging road, Nik eventually noticed his dad had put the berry pie on his seat while he was sleeping.

After Nik graduated from

high school and started driving flatbed trucks, highway trucks and frozen meat trucks. After he met his wife, Heidi, he decided he wanted to be home with his family rather than on the road. Nik returned to the family farm of 200 acres and grew corn, pumpkins and rhubarb.

Leslie kept his interest in trucks and actually began working on them on the side. Then in 1998, he got his first truck, and then another, and another. (I'm sure several people reading this

magazine are aware of this phenomenon.)

Today his collection consists of a 1980 Kenworth W900, a blue 1976 Kenworth W900 with Gordon Fast Freight on the door, a black 1974 Kenworth W923, a 1982 Kenworth and a 1986 Peterbilt 359.

The blue Gordon Fast Freight truck was seen by Leslie eight years ago. He had seen Gordon Fast Freight trucks on the road before, and it took him four years to restore it to his former

glory.

"When I was a kid, I would watch these things go down the road and I just thought these were the coolest things," Nik said. "Most of the trucks are from the 70s because those are the ones I remember going down the road."

Word of the restored truck got back to Gordon Fast Freight CEO Larry Gordon. He called

(Continued on Page 7)  
**See "Leslie"**



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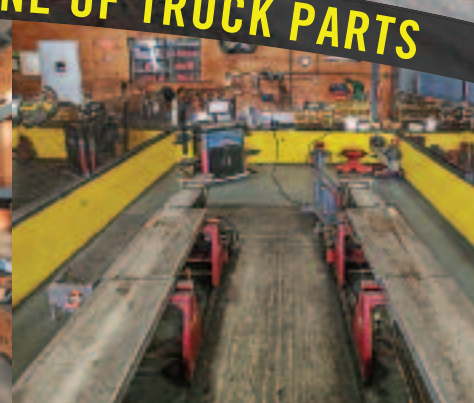
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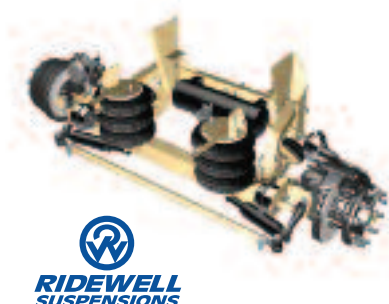
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## SHOWING OFF

This Kenworth 1976 with Interstate Distributing colors is a friend's truck that Nik Leslie's has worked on (left). Leslie hosted a truck show at his farm in Sumner in the past, inviting many people's makes and models to be showcased at his rhubarb, corn and pumpkin farm (above).



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Leslie and came out to see his former truck.

"A fancy car came to the farm, he stepped out and then began looking at the truck and walking around it," Nik said. "He began taking photos of it and telling stories about the truck. A friend of mine told me when Gordon got back to his shop, he was still talking about the truck."

Leslie also got a black and gold 1980 Kentworth W900 that Pat Wedrick had bought brand new. He got it in 2004 on a trip

to Walla Walla.

"I was driving with my wife and we saw it on the side of the road and I knew I wanted to take a look at it," Leslie said. "My wife said we have to get to Walla Walla so I just made sure we had enough time to look at it on the return trip."

It was in rough shape, but a week later he owned the truck.

After restoring it, Leslie had it up at the Morton Loggers Jubilee and a person there saw the truck and said he knew the guy that previously owned it. After a phone call, Nik exchanged serial numbers and the previous owner

ended up showing him old photos of him with the truck and a folder of paperwork from Kenworth Motors for the truck.

"I was just blown away," Nik said."

The black 1974 Kenworth W923 was previously owned by a friend. It had a 1693 CAT - one of the first engines they put in trucks. The friend was going to part it, but Leslie conned him into selling it.

Leslie also got a 1982 Kenworth out of Ellensburg and his Peterbilt he got out of Florida after it had served years as a big highway truck.

Now how does Leslie find time to work on his trucks? He finds bits of time here or there during the end of days or in the farming offseason. On weekends he will get a bunch of friends together and they'll just start "picking" on the truck.

"It's a great stress reliever and helps me unwind," Nik said.

To find parts, Leslie has to shop around and see if he can find rare pieces. There are still aftermarket parts available but he has to go after them. For some

(Continued on Page 8  
**See "Leslie"**

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(Continued from Page 7)

pieces, he has to have them custom-made by machine shops.

He also has to have a shop custom-make the dashes since time has taken their toll on them. Luckily, he's been able to replicate the wood grain pattern in the truck dashes from the 70s.

To do custom lettering and gauge graphics, Leslie turns to Alisha Jennings of Spanaway. She also does custom stickers for the trucks that would be on it.

"She's very talented and does great work," Nik said. "She even puts part numbers on the stickers because back then even the stickers were considered parts."

She even came up with the original shift pattern sticker.

Leslie makes about six truck shows and parades a year. With friends and family he's able to take all six trucks. Sometimes when he heads down to Chehalis, Wash. for farm reasons, he tries to haul fertilizer with his trucks just to keep them working.

He loves taking his trucks to ride and finds a reason to have them haul a camp trailer, haul a trailer for a company that works at fairs and sometimes he just hops in the trucks for a Sunday afternoon drive.

"I also enjoy meeting new people," Nik said. "The internet is great and you can find a lot of people with similar interests in trucks. I've made a lot of friends that share the same interest that I do."

Nik said he has a very understanding wife Heidi who lets him collect and work on trucks.

"This is how I relax and I wouldn't be able to do it without the support from her," he said.



## IN PROGRESS

A Peterbilt 389 - Nik Leslie's latest project - sits behind its CAT 3406B engine at the Leslie and Son farm in Sumner, Wash.

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## BLACK AND GREEN

Leslie also got a black and green 1974 Kenworth W923 that Pat Wedrick had bought brand new. He got it in 2004 on a trip to Walla Walla. "I was driving with my wife and we saw it on the side of the road and I knew I wanted to take a look at it," Leslie said. "My wife said we have to get to Walla Walla so I just made sure we had enough time to look at it on the return trip." It was in rough shape, but a week later he owned the truck.

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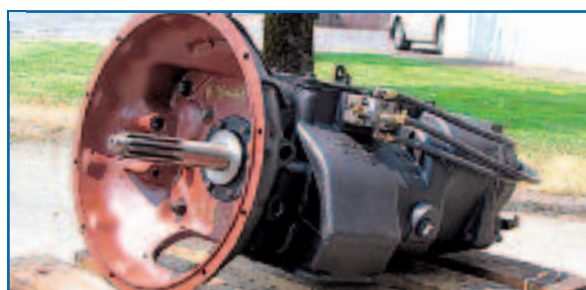
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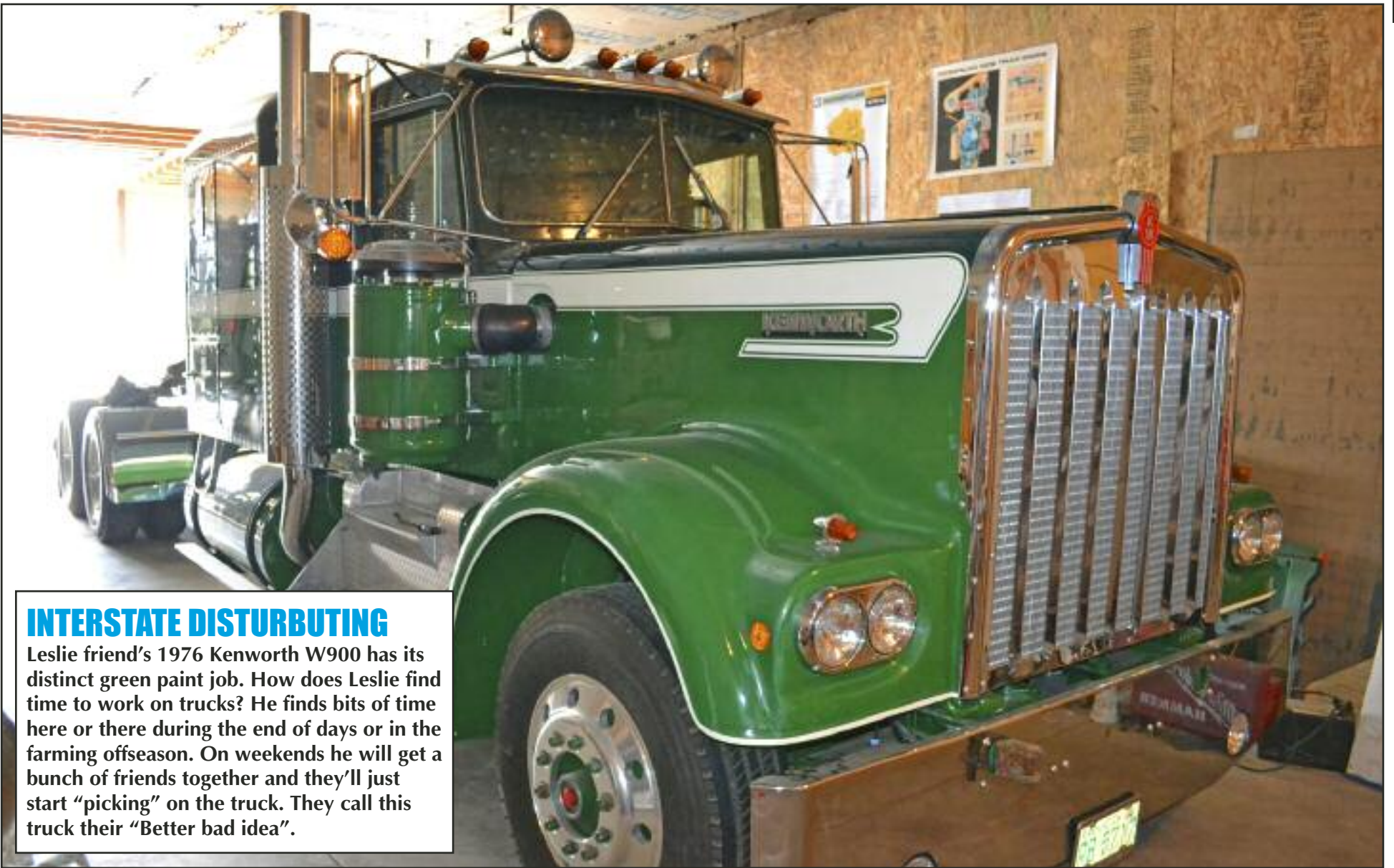


## 1980 MARMON

This is a 1980 Marmon powered by a Deutz V-12 air cooled engine and also has an air ride front axle. During the 80s and 90s this truck hauled many logs and poles. And still found time to show and shine at numerous parades. Then the spotted owl issue began and she was retired. 20 some yrs later Mike Rotschy pulled her from the bushes and between him and the original driver Charlie aka Chatatchie Apache they began to give her back life. Still a work in progress. Her new job is to escort the "Bull of the Woods" thru our Amboy parade and into the logging arena to receive his award.







### INTERSTATE DISTURBUTING

Leslie friend's 1976 Kenworth W900 has its distinct green paint job. How does Leslie find time to work on trucks? He finds bits of time here or there during the end of days or in the farming offseason. On weekends he will get a bunch of friends together and they'll just start "picking" on the truck. They call this truck their "Better bad idea".



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**LOOKIN' SHARP**

To do custom lettering and gauge graphics, Leslie turns to Alisha Jennings of Spanaway. She also does custom stickers and pinstriping for the trucks as well.



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## GLOWING GREEN

Alisha Jennings of Spanaway helped do the custom gauges for Leslie's trucks. LED lights give the gauges a green glow that give a nostalgic feel to these classic truck cabs.

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**Hadaller Logging Inc.**, KELSO, WA, (2) Brand New 2017 Whit-Log SEWC100 Long Logger with Matching Truck Equipment. Custom Steel Cab Rack, Double Tapered Stinger, and Much More... **Thanks Shawn!!**



**Hemmingsen Contracting CO Inc.**, CRESCENT CITY, CA, Brand New 2016 Whit-Log SEWC100 Long Logger with Matching Truck Equipment. Custom Aluminum Cab Rack, Quick Change Insert Stinger, and Much More... **Thanks Steve & Mike!!**



**K D Hobin**, PHILOMATH, OR, Brand New 2017 Whit-Log SEWC100 Long Logger with Matching Truck Equipment. Custom Aluminum Cab Rack, Double Tapered Stinger, and Much More... **Thanks Kurt!!**

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## AT THE READY

The 1980 W900 runs a restored General trailer with custom pin-striping. After restoring the truck, Leslie had it up at the Morton Loggers Jubilee and a person there saw the truck and said he knew the guy that previously owned it. After a phone call, Nik exchanged serial numbers and the previous owner ended up showing him old photos of him with the truck and a folder of paperwork from Kenworth Motors for the truck.

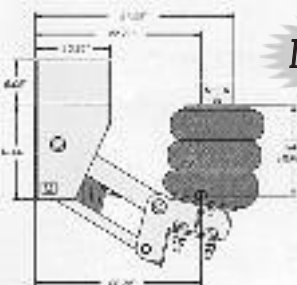


## LOG TRUCKER VIDEO

Use your smart phone to download a QR Code app and scan this to see more video of Leslie and Son's truck collection.

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**3408 CAT ENGINE**

Leslie's black 1980 Kenworth W900 sports its 3408 CAT. Leslie makes about six truck shows and parades a year. With friends and family he's able to take all six trucks. Sometimes when he heads down to Chehalis, Wash. for farm reasons, he tries to haul fertilizer with his trucks just to keep them working.



1995 T800, N14, 10-spd Fuller, Rockwells on AG 100 **Parting Out**



1997 CH600, E-7, 10-spd Spicer, Spicer rears **Parting Out**

1981  
W900A,  
BC3400,  
13 spd Fuller  
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2005 VNL  
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18 spd  
Fuller, 46k  
Rockwell  
dbl lock  
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1993 Volvo,  
low mile  
3406C Cat,  
13 spd  
Fuller, 402  
Eatons,  
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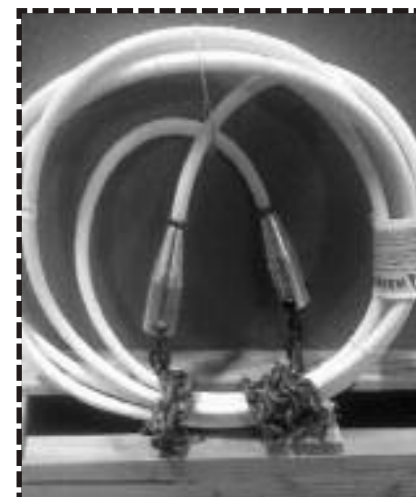
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## LOOKING FOR PARTS?

To find parts, Leslie has to shop around and see if he can find rare pieces. There are still aftermarket parts available but he has to go after them. For some pieces, he has to have them custom-made by machine shops. He also has to have a shop custom-make the dashes since time has taken their toll on them. Luckily, he's been able to replicate the wood grain pattern in the truck dashes from the 70s. Here is Nik's desk with a collection of truck parts behind it. By the way, we think Nik has superb taste in reading material.

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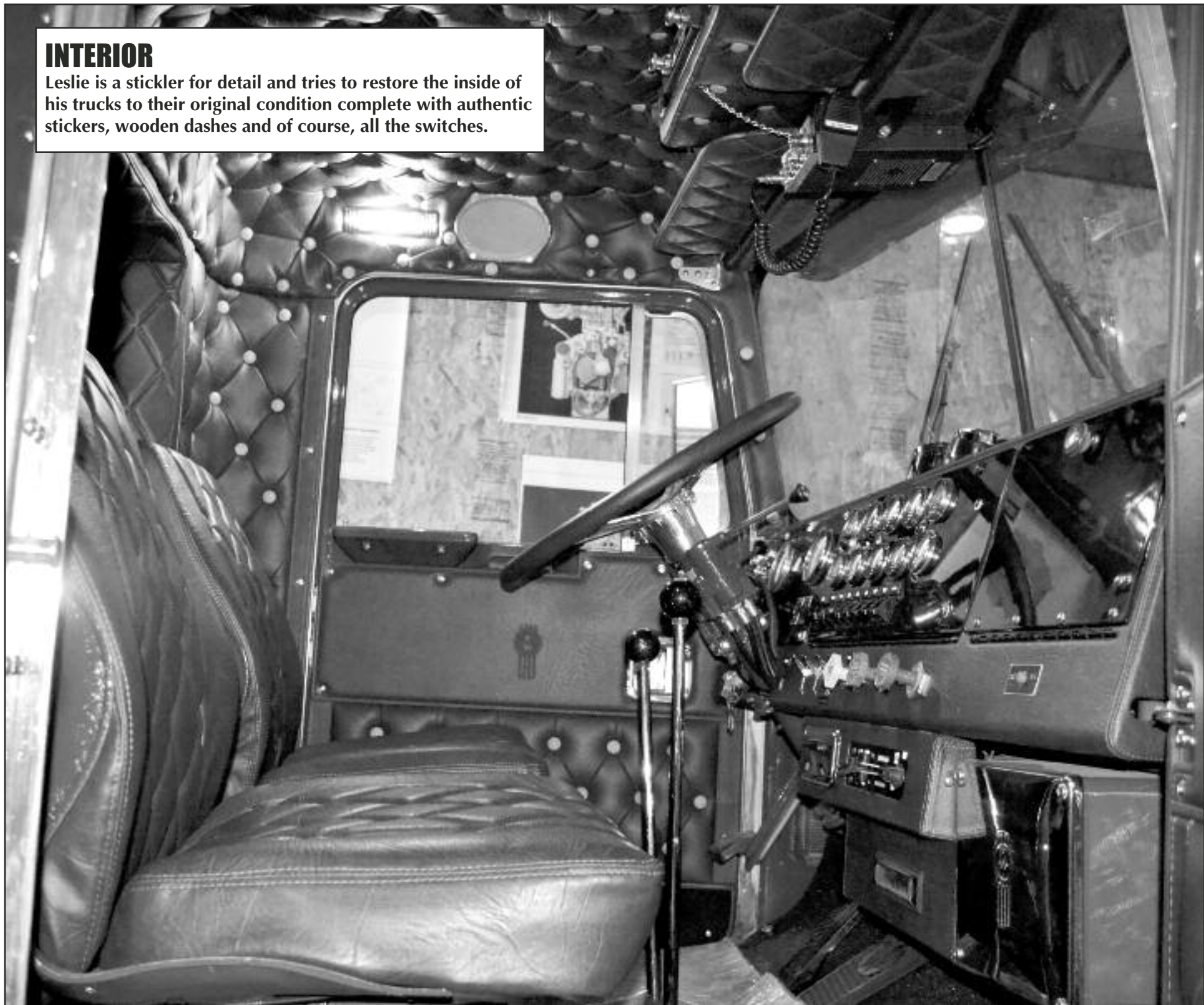


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## INTERIOR

Leslie is a stickler for detail and tries to restore the inside of his trucks to their original condition complete with authentic stickers, wooden dashes and of course, all the switches.



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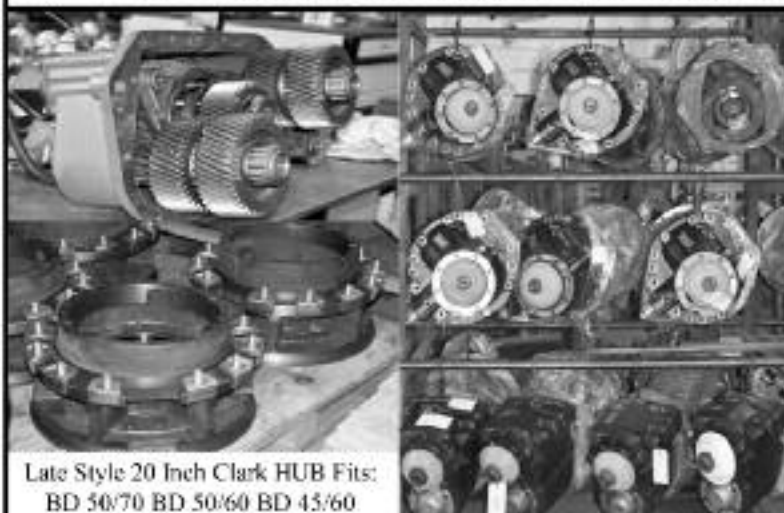
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# INTERIOR

Leslie's Blue 1976 Kenworth W900 (Also known as the "Queen Mary") sits next to the black 1980 Kenworth W900. The black 1980 Kenworth W900 was previously owned by a friend. It is now powered by a 3408 Cat engine that's so clean you could eat off it. The friend was going to part it, but Leslie conned him into selling it. There are lots of details on Leslie's trucks, including the lugnuts (left)



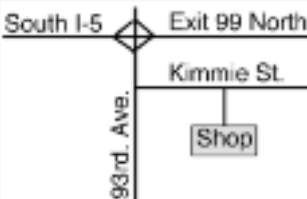
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