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Filming for the Keith Famie documentary “Detroit: The City of Hot Rods & Muscle Cars” takes place at Drive One Detroit on Feb. 2. Here, the camera crew gets a look at South Lake High School students working with Paul Tregembo Sr. on rebuilding an engine.

Photo by Patricia O’Blenes

Roseville’s Drive One Detroit to be featured in PBS documentary

By: Maria Allard (</reporterbio/Maria-Allard>) | [Roseville-Eastpointe Eastsider](https://www.candgnews.com/newspaper/eastsider) (<https://www.candgnews.com/newspaper/eastsider>) | Published February 3, 2023

ROSEVILLE — For the past year, local filmmaker Keith Famie and his film crew have traveled to various locations to interview classic car owners for Famie’s documentary, “Detroit: The City of Hot Rods & Muscle Cars.”

They’ve been to the Woodward Dream Cruise in Oakland County, John F. Kennedy Memorial Park in Eastpointe, Traverse City and other spots to meet diehard car buffs, including military veterans, actor Tim Allen and women in the driver’s seat.

On Feb. 2, Famie and crew visited Drive One Detroit in Roseville to document high school students working on several classic cars — including a 1931 Ford Roadster pickup and a 1967 Pontiac LeMans convertible — for this year’s Autorama.

Drive One Detroit opened in 2017 in a 16,000-square-foot training facility. The accredited auto tech class has partnered with Lake Shore, South Lake, Grosse Pointe North and Fraser high schools. Students take classes at Drive One Detroit while enrolled in their home schools. The auto school also offers after-school programs for at-risk students.

Drive One Auto is a four-generation business within the Tregembo family starting with Stanley Tregembo, who began teaching auto classes at River Rouge High School in 1943. Drive One Detroit has Paul Tregembo Sr., representing the second generation, at the wheel along with his son, Paul Tregembo Jr. Paul Tregembo Jr.’s sons, Joseph and Brandon,



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Kiley Robidou, a Fraser High School sophomore, uses a jack to raise up a 1962 Corvette so she can replace its drum brakes. Photo by Patricia O’Blenes

represent the fourth generation in the business.

"We cover everything — brakes, steering, suspension, hybrid," Joseph Tregembo said. "The documentary is what we do on a regular basis. The students are amped. It's like a rite of passage."

Famie decided to include the students of Drive One Detroit because "this is the next generation."

"You think of hot rods and muscle cars and you think of the older generations," Famie said. "Drive One helps kids chase a passion. They're turning a wrench and starting up a car. It's wonderful to see. What better place than the Motor City?"

With lights and video cameras in hand, Famie and the film crew shot footage of the students tinkering with the various vintage vehicles.

"I'm drawn to muscle cars, the music, the cars, the era," Famie, 63, said. "Growing up in the 1970s, muscle cars drove my passion."

Hot rods are generally cars that have been rebuilt or modified.

"There are no rules in hot rods," Famie said. "The muscle car was a factory-created car. It was ready to drive."



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The Keith Famie documentary "Detroit: The City of Hot Rods & Muscle Cars" will include footage from the Drive One Detroit automotive technical school in Roseville. The film is scheduled to premiere June 14. Photo by Patricia O'Blenes

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"Detroit: The City of Hot Rods & Muscle Cars" will premiere June 14 at the Henry Ford in Dearborn.

"It's a film about the impact people have had on cars, and the impact cars have had on people," said Famie, adding that the movie will also take a look at the bond fathers and sons have over cars.

That could certainly be said for the Tregembo family. When Paul Tregembo Jr. sat down for his interview, Famie asked him, "What has your dad passed on to you that you really cherish?"

"We learn from him to never give up," Paul Tregembo Jr. said. "You can transfer that over to every part of your life. My dad, he's my best friend."

Grosse Pointe North High School seniors Desmond Charlet and Tyler Miller attend class at Drive One Detroit from 6:50 to 9 a.m. every day.

"This is a very hands-on class," Miller said. "If you want to go anywhere in the auto industry, this can do nothing but help."

"I've been wanting to do this since I was 10," Charlet said. "It's so much more hands-on than other places."

This past summer, because of his experience, Charlet got a job at Gordie's Garage in Roseville.

"It was so fun," he said. "Getting paid to do something I like is really nice."

Both Miller and Charlet thought it was "pretty cool" to welcome Famie to the school.

"He's a nice guy," Miller said.

"We're happy to have him here," Charlet said.

Fraser High School sophomore Kiley Robidou has been attending classes after school, but next year, the class will be offered during school hours to Fraser High School students. She was able to be at the PBS filming last Thursday.

"It's pretty cool," she said of the camera crew. She feels she is learning a lot of skills in the class. All the students are looking forward to Autorama in Detroit later this month.



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On Feb. 2, during filming, Paul Tregembo Sr. works with students to change the carburetor on a car that will be at Autorama. Photo by Patricia O'Blenes

The executive producers of "Detroit: The City of Hot Rods & Muscle Cars" are Famie and John and Carole Kulhavi. Famie is a producer, director and author with Visionalist Entertainment Productions in Wixom. He grew up in Farmington Hills and resides in Novi. Famie had a Ford Mustang and a Chevrolet Corvette while growing up.

Autorama is scheduled for Feb. 24–26 at Huntington Place, 1 Washington Blvd. in Detroit. For more information, visit www.autorama.com (<http://www.autorama.com>).

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