

Hot rod book geared for children

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For the Enquirer

Chad Lampert is a self-avowed "gear head" who not only works on old cars but also creates cartoon pictures of cars for people all over the world.

And in May, the 32-year-old's children's story, "Little Book of Hot Rods," will hit the market.

Lampert, a lifelong Battle Creek resident who grew up with pictures of Porsches and Mercedes Benzes on the walls of the family garage, began drawing cars as soon as he could hold a pencil.

But he claims it was his 2-year-old daughter, Jaelle, who was responsible for his getting interested in children's stories.

"I looked around for kids' books about hot rods and there wasn't anything out there like it," he explained.

Lampert already had lots of his own drawings of hot rods in his computer, but it still took a long time to write the text and put it all together.

"(It took) hundreds or probably thousands of hours," he said.

Though many of the drawings were done for customers of his business, Custom Cartoon, Lampert retained rights to them.

When he told his clientele about the book, many of them asked him to send them five or more copies as soon as the book comes out.

Designed for children from pre-school to second grade, the book consists mostly of brightly colored humorous pictures with rhymes to accompany them. The vocabulary and content are simple so that a first-grade child could read the book easily: "Pickup trucks are hot rods, too; Red, black, yellow and blue."

Lampert's book is being published by First Page Publications of Livonia. Joe Aller, president, is excited about the book, which should be out by NASCAR season, he pointed out.

"When I saw his drawings and how creatively talented he was and the way everything came together in the book, I saw right away that it was a perfect fit for the types of projects we look for," Aller said.

Lampert's wife, Debbie, also an artist, served as critic and sounding board through the whole production — as she does with their sign-painting business, Cereal City Signworks, and the Custom Cartoon business.

Two thousand of the books are being printed and will be available for sale in May for \$9.95.

But Lampert is not stopping there.

"My next book is going to be about motorcycles, and I've already got some of the art work done," he said.

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