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May 26, 2011

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5/25/2011 4:39:00 PM

UPDATE: 'Pink Car' landmark found

Lisa Irish
The Daily Courier

The Pink Car, a Walker landmark for 73 years, was found in the Prescott High School parking lot early Thursday morning, only it's not pink anymore.



YCSO/Courtesy
The Pink Car, a Walker landmark, was apparently taken by students and vandalized. Authorities are still investigating.

"I'm so thrilled they found the car," said Al Mettner, owner of the property where the pink 1939 Dodge sedan rested. "Although, the kids painted it school colors - blue and gold."

The Pink Car is also covered in graffiti, including some "very foul things you wouldn't want to publish," Dwight D'Evelyn, Yavapai County Sheriff's Office spokesman, said Thursday morning. "There also appears to be minor damage caused when people were moving the car."

Prescott police notified the Sheriff's Office at 7 a.m. that a school employee found the Pink Car at the school's parking lot and had it taken to the district's bus barn. Right now the Pink Car is being held in an impound yard until the investigation is complete.

Sheriff's deputies and Prescott police officers are following up on several leads in the theft of the Walker landmark that sat at the corner of Pink Car Hill Road and Walker Road.

Betsy Bykerk, a longtime Walker resident, said Thursday morning that she and other Walker community members received an email this morning from the Walker Fire Protection Association saying that the Pink Car had been found at the high school.

"This is not a prank! Not for this community," Bykerk said.

The email also said employees at the Prescott High School maintenance facility volunteered to repaint the car if the Walker community provides the paint and primer, estimated the cost of paint and primer at about \$200, and added that they'd need some equipment to offload the body after it's painted.

"These kids should be held responsible, required to provide the primer and paint, and overseen by school authorities and/or their parents, to do the job themselves," Bykerk said. "If this car is on Prescott High School property, the school has responsibility to get the job done as well and returned to the community of Walker."

Since the Pink Car was on Mettner's property, it's going to be his decision what will be done and when, D'Evelyn said.

Mettner said after deputies talk with the teens, he has a plan to keep them out of the court system. The suspects could face charges of property theft and criminal damage, D'Evelyn added.

"They're going to pay to have it towed back here, then they're going to set it up on concrete

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blocks, bolt it down, sand it, and give it a fresh coat of primer and pink paint," Mettner said. "They're going to do all the work themselves."

On Monday, witnesses told deputies they saw a white full-size pickup truck towing the Pink Car on a trailer away from the area around 5 p.m. A blue tarp covered the vehicle on the trailer, but the witness told deputies he could still see a portion of the pink-colored sedan's body.

Deputies and Mettner said then they were concerned the suspects might be metal thieves intending to scrap the car for cash.

The Pink Car, which has rested in the same spot for more than 70 years, was left there by a local doctor after he rolled the car and insurance paid him for it.

Back then, there were no roads in the area, so the Forest Service painted it pink as a point of reference for area residents, and neighbors have been painting it pink ever since.



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ORIGINAL REPORT:

Yavapai County Sheriff's deputies are seeking people's help finding the person who on Tuesday evening stole the Pink Car, a landmark in Walker that rested at the corner of Pink Car Hill Road and Walker Road.

Witnesses told deputies they saw a white full-size pickup truck towing the Pink Car on a trailer away from the area around 5 p.m., said Dwight D'Evelyn, Yavapai County Sheriff's Office spokesman. A blue tarp covered the vehicle on the trailer, but the witness told deputies he could still see a portion of the pink-colored sedan's body.

The Sheriff's Office is asking anyone with information regarding this theft to call YCSO at 928-771-3260 or Yavapai Silent Witness at 1-800-932-3232. Callers to Silent Witness remain anonymous and will become eligible for a cash reward should an arrest occur based on the tip.

Deputies and the car's owner, Al Mettner, said they think the person who stole the Pink Car might be metal thieves intending to scrap the car for cash.

Mettner said the Pink Car, a 1939 Dodge sedan without its engine, has rested there for 73 years. D'Evelyn said deputies think the Pink Car's body might be of a Ford sedan, and they put out the word to salvage yards to keep an eye out for both.

"Back at the time when the gold and silver mines were active in this area, a local doctor known as the town drunk rolled the car and left it there," Mettner said. "Insurance paid him for it, so he just left it there."

Back then, there were no roads in the area, so the Forest Service painted it pink as a point of reference for area residents, and neighbors have been painting it pink ever since, Mettner said.

"When I first bought the land, I asked the dozer driver who was putting a road in to haul away the Pink Car," Mettner said. "He told me he couldn't do that because it was a point of reference for all of us. He said APS uses it, the county uses it, the phone company uses it - we all use it."

So the car stayed.

"When they started putting in roads, the county called me and asked, 'What would you like the road to be named?'" Mettner said. "I said Pink Car Hill, of course."

Tourists come up to take photos of the Pink Car, and it's on the Google World Map.

"The Pink Car has become very endearing to us. It's a tragedy it's been stolen," Mettner said. "This is a big deal for the residents here in Walker. We love our Pink Car."

Mettner said detectives have been very aggressive in looking for the Pink Car and have contacted salvage yards statewide.

"We're getting a lot of calls on this, and we are hopeful we'll find the Pink Car soon," D'Evelyn said.

Ask The Editor



The Daily Courier Editors

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Q: * Is there a "coffee party" or any form of progressive organization in the Prescott area?

A: Editor Tim Wiederaenders answered: According to our sources, that's a hard question to answer. One source said, "Not..."

Q: * How would I submit an announcement for my son's graduation from college with a photo?

A: Please visit the following link: [Click here to submit a graduation...](#)

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Reader Comments

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **PINK CAR HAS BEEN FOUND!**

In the high school parking lot. Still unknown who stole the vehicle.

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **Nosey Reader**

I never heard of this pink car before but obviously it's important to a lot of people so if you don't have anything nice to say about it then keep it to yourself, I agree if they thought it was junk/scrap metal they wouldn't have tarped it, that's messed up they knew what they were doing.

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **d m**

Perhaps the culprits are going to paint a mural on it and return it?

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **The Rev**

Gunney, if you are a Marine certainly tradition and symbolism are not lost upon you. Yet perhaps you are merely an ex-Marine with cut anchor, globe tarnished and topped with a wingless eagle.

[My thoughts to the people of Walker.]

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **Tom Hood**

Tired of it all:
Pink Car Road is a road silly. I used to live off of it...

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **Janet Glenn**

I think that car was the one used as the senior prank at PHS this week I would check it out.

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **Mr. Green Jeans**

Hard to imagine it's been there for 73 years if it's a '39. Must have brought it out a year before it was made and left it there! Regardless, it was definitely a landmark.

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **pablo noname**

The thievery is going crazy in the County. There was a guy arrested for the same, but the Judge let him out of jail.

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **I think ...**

I think Gunney should go back to California. Even if he isn't from there!

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **Always one in a crowd.**

Maybe Gunney took the car. Whatever the case I hope the car is returned. I love old Americana. It sounds like this old pink car means a lot to the people of the area so return it. I hope the car is found. Sad to think someone would have the gall to steal it.

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **ME ME**

I think Sheriff Joe took it to advertise his tent city. Nothing goes better with pink under pants, than an old pink automobile.

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **Conqueror Wyrn**

Gunney, I am going to forgive your ignorance...there is no way you could know the history of Pink Car nor the significance it plays in the community. Your ignorance though needs to be remedied so let me clarify a thing or two. Pink Car has been painted pink for roughly and at least 50 years. It was painted such by the friend of a local who kept missing the turnoff to his friend's house. Since that time it has been kept pink by the community and serves as a local relic and landmark. Nothing at all remains of the original Walker. This is a ghost from a time long after all the ghosts of the town that made Arizona had faded away. Now you are no longer ignorant.

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **Timing Is Everything! _ _ _**

To: The Gunney - There is nothing wrong with having that "broken down, abandoned vehicle", as you say, on his private property. It is maintained by area residents (owned by the property owner and maintained by area residents, therefore probably not really able to be classified as abandoned) by painting it pink and could even be likened to more common/modern signs (such as, Talking Rock Ranch, American Ranch, Forest Hylands, etc.) that you see at entrances to residential neighborhoods (albeit very quirky, and to many folks it is looked upon with admiration). There is no HOA there. Moreover, it is, as the article states, a landmark for the area (you know you are in Walker when you see the pink car) just as "Frog Rock" and "Duck Rock" are landmarks in Yavapai County.

This really doesn't have anything to do with the op ed in the Courier nor the case of Ramon Meza. Why you would try to make a correlation to the theft of property and the actions of Mr. Meza as a disparity with the U.S.F.S. is beyond me.

Additionally, I did not say that it was private property or U.S.F.S. at the time that the vehicle was left there. I said, "who is to say", I do not know and it appears that you do not either. At the present time, it is a rather moot point whether or not the U.S.F.S. had the right to paint the car when it did.

You are certainly entitled to your opinion that this landmark is "junk". However, the point is simply the fact that the pink car that was stolen, was again, personal property located on private property. I suppose then, using your logic, that it would be okay with you if a "civic-minded" person thought that something on your private property (a car, garden gnome, lawnmower, etc.) was junk because of its color or simply based on their determination of what junk is, regardless of its color and decided to clean up your "trash"...that you wouldn't want law enforcement to seek them as thieves?

Posted: Thursday, May 26, 2011

Article comment by: **cara orokos**

Yes, the pink car is a landmark that we all use up there. Also, Pink Car Hill Rd is a real road with people really living there. Walker is a great community and to steal the car does not make it ok. I will be sad, when I drive by it this weekend to go to our cabin. "Gunney," your comments are harsh and you have no clue about Walker.

Posted: Wednesday, May 25, 2011

Article comment by: **The Gunney**

Oh, so it's ok to have a broken down, abandoned vehicle on your property? So, guess the Editorial: Don't let home upkeep fall like values (5/22/2011), had it wrong. Just paint the junk pink and it's all ok.

P.S. The National Forrest Service has no jurisdiction on private land, so their painting of it pink was the start of this junk being called a "landmark".

Posted: Wednesday, May 25, 2011

Article comment by: **tired of it all**

How in the hell does no one not notice a pink car being stolen?? It's at least 6 miles to that road from hwy 69! And Pink Car Rd is not a road!

Posted: Wednesday, May 25, 2011

Article comment by: **Timing Is Everything! _ _**

To: The Gunney - The article states that "the car's owner, Al Mettner" "bought the land" that the car was on. Therefore, it was personal property stolen from private property. And who is to say that when that vehicle was left there that it was not private property at that time?

Posted: Wednesday, May 25, 2011

Article comment by: **Happy in PV**

It could be someone thought they were picking up scrap metal but a normal person wouldn't tarp scrap metal. I think we should just ask whoever picked it up to let us have it back. They actually may not know it was there for a reason.

Posted: Wednesday, May 25, 2011

Article comment by: **Joanuss K**

I absolutely adore history!!! When my bf was workin in that area I drove out to give him lunch, just to drive that beautiful road and to see the PINK car. I remember wondering the story behind it... now i know. Whoever stole it, just return it... weather it's in the dark of night. No car can replace that ONE car.. Who would of thought!!!

Posted: Wednesday, May 25, 2011

Article comment by: **The Gunney**

Ok, the car was abandoned some 73 years ago, the forest service left the litter (maybe Ramon Meza, the guy who got caught dumping litter in the forest (5/12/2011 article) has a basis for an argument that the forest service is selective in their enforcement) and now someone hauls the junk away and they are being sought as thieves? How about they should be applauded for their civic mindedness? They are cleaning up the trash left there by others.

Posted: Wednesday, May 25, 2011

Article comment by: **Timing Is Everything! _ _**

Real men don't steal pink cars.

Posted: Wednesday, May 25, 2011

Article comment by: **Kurt Womack**

This blows! Have all scrap yards been notified about this?

Posted: Wednesday, May 25, 2011

Article comment by: **ess tee**

I've been by it many times and assumed it is an Anglia, or English Ford. About a 1948 model.

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