

Sherwin-Williams Sunfire PRO Does It All for Shop Offering Restoration and Repair



by Autobody News Staff

Mike and Paulette Covairt didn't know it when they purchased a 1962 Volkswagen Beetle to restore not long after they started dating, but it was the first step to the life they live now, running *Franktown Collision & Restoration Garage* in Franktown, CO.

Mike said he bought the Bug from what was then *Douglas Auto Body*, and, after a year of work, had it ready to roll.

He kept in touch with the shop owner even after finishing the car, and when the owner was ready to retire in 2014, he offered the Covairts the opportunity to take over the lease and buy the equipment. On April 1, 2015, the new owners officially opened the business under its current name.

That Bug has since been restored a second time, and still makes appearances at local car shows every now and then. Meanwhile, the shop offers classic car restoration and auto body repair and paint, as well as welding and fabrication.

Paulette runs the office, and Mike works in the shop. "I always wanted to restore cars since I was a kid," Mike said. "I was always interested in it."

He didn't go straight into restoration work, however. Mike worked in carpentry for years, and then as a metal fabricator in the metal art and sign business.

"That was where I learned how to paint and weld, a lot of the things you would need to know to restore cars and do collision work," he said. "I began to restore cars on the side at home, for myself and other people, and feel like I caught onto it pretty quick."

Mike also started learning how to do collision repair work, taking on some of that at home.

"Then we got the opportunity to buy a business doing it, and we went for it," Mike said. "We took the risk and here we are."

Seven years later, the shop averages one or two completed collision repairs per day, and one or two completed restorations per month.

Franktown Collision & Restoration Garage doesn't work direct-



Franktown Collision & Restoration Garage in Franktown, CO, uses Sherwin-Williams® Sunfire PRO to bring both classic and collision-damaged vehicles back to life.

ly with any insurance companies, Mike said. Customers are welcome to use their insurance coverage but they have to be the one to negotiate with the insurance company on the estimate.

"We mainly stick to restoration and self-pay collision," Mike said. "It's worked for us. We've been pretty fortunate to be able to do that and survive."

Mike said as a shop that does both restoration and collision repair, its paint inventory was getting out of control.

"We were using a great product but it was expensive and we had to stock two banks," he said. "For some restoration work, one [bank] didn't work economically for some applications. Trying to stock two banks meant a lot of inventory, and a lot of money wrapped up in it."

Mike said the shop was looking for a product it could use for both restoration and collision repair when it was contacted by **Shane McIntosh** at Sherwin-Williams®.

McIntosh recommended the shop try Sherwin-Williams Sunfire PRO™ complete refinish system, designed for the shop that wants one solution and one partner.

The Sunfire PRO system features basecoat and single stage options, pigment-rich toners and pearls for effect, and an unbeatable selection of primers, sealers and tough clears.

As the current painter, Mike

has been personally using the Sunfire PRO system since the shop switched to it in early 2022, so he has seen firsthand how it performs, and as the owner, he's seen how it affects the bottom line.

"It's a good paint," he said. "It has worked well for us. Color matches are good, and we've been pretty successful with it."

"We have less money wrapped up in a large inventory of paint products, because we're using one product for both restoration and collision," he said. "It has helped our paint profit, and saved us some money and some room, since we don't have so much money wrapped up in inventory all the time."

Mike said the shop is also enjoying a superior customer service experience after making the move to Sherwin-Williams.

"The support has been great," Mike said. "Shane is a great paint rep. We were having some customer service issues with our previous supplier. We felt like it was time to make a switch. Sherwin-Williams has been a great company to work with."

Mike said switching to the Sunfire PRO refinish system was a smart move.

"It's a good product, if people are in a situation like I am, doing collision and restoration work," he said.

Franktown Collision & Restoration Garage

Location: Franktown, CO

(303) 688-2276

www.franktowngarage.com

Company At A Glance...

Type: Collision Repair & Restoration

Facility Employees: Five

In Business Since: 2015

Number of Locations: One

Production Space:

3,600 square feet



The shop repainted this 1959 Corvette for a customer who only drives black Corvettes, but bought this one when it was red.



Mike Covairt, left, and **Paulette Covairt**, center, with their Sherwin-Williams representative, **Shane McIntosh**, right.

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