



Lambrecht Chevrolet Collection auction proves that urban car legends can come true (and you could own one).

By [Michael Clark](#) | September 20th 2013

PIERCE, NEBRASKA—Forget everything you thought you knew about vintage Chevrolet cars and trucks. That’s right, everything. The restored, the survivors, even the ultra low mileage examples that have emerged from dusty garages over the years. It all needs to be re-written. And it’s all for sale.

See our huge “photo gallery from the collection [right here](#).

If there was ever a car find worth talking about, it’s the inventory from the former Lambrecht Chevrolet Company in Pierce, Nebraska. Approximately 500 vehicles will be sold during this two-day auction event, which starts with the preview on September 27th. [Online bids](#) are already being placed, on vehicles, parts, and a healthy collection of Chevrolet dealership promotional items.

One might be taken aback by some of the numbers that are creeping upwards for online vehicle bids, until you look at the odometer readings, with plenty in the sub-10 mile range. It gets better: you could be the first registered owner of a vehicle that rolled off the assembly line before you were born. Yes, these are basically brand-new vehicles that are going on the block — “new old stock,” as they call it in the biz.

How Lambrecht came to be

The business model that has resulted in this vintage vehicular jaw drop would have little hope of surviving in 2013, or 1963 for that matter, depending on where you were located. Ray Lambrecht and his wife Mildred sold new Chevrolets from this humble cinder block building in Pierce, from 1946 to 1996. It appears that’s all they ever sold. Used trade-ins, which make up the lion’s share of the inventory to be auctioned, were mothballed at the family farm just outside of town. When the new model year vehicles arrived, the remaining inventory from the previous model year vanished. Some of those vehicles were

afforded proper indoor storage. Others, such as utilitarian trucks, low-buck Biscaynes, and air-cooled Corvairs were subjected to decades of Nebraska weather. In car-speak, we call that delicious patina.

The upcoming Lambrecht auction has been attracting plenty of attention in this small Nebraska town, since the first snippets of video hit the nation that is YouTube. They don't take kindly to trespassers at the former dealer location on (where else?) Main Street, or at the Field of Gleams auction site just outside town. While attending this media sneak-peek, we were informed by the local sheriff that six individuals had been arrested that week alone. That was on a Wednesday.

Original pieces of history

The building on Main Street has seen better days. Broken glass panes, and remnants of drywall overhead confirm that the Nebraska weather, and vermin, have made their presence known. It's not just dust on the trunk lid of that 11-miles-young '63 Impala two-door hardtop; it's droppings from birds and bats. Luckily, those inconsiderate creatures didn't disturb the interior, still wrapped in pre-delivery plastic. This red-and-white '63 Impala was light on the options; a 283 V8, Powerglide automatic, a manual-tuned AM radio, and not much else. A white '64 Impala two-door hardtop nearby has but four original miles to display. Talk about weird equipment; a 327 V8, three-speed manual column shift, plus no power assists for steering or brakes. No wonder it didn't sell. As of this writing, it's already sitting at an online bid of \$19,750. Expect that number to do some very healthy jumps, once the Barrett-Jackson Mafia shows up.

Hats off to VanDerBrink Auctions, for keeping these finds in 'as-found' condition. No attempts will be made to start the majority of these low mileage vehicles, which has a lot to do with the fact that such an attempt has serious potential to end very badly. (Local short-term storage is available.) There's little indication that any long-term storage methods were used on most of these vehicles. Factor in a full mechanical tear-down into your budget, assuming that you'll actually want to drive it. There's already talk of the potential for many of the Lambrecht cars to remain frozen in time. Things are only new once, after all.

Best bargain bets

The no-mile bargains, according to the current bids, appear to be the wide selection of Chevrolet trucks from the early to mid Sixties. The exterior patina hides plenty of surprises. Lift the hood, and the hinges don't creak. The engine compartment isn't caked with oily grime. The firewall still shows the original chalk mark codes of the assembly line. Sadly, many of the vehicles have had parts stolen over the years, such as the driver's door from an otherwise clean '65 Impala four-door hardtop. If you like four-doors, there's plenty here, which means many of the cars in the Lambrecht collection will be destined for parts donation, instead of restoration. VanDerBrink Auctions has advised that buyers can purchase cars for their parts needs, and remove them on-site, with the remaining carcass destined for immediate recycling.

There are some genuine oddities, like a first-gen Ford Fiesta, a new 1980 Chevy Monza, even a semi-fresh Chevette Scooter in the mix. A '53 Studebaker and a Kaiser peek out from the weeds. Remember that many of the used vehicles in the Lambrecht collection were traded in at fairly young readings on their odometers, so don't lose your head on the no-mile vehicle bidding frenzy. A '63 Chevy truck traded in around 1970, and not having seen the road since, is definitely a good resto candidate, assuming the grass beneath it didn't get too high.

Many of the vehicles suffered damage during their inert years. The '58 Chevrolet Cameo pickup, which sported the same fiberglass panel material for its box sides as the Corvette, suffered the indignity of a shed with too much snow, denting the Cameo's roof, and cracking the windshield. With 1.3 miles on the odometer, it has already hit the \$23,750 mark for online bids. Maybe some of those marks will buff out.

If you're planning to attend the auction on the 27th, you should be aware that Pierce is by no means overflowing with accommodations for out-of-towners; I stayed at the Tuscan Villa Bed and Breakfast. If you're still on the fence about attending, ask the man who walked the Field of Gleams, at steelbeltedmind@gmail.com.

Remember, they're only new once.

Source: AutoFocus Website: <http://www.autofocus.ca/news-events/features/field-of-gleams-the-ultimate-chevrolet-auction>