

READERS' RIDES

Linda & Steve Rieger 1966 Nova



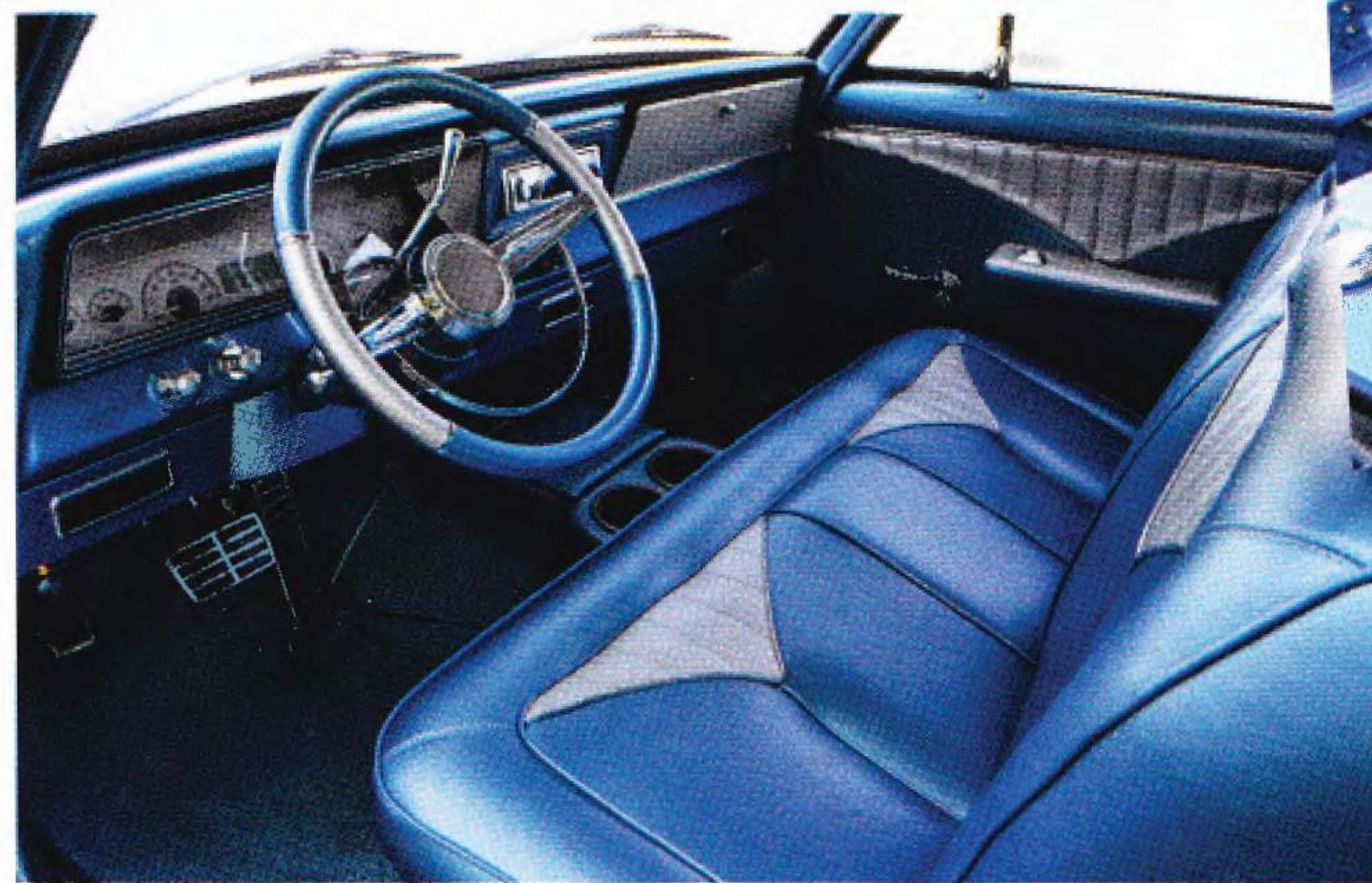
MY HUSBAND, Steve Rieger, has restored and built four cars for the past 25 years. His first endeavor was a 1941 Chevy, which he was never really happy with since it had the original six-cylinder engine with "no power." So he sold the 1941 Chevy and bought a 1936 Chevy basket case, which he rebuilt into a street rod with help from his friend, Jesse Jasso from Kustoms by Jasso in Sylmar, California. They turned it into a trophy winner and magazine cover car.

During that time he bought the car of his dreams since his high school days, a 1966 Chevy Nova. He bought the Nova from its original owner, whose wife had owned it but recently passed away. It wasn't being driven much.

The Nova was a six-cylinder car, and Steve wanted it to have a V-8. He didn't have the time or money to make all the changes he wanted, so the Nova was stored in the garage.

Just after he purchased the Nova, Steve was diagnosed with cancer, and a year after that he developed Parkinson's disease. The doctors solved the cancer, but Parkinson's doesn't get solved; it just progresses. With my urging and the doctor's, we convinced Steve to retire. So his days began and ended in the garage, and he was so happy doing what he loves to do.

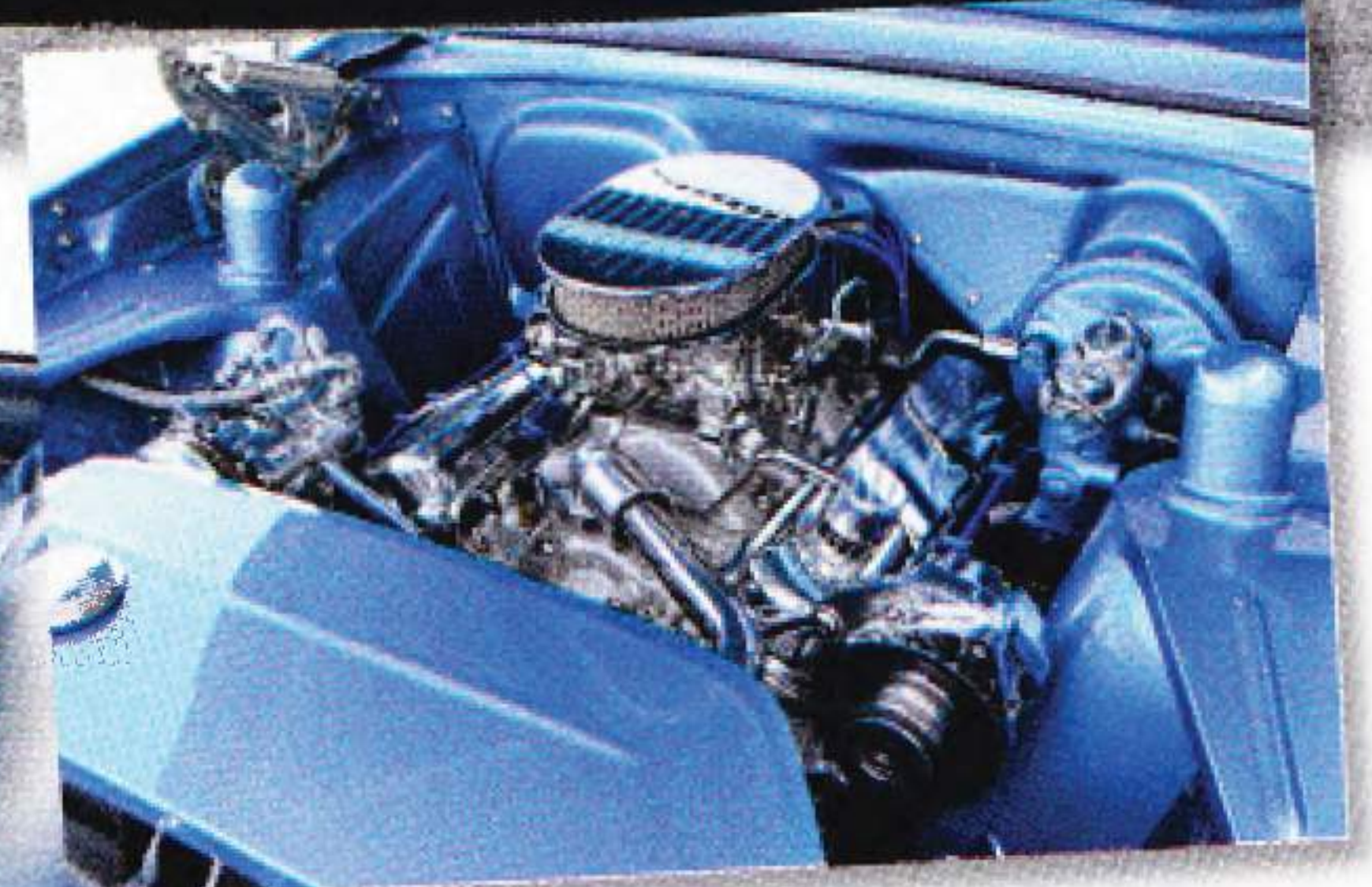
We called Jesse again, and he oversaw the car's tear-down,



prebuild, and final restoration. He worked along with Steve to make sure no detail was left behind. All of the modifications and upgrades are too numerous to mention, but here are a few. Jesse stripped the car completely to bare metal and rebuilt it front to back. They installed a Chevy ZZ4 small-block and 2004R transmission. They rebuilt the 10-bolt rearend and added 3.73 gears. The cowl vent was filled and the windshield wiper motor moved from the firewall to under the dash. Stainless-steel tubing was bent and used to cover all vacuum hoses and wires.

The front suspension remains stock except for the CPP disc brakes and master cylinder added for safety. Cragar chrome wheels and 205/15 tires were used all around. The fenderwells were enlarged, and handmade trim finishes off the openings.

Steve wanted to make subtle



the Nova its first non-factory paint job. Dan sprayed a custom PPG mix we chose and named Electric Blue. It truly highlights the car.

The upholstery was a challenge. Every fabric we looked at didn't match the exterior paint. But after much trial-and-error, we found a good match. I wanted to set it off with silver trim. Steve had other opinions, but I stood my ground, and I love my color and design choices.

It took another year in the garage to finish the Nova, but his last car is truly his dream come true. The car was finished in April 2015, and the payoff for all that hard work is that the Nova has been a consistent show winner and has caught the attention of many.

