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Inspiration from a Classic TV Show Lives on in a Model A

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The Waltons and the Road to Our John-Boy Car

As a child of the late '60s and early '70s, like many American families, we were greatly influenced by a Depression-era family who made a weekly appearance on our television. Whether it was Thursday or Sunday evening, our family would gather around the TV to watch our favorite show—*The Waltons*.



Growing up in rural West Texas, our values and understanding of family roles were often shaped by what we saw on the screen. As the oldest child, I naturally identified with John-Boy Walton. Like him, I sometimes felt like a “mother hen,” looking out for my younger siblings and navigating the responsibilities that come with being the eldest. *The Waltons* wasn't just entertainment; it was a guide on hospitality, love, friendship, faith, and even life's harder lessons—loss, disagreements, poverty, caring for the abandoned, alcoholism, and disappointment.

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That show left a lasting impact on me, and little did I know that decades later, it would connect me to a very special car—one that would bring a piece of *The Waltons* into my own life.

The Journey to Owning John-Boy's Car

Once Chuck and I were married and started a family, *The Waltons* never strayed far from our hearts. Every Christmas Eve, we would gather around to watch our old VHS copy of *The Homecoming: A Christmas Story*, the pilot movie that started it all. As the series went into syndication, we enjoyed watching episodes on demand and even built a backup DVD collection. Now, our grandkids have joined in as avid Waltons fans—a great legacy to pass on!

When Facebook came along, I connected with fellow Waltons enthusiasts across the country and discovered a fan club and cast reunions. In March 2016, Chuck and I had the incredible opportunity to visit the Waltons Mountain Museum in Schuyler, Virginia—the real hometown of the show's creator, Earl Hamner Jr. It was a bittersweet day, as we received news that very morning that Earl had passed away. That moment will stay with me forever.

A year later, in March 2017, we attended a Waltons reunion and Earl Hamner's Celebration of Life event. Not only did we meet many of the cast members, but we also had the honor of creating a memorial bench in Earl's memory, which now resides in the Pony Cart Room at the Waltons Mountain Museum. During that visit, we first heard whispers of a special project—a Waltons-themed bed and breakfast.

John & Olivia's B&B - A Dream Come to Life

The idea soon became reality when Carole Johnson built John & Olivia's B&B Inn directly across from the museum, meticulously recreating the look and feel of the Walton family home. From the furnishings to the layout—even a replica of John-Boy's car parked out front—every detail was designed to transport visitors into the world of *The Waltons*.



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Chuck, ever the craftsman, was eager to contribute to the B&B's authenticity. He built a beautiful front porch swing, an iconic feature seen in so many beloved scenes from the show. Over the years, I was able to enjoy a couple of special girls' weekends there with my daughters, making more cherished memories in this Waltons-themed haven.

Then, during my last visit in October 2024, I received unexpected news—Carole was closing the B&B. As we talked, she casually asked if I knew anyone who might be interested in the car. I tried to contain my excitement, but I'm sure my face gave away the fact that I needed to make a call back home ASAP!

Bringing John-Boy's Car Home

At first, I conceded that acquiring the car was just a dream—probably not something we could make happen. But after a second conversation with Carole, I was reminded that prayer works! She wanted the car to go to



someone who would appreciate its history and keep it true to its Waltons roots, rather than transforming it into a rat rod. With an offer we couldn't refuse, the deal was set.

In November 2024, John-Boy's replica car made its journey from Schuyler to Powderly, Texas. Upon arrival, it went straight to the mechanic's shop for much-needed engine repairs. Three months, a newly rebuilt motor, and several under-the-hood fixes later— "Sprocket" was finally home!

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Sharing the Nostalgia

Sprocket's first official outing will be at the Missouri Cherry Blossom Festival at the end of April, where many Waltons cast members, including our beloved Richard Thomas (John-Boy himself), will be in attendance for a weekend of fun and nostalgia.

Moving forward, we hope to take the Model A to local car shows and maybe even a parade or two. More than anything, we want to bring a little piece of *The Waltons* to life—reminding people of a simpler time, when family, love, and values were the heart of everyday life. And who knows? Maybe we'll even inspire a new generation of Waltons fans along the way.

