

Hollywood movie crew films local car buff

By DANIEL SCHWAB

Essex resident Martial's Voligny's pride and joy – a fiery orange '71 Dodge Charger RT – will be immortalized in a Hollywood movie being filmed this week.

The long-time car buff came across a newspaper advertisement a few months back from a production studio calling for classic cars. Voligny, 68, mailed out some photos of his near-mint vehicle and before long, he received an invitation to the Michigan State Fairgrounds where more than 400 vintage cars would be filmed.

The movie, Semi-Pro, stars Will Ferrell and Woody Harrelson. It's a comedy set in the 1970s about the Flint Michigan Tropics, an American Basketball Association team led by owner-player-coach Ferrell, who encourages his teammates to follow their NBA dreams.

The film is set to be released in February 2008.

But last Monday and Tuesday, director



Martial Voligny and his '71 Dodge Charger were filmed by a Hollywood movie crew this week in Michigan. Semi-Pro, starring Will Ferrell, is set in the 1970s and will feature hundreds of classic cars.

Kent Alterman was at the Michigan State Fairgrounds, turning the cameras not on the stars but on the cars.

"I was worried that my car would only be seen as a speck next to hundreds of others," Voligny said. "But then they said not to worry, they're shooting a lot of car scenes

and that the Charger will get some screen time."

Voligny drove the Charger, equipped with a 440 six-pack crate motor under the hood, across the border Monday morning sporting a white T-shirt and blue jeans as requested by the Semi-Pro's casting depart-

ment.

He usually takes it to about 20 car shows every summer, including the annual event at the Canadian Transportation Museum and Historic Village and the Essex Fun Fest parade.

"Wherever there's a car show, I go to them," he said proudly.

Only 3,100 models of Voligny's Charger were produced. He's also owned a '71 Mustang, '71 Plymouth Roadrunner and a '63 Ford Convertible, to name a few.

He'll usually put some time and money into a car before selling it and buying his next one.

But he won't be letting go of the '71 orange Charger.

"This one here's a keeper," he said.

Since purchasing it 13 years ago, Voligny has installed a rear spoiler, hood pins and door panels.

Voligny has been a licensed insurance broker with DPM Insurance Group in Essex for 21 years.

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