

High tech dooms junkers

Thursday, July 14, 1988 O&E

(B9C)

Durability may not be everyone's automotive aphrodisiac, but several times I found myself paying cash for a vehicle with so many miles on the odometer that I could watch it blink out like Little Orphan Annie's eyes on the second roll around the clock, with me hoping that good cars, like fine wines, improve with age.

Or at least keep running. In fact, with today's marketing strategists allying new cars at the upper 10 percent of the American economy, the vast majority will never buy a new car, and instead will dutifully load up on cans of new-car aerosol scent at Murray's Discount Auto Stores before heading off to buy a new set of tires.

One who recognized this was Freddie Bishop, a friend of mine who once ran a junkyard in Inkster. Freddie worked under a marketing strategy that included keeping an eye out for some kid lifting the carburetor from a slant-six DeSoto over the fence, whereby Freddie ambled outside and intercepted the tight end of the operation, who by then was attempting an exit with the carburetor tucked underneath his arm.

"Nice catch," Freddie would say. "That's 26 bucks."

BUT FREDDIE'S junking days were numbered, as he found himself stuck with a growing mountain of cast-iron engine blocks in a scrap metal market shifting toward aluminum. It was the onset of technological change that hasn't quite reached the beaters — the serviceable old cars that keep at least as many peo-



auto talk
Dan
McCosh

ple on wheels as new-car sales. But it will.

You can't quite picture tearing out an electronic fuel injection system and tossing it over the fence to your buddy even if Freddie isn't watching. Engine control computers, antilock brakes, even airbags don't age gracefully or lend themselves to the kind of transplant operations carried out by Freddie and his customers who live in a world of cars with three-digit purchase prices.

It hasn't been widely noticed yet, but new technology applied to cars today has little chance of staying workable at the tail end of the average car's life. A whole host of new gadgets are either too sophisticated or too integrated into a car's basic design to be repairable at the corner garage, let alone salvageable from a car pushed in the front gate at Freddie's.

The net result is likely to be a gradual dwindling of "good old car" stock, accompanied by a rising desperation among people relying on patchwork cars for daily transportation. Extended service intervals, even longer basic car life, don't really alter the equation — the trend today is a lengthy, relatively trouble-

free period following the new-car purchase, then an expensive replacement of a "module," an operation that takes specialized equipment.

There was a glimmer of hope a few months ago when the folks at Chevrolet noticed that sophisticated car thieves were capable of installing whole electronic engine control computers so they could get away with a new Corvette. Car thieves are the best example of leading-edge, streetwise, trickle-down technology, but I still would treat this as an aberration.

Another development noted is that in the midst of the new models coming out in 1989 is a new Chrysler pickup truck with an industrial diesel engine rated to run 300,000 miles.

That's roughly 30 years worth of average driving, at least for the engine. It's also about three times as long as you would expect the truck itself to last.

It may be the last engine Freddie and his kin may be able to salvage to keep a good old truck going.

Dan McCosh is the automotive editor of Popular Science magazine.

mackenzie's

mackenzie's

SALE

20% - 50% OFF

On almost our entire stock
of Spring and Summer
Traditional Menswear

APPLGATE SQUARE • NORTHWESTERN BETWEEN 12 - 13 MILE

mackenzie's

mackenzie's

Is there stone in your future?
Get professional results
at Do It Yourself prices
With
CULTURED STONE®
LIGHTWEIGHT STONE VENEER

- Lightweight, durable, colorfast
- Do-It-Yourself or Professionally Installed
- Interior or Exterior
- New or remodeled construction

FREE DO-IT-YOURSELF SEMINAR SATURDAY, JULY 23, 9:30 am
Special one-day-only discounts for seminar participants
Call for details or reservations
Visit our showroom or call for a free home estimate

WILLIAMS PANEL BRICK
MFG. CO., INC.
Fireplace Design Center
27303 W. 8 Mile (2 Miles W. of Telegraph Rd.)
Redford, Michigan 48240

Redford
538-6633
Troy
524-9150

datebook

START A BUSINESS

Thursday, July 14 — "Whole Braining" seminar offered 7-9 p.m. in Detroit. Fee: \$25. Information: Margaret Hiltz, 649-8646. Sponsor: Start a Business Store.

CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Friday, July 15 — Full Gospel Business Men's Christian Fellowship meets for dinner at 6 p.m. in Farmington Hills. Fee: \$6 per plate. Information: Stanley Marentette, 697-4004.

AUTO WORD CONGRESS

Sunday-Wednesday, July 17-20 — Automotive News World Congress meets at Westin Hotel in Detroit. Information: Doris Smith, 448-6047.

WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS

Tuesday, July 19 — National As-

sociation of Women Business Owners meets for Salon Fun Night at 5:30 p.m. at Don's Salon in Southfield. Information: 664-3300.

CONSULTANTS NETWORKING

Tuesday, July 26 — Consultant's information exchange and networking meeting begins at 6 p.m. at the Ramada Inn, 28225 Telegraph, Southfield. Fee: \$25. Information: Charline Manuel, 342-8772.

CAD/CAM ROBOTICS

Sunday-Wednesday, Aug. 14-17 — Third International conference on CAD/CAM Robotics and Factories of the Future held in Southfield. Information: Prakash, Shrivastava, 986-2206. Sponsors: International Society for Productivity Enhancement, Society of Automotive Engineers.

SMALL BUSINESS DIRECTORY

Copies of the free "Small Business Resource Directory" are available at all National Bank of Detroit offices. The booklet, produced by New Detroit and NBD, offers resource information for operators of small business.

Information for this column should be sent to the business editor, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, 39251 Schoolcraft, Livonia 48150. Information must be received by Monday to be published in the Thursday issue. Publication cannot be guaranteed. Information should contain a daytime telephone number where information can be verified.

Oriental Rugs
SUMMER SALE
tadross & zakloute
FINE ORIENTAL RUGS SINCE 1937
330 E. Maple • Birmingham • 644-4200
Between Woodward & Hunter

Twice a week is better

Jobstorn
BUILDING COMPANY
ADDITIONS • KITCHENS • BATHS
6190 Doughty • West Bloomfield • 351-2266

CD RATES FOR THE SERIOUS INVESTOR.

30 DAY	7.35%
91 DAY	7.50%
6 MO.	7.70%
1 YEAR	8.00%
2 YEAR	8.45%

*These annual rates of interest are subject to change.

*These rates are based on a \$10,000 deposit per account.

*These rates are based on a \$10,000 deposit per account.

*These rates are based on a \$10,000 deposit per account.

*These rates are based on a \$10,000 deposit per account.

*These rates are based on a \$10,000 deposit per account.

*These rates are based on a \$10,000 deposit per account.

*These rates are based on a \$10,000 deposit per account.

*These rates are based on a \$10,000 deposit per account.

*These rates are based on a \$10,000 deposit per account.

*These rates are based on a \$10,000 deposit per account.

*These rates are based on a \$10,000 deposit per account.

*These rates are based on a \$10,000 deposit per account.

*These rates are based on a \$10,000 deposit per account.

UGLY KITCHEN CABINETS?
DON'T REPLACE... **'REFACE'**
MODERN & EUROPEAN STYLES

FORMICA Solid Colors and Woodgrain
SOLID WOODS Oak, Cherry and Birch

SERVING WAYNE, OAKLAND & MACOMB
• FACTORY SHOWROOM
• FREE ESTIMATES

1842 E. 11 Mile Rd., Madison Hgts.
1 Block W. of Dequindre Daily 9-5, Sun. 10-4

Cabinet Clad... 541-5252

Priced to Drive the Competition Crazy!

\$399 \$895 VALUE

Latest Technology
M-10 Mobile Phone

TOP QUALITY BEST VALUE!

NO DEALERS
Price is based on participation by Alameda County. New activation and minimum service requirement.

Metro Cell

Observer & Eccentric
CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING

644-1070 Oakland County
591-0900 Wayne County
652-3222 Rochester/Avon

SHOW YOUR SUPPORT
GET YOUR OFFICIAL USA BASEBALL TEAM BOOSTER PACKAGE

Observer & Eccentric
Proud Sponsor
USA Baseball Team
1988 Summer Games

HERE'S WHAT YOU GET:

- 24" x 30" poster by famous sports artist, Bryan Robley.
- Silver and enameled team pin.
- Official team uniform patch.
- USA Baseball Team Booster card.
- Deluxe foil window sticker.

Help the USA go for the Gold at the 1988 Summer Games. Donate \$10.00 or more to the USA Baseball Team fund, and you'll receive the official team booster package (\$20.00 retail value). Or send \$5.00 for the poster only. This grand slam poster by Bryan Robley is printed on 100 lb. vintage glass stock and is ideally suitable for framing.

1988. Send your donations now, since these USA Baseball Team booster packages have been produced in limited quantities. You'll love it. Your kids will love it.

Official fund-raising Sponsors:

Plymouth
SPORTS **Polaroid**

There's my check, money order for \$10.00 or more to USA Baseball Team Fund.
\$5.00 check, money order for the poster only.

MAIL TO:
USA BASEBALL TEAM FUND
PO BOX 20221
NEW YORK, NY 10028

Please send my official USA Baseball Team Booster Package to: (Type or print clearly.)

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____
Please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery.