

You can't live without weird stuff for your car

"Moonie" is a statue of a chubby little guy you put in your rear window. Squeeze a bulb hidden under the dash and he drops his pants.

Granted, this may not be exactly a class act, but it's a sure sign that the annual APAA show is back in town. The Automotive Parts and Accessories Association represents manufacturers of \$150 billion worth of stuff American motorists buy for their cars.

Stuff such as Moonie, or new-car scent, or chrome-plated van running boards, or a whistle that clamps onto your fender and is supposed to alert other motorists who otherwise might commit suicide on your radiator.

I'VE ALWAYS been mildly addicted to auto-parts stores anyway and still have to fight off the urge that seems to come on about 1 p.m. every Saturday to go off and buy a bottle of Turtle Wax or something.

I end up at some auto parts store lost for the next couple of hours in the shelves full of hydraulic floor jacks, rear-window defoggers and other neat stuff.

Over the years, I've succumbed to the lure of phony sheep seat covers, a tiny auto vacuum that wasn't powerful enough to clean an ashtray and a half-dozen new jackstands, among other things.

The APAA is where all these aftermarket goodies come from. On the floor of McCormick place in Chicago, you get to meet the inventors of the Slide-N-Lock tiebar for your pickup truck, or the revolutionary NU-CHARGE system.

THE BIG BOOTHS are taken over by the Valvolines or Black & Decker, while the small, booths in the basement get the guys dreaming about inventing the next big hit, like Armor-All, which was supposed to



auto talk Dan McCosh

have gotten its start on the APAA show, on the premise that what the people really needed was something to make their tires shiny.

"India is the next big manufacturing nation," confides one importer of hand tools. Underdeveloped nations, in fact, are heavily represented, touting themselves as manufacturing sites, since price competition can be cutthroat on commodity items such as small wrenches and pliers.

Suppliers long ago abandoned Japan and even Korea in favor of India, Pakistan or Malaysia. I got a strong impulse to lead an expedition

into the jungle to find the lost city of rubber floor mats.

BUT IT is invention that is the core of the show, ranging from 20 varieties of tune-playing car horns to a truly fascinating cupholder that works on a kind of gyro-tilt principle. A solar-powered window vent, a battery that recharges itself at the flip of a switch and a tricky butane soldering iron that ignites at a touch capture my attention.

Then I realize that no car on the market today is really adequate to handle half these items. You would

need at least a set of air-operated overload springs just to support the weight of the air horns, the battery-operated compressor, the new seat covers, mud flaps, radiator grates and bumper winches.

NEARLY READY to leave, I notice a sign for the Feather Wash Sys-

tem, which dry-cleans your car with select feathers from Chinese water fowl and a specially formulated silicone spray. "We will be washing cars in the box," says the sign.

Just wait until next Saturday.

Dan McCosh is the automotive editor of Popular Science.

Tax bill can be put off until later

Third of five parts

The third strategy of tax reduction is deferral, which refers to the action taken to future years.

There are two main types of tax deferral. Deferral with pre-tax dollars and deferral with after-tax dollars.

Deferral with pre-tax dollars

Qualified pension and profit-sharing plans for business employees are essentially savings plans with two tax incentives for business contributions.

First, money saved from current income and contributed to properly qualified plans is deductible from gross income and therefore cuts your taxes.

Second, the interest income, dividends, and any capital gains earned in such plans aren't taxable until the participant retires and receives the money.

SELF-EMPLOYED PEOPLE with Keogh retirement plans can make tax-deductible contributions to several different kinds of plans. The maximum amount the taxpayer can deposit is up to 20 percent of self-employed earnings, with a ceiling of \$10,000.



finances and you

Sid
Mittra

Self-employed people also may deduct 15 percent of the cost of health insurance if they do not get coverage under a subsidized plan, such as through a spouse's employer.

The third choice of tax-deferral is an individual retirement account. People not covered by retirement plans at work as well as employees whose adjusted gross income on a joint return fall below \$40,000 (\$25,000 for single taxpayers) can deposit up to \$2,000 each in IRAs. These contributions are fully tax deductible.

People covered by 401 (k) retirement plans at work and barred from also having a deductible IRA can contribute up to \$7,000 in 1989 in this tax-deductible plan. The money is subtracted from the salary automatically and put in the plan to grow tax-deferred. The company usually kicks in some additional money.

which raises the yield.

Deferral with after-tax dollars

Insurance contracts bought with after-tax dollars are good for after-tax accumulation of earnings as long as these earnings accumulate within the policy contract.

The types of insurance contracts that qualify include single-premium deferred annuity, single-premium whole life, single-premium universal life, and variable annuities. In general, at the time of withdrawal, that part of the annuity payment allocated to the cost of the investment is treated as a non-taxable return of principal; when withdrawn, the balance is taxed as ordinary income.

THE SECOND choice is non-deductible IRAs. These contributions can be made by those taxpayers who do not qualify for a deduction. The

reason for making non-deductible IRA contributions is that earnings on such deposits, like earnings on deductible deposits, accumulate without being immediately taxed.

Unlike deductible IRAs, which cannot be withdrawn before age 59½ without a penalty, non-deductible IRA deposits can be withdrawn at any time without incurring a tax on principal or penalty for early withdrawal.

Seminar: "Planning Strategies for the Young and Successful," "How to Tame the Volatile Market," "Long-Term Health Care," "Annuities — The Only Tax Shelter Left?" and "Retiring — Your Best Financial Choices."

The seminar, sponsored by the Observer & Exceter Newspapers and Coordinated Financial Planning, will be 7-9 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 12, in the offices of Coordinated Financial Planning, Sheffield Office Park, 3250 W. Big Beaver, Suite 540, Troy.

For reservations, call 643-8888.

Sid Mittra is a professor of finance, School of Business at Oakland University and owner of Coordinated Financial Planning.

marketplace

R.S.V.P. Public Relations in Southfield has been appointed to handle public relations and newsletters for Airmaster Heating and Air Conditioning and Joyce Weiss Associates.

The Berlin Group Inc. has won the first place award in the third annual American Scene competition given by the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists.

Vanity Dental Studio has opened its office at 2710 Rochester Road, Suite A, Rochester Hills.

Vanity Dental provides a variety of cosmetic services and uses the latest techniques to whiten, straighten, close gaps and repair chips and breaks in teeth.

Richard Media Design has been named agency of record for Motivation Planners and Motivation Travel.

American House Retirement Residences of Birmingham has been completed. American House is at 1100 N. Adams Road.

Scott Specialty Gases Inc. has received the 11th annual Leonard

Parker Pool Safety Award for companywide safety improvement.

Dennis R. Green & Associates Inc. has moved its office to 2335 Northwestern Highway, Suite 110, Southfield. The telephone number is 352-0700 and the fax number is 352-1365.

Barbara L. Berent has formed the new company, Music Technologies International. The offices of the new firm are at 34581 Northwestern, Ste. 300, Southfield. The phone number is 827-7788.

Schwitzer Real Estate Inc./Bettler Homes and Gardens has opened its 21st office. The new office is at 200 Diversion, Rochester Hills.

Cushman & Wakefield of Michigan recently completed lease negotiations for Ameritech Publishing on 17,000-square-foot of office space at Kireo Commerce Center on Dequindre near I-696 in Madison Heights.

America's Pizza Cafe has opened at 24459 Telegraph Road. The new full-service, gourmet pizza restaurant, features a special wood-fired oven located in the center of the restaurant.

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