

HUBRED

FROM PAGE C5

Horns honked behind him. I almost honked, but I think one should save honking for really outrageous behavior. I'll get to that in a minute. It seemed to me that every time I measured a safe following distance (one-one thousand, two-one thousand...), some bozo slipped into the space. I watched the drivers around me, and nobody had their hands at the 10 and 2 position, either. Do kids still feel a sense of awe and a tinge of fear when they get behind the wheel for the first time? Or has driving become something so mundane and uninspiring that we've become enervated, we with our cell phones and fast food meals-on-the-go?

How can we take driving so casually? We're piloting a ton

of steel that could collapse around us or burst into flame or crush the life out of another human being. We know the statistics about highway accidents. We know speed kills. Why aren't we nicer, why don't we show more respect to each other on the road? I've heard it said that my driving isn't the fastest in the world, but I do try to be safe. On this trip, when my anti-lock brakes kicked in during a thunderstorm and knocked the cruise control off-line, I took notice. I think that "Low Trac" light on my dashboard is cut-spoken for, "Slow down stupid, you're gonna get us killed." When the car ahead of me hit its brakes, I touched mine as well, instead of waiting until the last minute and stopping a hairsbreadth away from its rear bumper. And when a BMW driver,

impatient that I refused to cut off another car to leave the left lane on I-94, darted around me, pulled in front and then suddenly braked...I finally honked my horn. I mean REALLY. I'm not a better driver than anyone else. In point of fact, I occasionally tend to err on the slow side, which can be just as dangerous as speeding. I take things personally on the road, and my traffic expert or patrol officer will tell you that's a sure way to get yourself in trouble. Some of the Important Stuff I was thinking, though, had to do with why I let people into my lane, why I don't very often speed toward my destination and why I insist on a safe following distance, even if others insist on filling the empty space I leave. It's because I don't just drive cars. I bond with them. The Beast I drove for seven

years served me well, and letting her go has been a tough, tough thing to do (and not just because someone lost the paperwork that would give me clear title). The Princess and I clocked 1,712 miles altogether during my week's vacation. She took me to see the people I love, she carried me safely through road construction and traffic jams and the monsoon season in southern Minnesota. We're together now. And if history is any indicator, it'll be a long and very rewarding relationship. Joni Hubred is editor of the Farmington Observer. She welcomes your comments by mail to 3341 Grand River, Farmington MI 48335; by phone, (248) 477-5450; by fax, (248) 477-9722; or via email. jhubred@oe.homecomm.net

Farmington resident chairs fund-raiser

Farmington resident Mary Lore is alumni chairperson for the University of Michigan-Dearborn School of Management's "Celebrate Success," held Friday, Sept. 6, starting at 6:30 p.m. The event will be held at the Ritz-Carlton, Dearborn, located at the south-west corner of Hubbard Drive and the Southfield Expressway Service Drive. Proceeds from the event will fund the first-ever endowed faculty position in the School of Management at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Over 200 alumni, faculty and staff - some from the School's first-ever graduating class of 1969 - will gather to celebrate the school, its success and the success of its graduates. University of Michigan Regent and DTE Energy Senior Vice President S. Martin Taylor, and Bank of Bloomfield Hills President, and School of Management alumni, Patrick

McQueen, are honorary chairs for the evening's festivities, which include a dinner-dance, raffle and silent auction. Top raffle prize: two-year lease for a 2003 Mustang V6 Convertible, donated by Ford Motor Company. Silent auction items include a seven-day Celebrity Caribbean cruise for two, including airfare, provided by Auto Club Group. The UM-Dearborn School of Management ranks in the top 10 percent of all management programs in the US and among the top one percent of all regional universities in the country according to US News and World Report. Tickets are \$250 per person and \$1600 for a table of eight. Contact the UM-Dearborn School of Management at (313) 593-6248 or visit the event Web site at www.som.umd.umich.edu/success.

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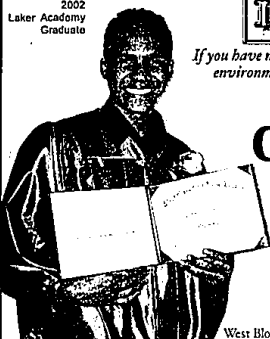
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