November 2011

fall car care











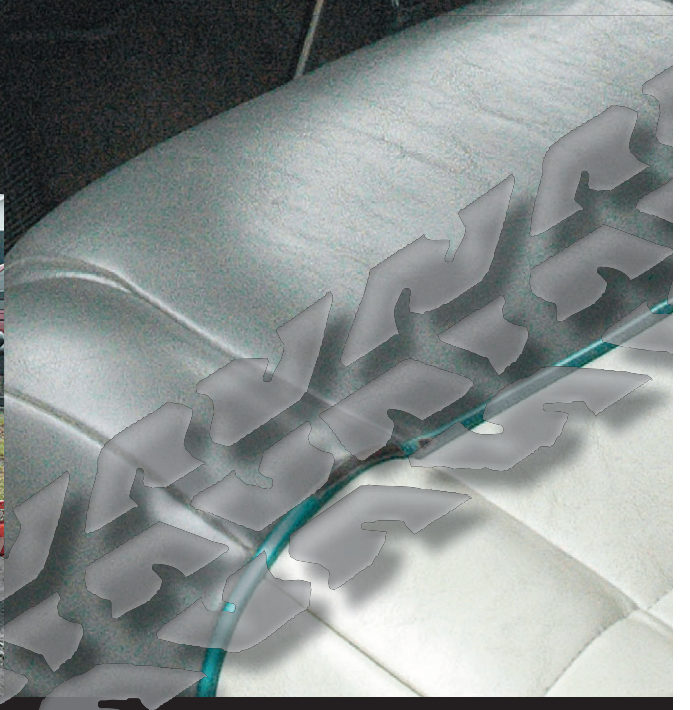

A special section of the *Winchester Press*

Queen of Winchester still reigns

WINCHESTER

Firefighters in the village of Winchester have called the little 1940 Chevrolet truck the Village Queen since 1948.

Today, the Queen still reigns. The Township of North Dundas Fire Services – Winchester Department still has a special place in its fleet for the two-seat pumper.

The Queen is now seen on occasion with Sparky the Fire Dog along as a passenger, in the Country Christmas Parade of Lights in Winchester, at antique fire equipment shows, and as an attraction at fire prevention activities.

Purchased by the Winchester Fire Department in 1948, the 1940 Chevy is powered by a six-cylinder, 235-cubic-inch engine that pushes power through a three-speed manual transmission.

The Queen carries a Hale fire pump that is driven by a six-cylinder Chrysler industrial flathead engine with an exhaust driven priming system. The Hale, estimated to pump 500 gallons per minute, is still operational and is used in demonstrations and to aid in transferring water to cisterns. The truck also was originally equipped to carry a 40-foot, three-fly extension ladder.

One of the Queen's unique features is the wooden portion of its body. The oak was imported from New York State and used to construct the cargo box, seat base and windshield frame. Members of the Winchester department carried out the work at the Cedarview Lumber yard in 1970.



Village Queen

Known as the Village Queen, the 1940 Chevrolet truck has been a fixture in Winchester since 1948. After seeing regular duty with the Winchester Volunteer Fire Department, the Queen was retired and has been maintained in working condition. It is displayed at local functions, antique fire equipment shows and in promoting fire safety.

Press Photos – Van Bridger







Featured on our cover

Newington hauler

The 1956 Ford F100 pickup featured on the cover of this edition of the Fall Car Care section belongs to Rick Bouchard of Newington. The hauler was purchased in Florida from an owner whose 86-year-old father originally purchased it. The metallic paint was applied in Florida, but the customized interior was done in Ontario. The 351-cubic-inch Windsor power plant pumps out 400 horsepower. The all-metal body sits on a Lincoln LTD frame, which rides on a Mustang front-end suspension system. The '56 was displayed at the Wubs' Grand Opening Show and Shine.

Press Photos – Van Bridger

Winter rims can save money, time

If you're looking for an easy way to keep your tires in good shape and save money, consider getting a second set of rims.

Buying an additional set – which means both your winter and summer tires can stay on their own rims, all year round – can help preserve the inner edges of the rubber. That's because an auto technician won't have to peel off the tires in the spring and fall, season after season.

Plus, when a car owner only has one set of rims, a routine tire change takes longer for a technician to complete – and, in the case of most auto shops, the additional labour required will typically result in a higher fee for the customer, noted Phil Van Noppen of Winchester Automotive Services.

Van Noppen also said that tires, when on rims, can be changed quickly, and drivers can get on the road in short order.

"You don't have to wait around – it's a half-hour thing, tops," he said.

In addition, Van Noppen noted, alloy rims used in the summer will last longer and keep looking new, because they won't have to endure years of harsh Canadian winter weather.



Phil Van Noppen is pictured here taking a summer tire, which is on rims, off a SUV. Winter tires can be put on the vehicle much faster if they are already on their own rims.

Press Photo – Smith-Millar



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Precision Diesel, Wubs Transit settle into new location

by Amanda Smith-Millar
Press staff

WINCHESTER

The move is finally, and officially, complete.

Nanda and Richard Wubs have relocated their two businesses – Precision Diesel and Wubs Transit – from their River Road home to a more spacious facility on Dawley Drive in Winchester.

The husband-and-wife team hosted an official opening earlier this autumn, at which community members and dignitaries gathered to celebrate with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Grand opening

Wubs Transit is a transportation company which, among its other services, offers a commuter shuttle bus to Ottawa. Meanwhile, Precision Diesel repairs "heavy duty" machines like farm equipment, transport trucks and trailers, pickups, and dump trucks. Precision Diesel also performs Ministry of Transportation safety checks, as well as emissions tests for heavy-duty equipment over 4,500 kilograms.

Nanda noted that the move to Winchester will provide better visibility for Wubs Transit. It's also more convenient for customers who wish to drop by and purchase shuttle tickets.

"The community can see that we're here," Nanda noted.

The two businesses now occupy 12024 Dawley Drive, formerly owned by Green Tech Ag & Turf, which vacated the building after expanding last year.

Snip goes the ribbon

A ribbon-cutting ceremony on Sat., Sept. 24 served as Precision Diesel and Wubs Transit's official housewarming party in Winchester.

A barbecue, show-and-shine car display, open house, and kids' activities turned the afternoon into a community event for all ages. Various industry vendors had booths set up and information available.

In fact, they decided to make their grand opening double as a fundraiser. Including a $400 donation from TD Bank and $100 from Ackert Insurance Brokers, the open house produced $1,000 for the Winchester District Memorial Hospital Foundation.

Township of North Dundas Deputy-Mayor Gerry Boyce praised the Wubs' generosity during his speech at the opening ceremony.

"They are very good corporate citizens here in North Dundas," Boyce said, adding that the Wubs family not only supports charities, but in the past, has also quietly helped out those in need: "They've also done a lot of things behind the scenes."

Boyce added that council wishes the best for the couple. "Richard and Nanda have worked very hard over the years," he said.



Meet the team

The owners and employees of Wubs Transit/Precision Diesel gathered together for a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Sat., Sept. 24. Pictured in the front row are: John Morgan (front, left), Harmony Church's youth pastor, who provided a prayer and blessing during the speeches; owners Nanda and Richard Wubs, with the youngest members of the Wubs family – twins Angelina (left) and Tessa; Gerry Boyce, Township of North Dundas' deputy-mayor; Tony Fraser, North Dundas councillor; and employee Glen Vivaraies. The employees in the back row are: Shawn Fahey (left), truck/coach mechanic; Charles Winter, farm equipment mechanic; Lacey Van Schyndel; and Sandra Whitehead. Missing: Gary Bryan, truck/coach mechanic.



Left: *Soccer-star-in-training Ellia Glennon-Huntley took advantage of the kids' activities at the open house.*

Right: *Nanda and Richard Wubs decided to relocate their two businesses to Dawley Drive in Winchester to increase visibility and operate in a more spacious location.*

Press Photos – Smith-Millar



Wubs Transit to add Morrisburg route?

MORRISBURG

In response to customer requests, Wubs Transit is considering the addition of a second commuter bus route — this time, starting from Morrisburg.

Winchester and Chesterville residents already have the option of taking Wubs Transit commuter shuttle services to work or school in Ottawa, Monday to Friday. Now, a second bus could pick up residents not only in Morrisburg, but also in communities along the way, such as Williamsburg and Winchester Springs.

"We've had people asking us over the years," explained Nanda Wubs, co-owner of Wubs Transit, of the demand for a Morrisburg route.

To learn more about customer needs, a survey has been set up at www.wubs.ca. (To participate, click on the "Commuter Shuttles" link, then "Morrisburg Survey.") Those without Internet access can call 613-774-6618 to participate or ask questions about the tentative plan.

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Do your homework before buying a used car



Confessions of a Country Convert

by Adele Eyman

Most people would agree that buying a used car can be risky; however, you can take steps to cut the risk.

The key is to prepare yourself, by researching the best used car that you can afford to buy, and by learning how to protect yourself from the unfair sales techniques that some car salespeople use. By "unfair," I mean techniques that structure the situation for the sales rep's advantage and allow him or her to subtly influence your thinking, decision-making, and confidence in what the sales rep offers.

A really good salesperson won't overtly lie, cheat, or behave unethically, because he *doesn't have to.* His influence strategies work – and not just because the buyer is naïve or gullible. They work because the sales rep knows how to reliably "pull" a particular set of desired behaviours from the customer, without the buyer realizing it. This is what "sales training" is all about: the psychology of influence and persuasion.

It's not enough to know that used car dealers have a reputation for using underhanded tricks and techniques (some of it deserved, some not). I had studied them in graduate school, thought I was immune to their effect, yet still fell for an arsenal of sales techniques that cost my time, money, and nearly my own car.

Here are some tips to help you avoid falling for them, too:

• Do not believe that the sales rep is your friend. The sales rep is there to sell cars. To do this, he or she must win your confidence. A good sales rep knows how to cozy up to a customer quickly, by finding and establishing common ground with the customer, and by matching their speech and mannerisms to their customer's.

This does not mean that every used car salesman will manipulate you into feeling that the two of you are pals. Some are genuinely friendly and have a knack for creating instant rapport. But that "knack" can also be taught: salespeople learn how to match a customer's speech, body language, and so on. As a "quick-change artist," the good salesperson adopts a persona most like the customer's own.

For example, after a brief conversation about what I was looking for, one of my salesmen began answering my questions by giving me a choice. When I asked him to explain the advantages of alloy wheel rims, he said, "Do you want the aesthetic or the technical version?" This made me feel like I was in control of things and increased my confidence in him. As my confidence grew, I relaxed – obviously, I could let down my guard a little with someone I started trusting – and eventually let the sales rep take over the whole process because, after all, he was the expert here.

Experts suggest that, when dealing with their "new friends" at the car dealership, a customer should take a step back from the situation and ask, "Am I here to buy a used car or make friends?" Ask yourself this question whenever you start to lose focus on the car and the business transaction ahead.

• The Carfax / CarProof document may not tell the whole story. It will give some critically important information; however, any body work not claimed on the past owners' insurance will not appear. In my case, the folks doing the prepurchase inspection discovered that the front end of the car I was considering had been repainted. There were also signs that the cat-cap (cover for the catalytic converter, on the underside of the car) had been reattached.

My friendly salesman had gone over the Carfax report with me in great detail. The car had been a rental, purchased at the end of the lease, with one owner. The report contained no insurance claims or police accident reports. He then suggested that the car was clean (accident-free) when, in fact, it had probably been damaged and repaired at the owner's expense (probably to conceal this from the dealer holding the lease).

Did the salesman know the car had been repainted? The first thing he pointed out to me was the car's colour on the front end. "Look at the colour of this car," he had exclaimed. "I thought it was just plain black, but look over here, there is a blue cast to it. You only see it in certain kinds of light. Isn't that just beautiful? I have never seen a colour quite like this." The best defence is an offence, and my salesman pointed out the two paint colours to me right away, in a manner he thought would appeal to me the most.

My friend told me that her salesman also talked up the car's colour right away. Insulted by this sexist treatment, she replied that colour was at the bottom of her priorities and walked out of the dealership. But, most people won't walk away because, deep down, they really want the car, and sales reps know this. In a similar situation, you might counter by asking how the vehicle's colour affects its performance, or better yet, its price.

• Ask for a prepurchase inspection with your own mechanic, or at another garage of your choice. This request should be seen and treated as standard practice in buying a used car. When asked, however, my sales rep gave me a playful look of horror: "Whatever for?" he said. "We have our own garage here, with an excellent group of mechanics. In fact, let's go meet the service manager now."

I was introduced to the service manager and his entire department. I got the tour of the garage and the service manager's philosophy of life. By the time I extricated myself from him, I felt guilty about doing an inspection at another garage.

When I told my husband about skipping this, however, he insisted that I reconsider and even made the arrangements himself. The sales manager was not that co-operative, but we had the car taken to a nearby, independent garage, where a number of flaws were reported, including a portion of the front end painted "midnight blue" over the original "pearl black."

• Negotiate the price before agreeing to anything else, including giving the dealer a deposit to "hold" the car for you. I made the mistake of forking over $500 to "hold" my car so that my husband could test drive it, and actually walked away from the dealership without a receipt for the deposit – or a bill of sale for the vehicle, with this condition clearly spelled out.

Only a bill of sale can "hold" a car for your purchase, subject to financing or whatever other conditions you negotiate with the dealer. It only makes sense (in hindsight for me, unfortunately) to put money down on a car *after* negotiating its purchase price and putting all the details of the sale into writing.

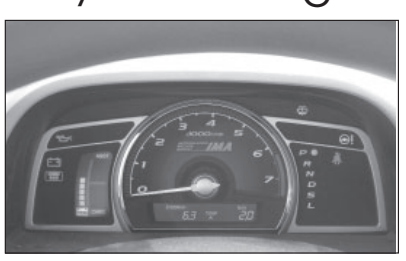
Adele Eyman is a South Mountain resident and volunteer opinion writer for the Winchester Press. *Her column, "Confessions of a Country Convert," examines the quaint, quirky, and sometimes contradictory realities of the rural lifestyle.*



Budding business

Winchester's Akcent Motor Sales has been in business for roughly 18 years as a used-car dealer, and now offers full automotive repairs and service. Troy Wilson, shop technician, is shown here completing a transmission overhaul. *Press Photo – Uhrig*

Track your fuel consumption to increase your savings



Just as weight loss experts recommend keeping track of everything you eat in order to lose weight, driving experts recommend tracking your fuel consumption to cut costs and reduce harmful emissions.

One way of monitoring your fuel consumption is to use a fuel consumption display. Now standard in many vehicles, these displays give you immediate and average fuel consumption readings. Some systems let you know when you are accelerating too hard or are driving too aggressively.

Many drivers report consuming 15 per cent less fuel by acting on the feedback the systems provide.

You can also log on to the Natural Resources Canada website at www.vehicles.nrcan.gc.ca and check out the Track Your Fuel Consumption calculator.

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Collision Solutions Network member

Dawley Drive family repair shop still going strong

WINCHESTER

It's business as usual at D's Collision Center – except for a new affiliation and different signage in front of the Dawley Drive autobody and glass repair shop.

Formerly associated with Fix Auto, D's Collision recently switched over to another company: Collision Solutions Network (CSN).

But, besides joining CSN, not much has changed at the Winchester shop owned by the father-and-son team of Dennis and Phil Carkner.

"We felt we needed to go in a different direction," explained Dennis of the switch to CSN.

The partners remained upbeat about joining the national company, explaining that they felt the CSN brand was a better fit for their business overall.

"They [CSN] embrace the co-branding," added Phil. "They embrace the multi-generational shop."

Phil added that he felt CSN's Canada-wide lifetime warranty was beneficial to customers. (No matter where drivers take their vehicle for repairs – whether it's Winchester or Edmonton or Fort Saskatchewan – the quality of the work performed by any CSN shop is guaranteed for as long as the insured car owner drives the vehicle.)



Same local service

Phil Carkner (pictured here inspecting a vehicle) and his father, Dennis, co-own D's Collision Center in Winchester. The business recently became affiliated with the Canada–wide company CSN.

Press Photo — Smith–Millar

A family affair

D's Collision has a long history in Winchester.

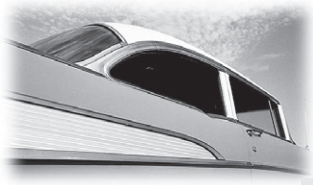
Dennis has owned his shop for more than two decades. Phil and his brother – hockey star Matt Carkner, now a defenceman for the Ottawa Senators – learned key skills of the automotive trade when the siblings worked in their dad's shop while growing up.

Phil later decided to pursue an education in the industry at the post-secondary level, and ended up studying automotive marketing in the U.S. at Michigan's Northwood University.

Phil joined his father in the workplace shortly after graduating, and about two years ago, the father-and-son team officially became co-owners.

Today, D's Collision is one of about 100 independently-owned Canadian repair facilities that have been approved for CSN membership.

According to CSN, these shops repair more than 60,000 cars annually, and their work produces a customer satisfaction rating of 98 per cent.



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Efficient thinking

Proper car maintenance can help drivers get the most out of every litre of fuel they put into their vehicles. Pictured here is Kim Milne, pumping gas for customers at Francis Fuels in Winchester.

Press Photo – Smith-Millar

Five ways to drive lean, clean, and safe

By adopting these five driving behaviours, you can cut back on gas, save money, curb harmful emissions and improve safety on our roads.

1. Be mindful – Seatbelts and car seats revolutionized the way we drive and forever changed the way we think about safety and driving. Nowadays, the buzz is all about fuel efficiency, saving money and the environment. If you have never driven with fuel efficiency in mind, now is the time to start. Make it a priority and watch your pennies pile up. You could save as much as $500 a year in fuel costs and cut your carbon dioxide emissions by over 1,000 kilograms.

2. Become aware of your driving style and modify it accordingly – Are you aggressive, rushed, average, or fuel-efficient? Natural Resources Canada identifies these four driving behaviours as significant factors in fuel efficiency and driving. Aggressive drivers focus on speed, rushed drivers focus on saving time, average drivers react to changes in traffic, whereas fuel-efficient drivers are always mindful of how their driving will affect their fuel consumption.

3. Think before you drive – Can you take public transit or share a ride? One bus takes up to 40 cars off the road, saves as much as 70,000 litres of fuel, and prevents nine tonnes of air pollutants from being emitted each year. Can you work from home? Telecommuting one day a week cuts the amount of fuel used to go to work by 20 per cent that week. Can you plan your route? Allow for fewer stoplights, intersections and pedestrian traffic.

4. Avoid unnecessary idling – Some Canadians spend about four per cent of their annual fuel consumption idling their vehicles. In fact, for every 10 minutes of idling, one third of a litre of fuel is wasted for an average vehicle. Experts recommend turning off your engine when you are parked for more than 60 seconds, except in traffic. Also, the best way to warm up your vehicle in cold weather is to run it for two to three minutes and then drive it.

5. Maintain your vehicle – Proper tire inflation, reducing extra weight, removing roof racks and following the maintenance schedule in your vehicles owners' manual all help to keep your fuel consumption in check.

Driving with fuel efficiency in mind takes time, knowledge, steady hands and feet, and a sense of commitment. NRCan has more tips, tricks, and trivia at www.vehicles.nrcan.gc.ca.

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Plan now for safe winter driving

Thanks to global climate change, many of the weather patterns we've grown accustomed to in the past are no longer the norm today. It seems much of the country experiences shorter-than-normal days of moderate spring and fall weather, with seasons simply switching from scorching sun one moment to chilly temperatures and snow the next. That means it's never too early to take a refresher course in preparing for safe winter driving.

Winter weather takes all of the usual road hazards and steps them up a notch. Slippery roadways, congestion, road rage, pedestrian traffic – all of these situations seem magnified when the weather is poor and daylight is waning. Although winter driving may be frustrating, there are ways to prepare for the season and prevent accidents and injuries.

Prepare

It's important to check that a vehicle is in top shape before the cold weather sets in. Pay special attention to the tires. If tires are bald or their wear is significant, that could prove hazardous on weather-slicked roads. Have tires replaced before the first snowfall. The same can be said when switching from regular performance tires to all-weather or snow tires. Be sure to change all of the tires on the car, even if it is just a front-wheel drive vehicle.

Now is the time to also get a tune-up on the vehicle. Cold weather can make it hard for a car to perform at its best, and any problems should be eliminated before they spiral out of control. Be sure to top off any fluids in the car, especially windshield washer fluid you might need to improve visibility during a storm. Check the function of wiper blades and change them if they aren't up to snuff. Consult with a mechanic to find out if it is advisable to switch motor oil viscosity during the winter to improve flow through the engine and help with cold start turnover.

It also helps to stock up on supplies should you get stranded or stuck:

- snow shovel
- scraper/brush
- tire chains
- flashlight (extra batteries)
- abrasive material, like cat litter, sand, or salt
- jumper cables
- flares or reflective triangles
- brightly colored cloth to signal for help
- empty water-tight container with candles, matches or a lighter, bottled water, and a snack
- sleeping bags or blankets, ski caps, and mittens
- first-aid supplies

Skidding

How best to manoeuvre a car when it starts to skid depends on how the vehicle handles. If the rear wheels skid, turn the steering wheel, and subsequently the front wheels, in the same direction of the skid. If the front wheels skid, take your foot off the gas and shift to neutral. Don't try to steer immediately; the skid may slow, and traction could return. Then you can steer in the direction you want to go and put the car back into drive.

Keep in mind that even with expert manoeuvring it can be tricky to recover from a skid on ice. Snow tires are not infallible and may be ineffective on icy roadways.

Leaving space

One of the best things a person can do when driving in winter weather is to slow down and add much more room for reacting to roadway conditions. Driving slowly and braking slowly may help to prevent skids. Also, should a skid occur, having more room between you and another vehicle helps you to manoeuvre elsewhere or come to a stop without causing an accident.

When visibility is poor, leaving extra room means you can react if something suddenly veers into the path of the car or you missed seeing it through the snow and sleet.



Are you winter ready?

In just a few weeks, the winter winds will descend on the region, and with it will come the snow. Are you prepared? Winchester's W.J.L. Boyd and Sons/ OK Tire is at the ready with an extensive line of tires from which to choose. Service manager Ron Wattie, pictured here, showed off just a few of the options available. *Press Photo – Uhrig*

Stranded or stuck

Should the car break down or it becomes stuck in the snow, there are some things you can do. Be sure to steer or push the car to a safe location, if possible. Put up warning flares or triangles so that you are visible and leave the four-way flashers on if the battery is operable.

You can try "rocking" the car, by putting it in drive and hitting the gas, then in reverse and pressing on the accelerator to create a valley in the snow that might free the car. Use your abrasive material to provide traction. You can also attempt to shovel out the tires.

If the car is inoperable, stay in the vehicle out of harm's way and call for help on a mobile phone. Leave a window cracked open if you will be running the engine for periodic heat. The National Safety Council says that you can run the engine for heat about once every hour, or every half hour in severe cold. Be sure to clean snow from around the end of the tail pipe to prevent carbon monoxide buildup. For extra heat, don blankets or a sleeping bag to prevent hypothermia.

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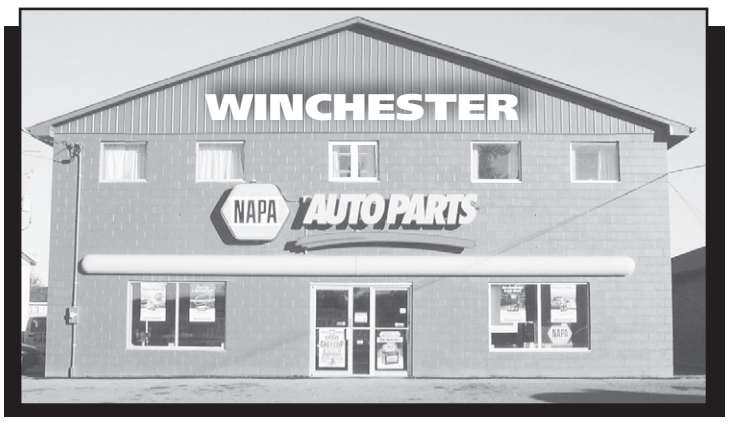

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All aligned?

Matt Richardson of D&J Motors in Winchester is pictured here checking a van's wheel alignment. An alignment can reduce tire wear and ensure that the vehicle travels straight and true (without "pulling" to one side).
Press Photo – Smith-Millar

Tire maintenance essential to staying safe on the road

Proper tire maintenance makes a car safer for drivers and their passengers and can even pad a driver's pocket with a little extra money.

Routinely check tire pressure

Underinflation isn't always caused by a leak. In fact, gradual loss of pressure is natural, particularly when the seasons change and temperatures dip. An underinflated tire makes handling difficult and can even cause structural damage to a vehicle. Drivers should check their vehicle's tire pressure at least once a month. Those who have long commutes should check their tire pressure more frequently. Recommended tire pressures are listed in the owner's manual.

Look for abnormal wear and tear

Tires will wear down over time, gradually losing tread. However, drivers should inspect tires for excessive wear and tear, which could be indicative of other issues, including underinflation and alignment problems with steering and suspension. Additional issues to look for include bulges or cracks on the sidewalls or tread and any signs of a punctured tire.

Rotate tires

Check the owner's manual as to how often tires should be rotated (most suggest every 6,000 miles). Rotating tires helps achieve even tread and extends the life of the tires. Tires are expensive, and rotation can help drivers get more bang for their buck. Drivers of front-wheel drive vehicles will notice their front tires wear down faster than their rear tires. That's because the front tires are doing most of the work, bearing the brunt of the force of braking, steering and driving. Rotating tires effectively levels the playing field.

Stay balanced

Sometimes tires become unbalanced. When taking a car in for routine maintenance, ask the mechanic to see if there are any issues regarding balance. Out-of-balance tires can cause significant issues that stretch beyond just uneven tread wear. An out-of-balance tire can wear down the vehicle's suspension. When driving at highway speeds, drivers might notice a considerable thumping. This is often indicative of an out-of-balance tire.

Don't mix and match

A vehicle's balance can be affected significantly if owners mix and match tires. Having different tires on the left and right sides is likely to upset a car's balance. When installing tires, do so in front or rear pairs or even complete sets. Pairs should also be the same size, brand, and type, and should have the same tread wear. Should one tire go bad, it's almost always worth it to buy two tires. Always put the two new tires on the rear wheels, regardless of the type of transmission (rear-wheel drive, all-wheel drive, etc.). Rear wheels need maximum traction so the vehicle can remain stable.

Don't overload a tire

Check tires for their maximum load range, which will be listed on the tire sidewall. This maximum load should never be exceeded. Doing so will increase tire wear and shorten the tire's life. Excessive load also increases the risk of sudden tire failure. It's important to note the maximum passenger and cargo load intended by the vehicle manufacturer is often significantly less than what the vehicle can actually hold. But drivers must adhere to this figure to reduce the risk of sudden tire failure.

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The Lighthearted Vegetarian

by Janice Atkey Videto

October heralds the start of the bleaker winter months — shorter days, darker evenings, that fresh snap in the air. Just as a car needs thicker oil to be in good working order in cold temperatures, our bodies need heartier, more sustaining foods to maintain our good health in the winter months.

Yes or no: Food in the car

It is quite a conundrum! Many new car owners vow never to eat in their vehicles, but this is often short-lived, as our lives become faster paced and demands on our time become more plentiful. At no time is this more evident than as we travel the road towards the hectic holiday season.

For many reasons I already explored in the *Spring Car Care* supplement, eating in the car is not ideal for our driving attention or for our digestion. If you are planning to be on the road for days, you have no choice but to plan and pack proper food and water provisions for the trip. This is extremely important in a Canadian winter, lest you have a car breakdown and need to wait a storm out for several hours or days. The majority of us, though, are just jaunting about for the day, running errands, visiting relatives, having business appointments. For folks like that, two things are essential:

1) Drink plenty of water.

• Do not substitute pop, energy drinks, coffee, or tea, as they are dehydrating.

• Water increases our ability to concentrate, keeps us alert, and assists all the systems in our bodies.

2) Have small amounts of protein on hand.

• Nuts and dried fruit are the ideal companion. They offer protein, a natural blood sugar boost, and a balance of quick energy and fibre. They can store virtually forever in a reusable seal-tight bag or small plastic container.

• Granola bars are an inexpensive and travel-friendly item as well, but beware the chocolate-coated and candy-filled ones. Choose ones with whole grains, nuts for protein, dried fruit for fibre, and a crispy rather than sticky consistency (easier to manage in the car).

• For the kiddies, there are nice little bags of small, cut vegetables available in the grocery. Feel free to add some nuts or cheese protein cubes.

Tip: Reuse and restock your containers, and always have some food in your car so you don't get "caught" with a rumbling tummy or headache. That is when you might be tempted to stop for the fatty, greasy offerings of the fast-food industry. Think light, think healthy, and you will stay refreshed throughout your day of travel.

Now you've done it!

Eeegads! Your car seats look like something a small dog could snack on for an hour — sticky puddles and food crumbs everywhere!

Quick stain tips:

• Remove all rubble with a hand-held vacuum.

• Treat liquid stains within the first 24 hours.

• Sparingly apply either a well-diluted dish soap/water combination or a vinegar/water combination. For heavy grease, sprinkle on cornmeal and leave overnight, then vacuum. For stinky stains, work with baking soda and water. Dab, don't rub, using clean cotton cloths and change to clean ones frequently. These methods will clean up most average stains. Stubborn or old stains may have to be dealt with by a professional.

Now try it on your plate (and take it with you in the car!)

The road to winter is paved with — well — healthy winter vegetables, and the most colourful and most varied of all is the squash!

Explore all that the squash family has to offer, from acorn squash with its peppery, bold flavour and deep orange flesh; to butternuts, rich, tender and sweet; to the tiny patty-pans that can be cooked and eaten in their skins or marinated and placed in a salad for those lingering summery evenings. Have fun with the spaghetti squash, a lovely yellow squash whose name comes from the fact that, once cooked, its flesh is removed by scraping with a fork and the resulting squash is in fine strings like spaghetti.

Until next time...

Next time, even though Halloween will have passed, we are going to explore very scary ground indeed.

Someone has invited a vegetarian to Christmas dinner! What on earth are you supposed to feed them?

Until then, enjoy sampling the wonders of the fall harvest, and keep your travel foods light and healthy!

Janice Atkey Videto is a Winchester-area resident, volunteer columnist for the Winchester Press *supplements, and long-time vegan ready to pass on her experiences with the "veg life" to two-legged omnivores, herbivores, and carnivores alike.*



Vegilicious recipe du jour

For the road — roasted squash seeds

Here's an easy, car-friendly squash seeds recipe for the fall season:

• Remember to remove and clean all the seeds from every squash you use. They are the "secret protein packs" of the squash family.

• Toss them with some olive oil, salt and pepper, or other spices.

• Place them on a cookie sheet, and roast them gently for 30 minutes at 275 degrees, stirring once.

• Allow them to cool and store in baggies for a healthy travel snack. Squash and pumpkin seeds offer protein, but that's not all! They also contain vitamin A, calcium, phosphorous, and, best of all, a big punch of magnesium! All that packed into a tasty, toasted little package! You can also sprinkle these seeds on salads in place of croutons, or use them as a garnish for a nice piping-hot bowl of soup.

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