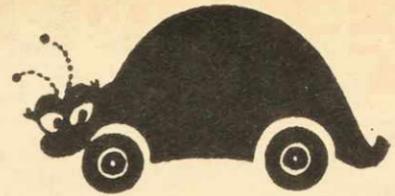




Wheelin' around



by Charlie Moore

Mass transportation in large cities is becoming one of the biggest problems of the seventies. Many solutions have been offered, ranging from the complete replacement of cars with busses, to endless moving sidewalks.

As with every controversy,

there is the usual lunatic fringe ardently demanding the usual over-simplistic rectification of the problem. These people are screaming "ban the automobile" without ever considering the problem in depth or offering a reasonable alternative.

To a certain point, they are

right in that the automobile as we know it today must disappear from our cities if they are not to become huge smog-ridden perpetual traffic jams, but to do away with individual personal transportation altogether would be hopelessly inconvenient and impractical.

In my humble opinion, busses and subways are extremely inadequate, especially in bad weather. Standing in the cold wind waiting for the bus after missing the previous one by 15 seconds and fruitlessly chasing it for two blocks, brings to mind murderous thoughts about people who would have me give up my wheels and depend on Halifax Transit. I realize that there are many people who are obliged to use the Transit system regularly, and they have my deepest sympathy.

However, my heart also turns cold towards people who buy gargantuan smog-belching Detroit monsters to drive themselves, usually alone, back and forth to work. Many of these hulking land-barges rarely ever carry more than two passengers. Many of them have less room inside than their better engineered imported counterparts such as the Austin 1800 or the Renault 12 and 16.

A rationalization of the situation is needed. Micro-Mini cars (see last week's column) are a step in the right direction if people will buy them and use

them in great enough numbers, thereby replacing larger cars. What should be done now, and what will have to be done eventually, is to legislate a size limit on cars to be driven in the city. Eventually there would evolve a specialized city car which would probably be impractical for open road travel but completely at home in the urban environment.

Some pre-requisites would be: small size with sensible utilization of space, low cost, ease of maintenance, a small gas or electric powerplant, good maneuverability, and snappy performance up to about 40 miles per hour.

These changes could be brought about over a period of five to 10 years and although costly, the advantages would be well worth it. The problem is to get the politicians (who probably would be reluctant to

give up their Caddys and Olds 98's in deference to something smaller) moving on the matter.

Meanwhile, you can help alleviate traffic congestion and inadequate parking facilities by:

1. Buying smaller cars and using them only when necessary (walking is good exercise).

2. Try organizing commuter car pools to cut down on the number of vehicles in use during rush hours.

3. A well-tuned car burns its fuel more efficiently so keep your engine in good working order to cut down on pollution.

4. Write a letter to your favorite local politician (or clip this column and send it) demanding some action on the transportation and parking problem here in Halifax.

Till next week, keep wheelin' along.

Gesundheit!

by Uncle Walt

"This is my son," said the dentist, introducing the boy to a patient. When the dentist was out of the room, the patient asked, "Are you going to be a dentist too?" "No," replied the boy. "My father isn't a dentist." How is this possible? (Answer below.)

Healthy teeth are useful for chewing, that important first step in digestion. A full complement of adult teeth, and the willingness to use them rather than gulp food down, will insure that the stomach gets food in a condition it can handle.

Dental hygiene has been drilled into all of us, yet a detailed review can still be helpful if we are to avoid a third set of teeth: false ones. Even denturists — who should be legalized — cost money.

Nutrition is a must for healthy teeth. Even adults require calcium in their diets. Milk is an excellent source. So is blackstrap molasses, if you can dig it. Healthy teeth require healthy gums, which need vitamin C. A fresh orange daily will do the trick, although other fruits and vegetables also contain vitamin C, especially citrus fruits: lemons, limes, grapefruits, and tangerines.

Smoking irritates gums. Very hot and very cold drinks are hard on teeth, and may cause fillings to fall out. Also stay out of fights, be careful on icy sidewalks, and always wear a seatbelt while in a car. Your teeth — and the rest of you — will last

longer.

Avoid soda pop, hard candy, and other supersweet nonfoods. Brush your teeth after every meal and snack. Decay occurs in the first 15 minutes after eating. This means you should carry a toothbrush with you.

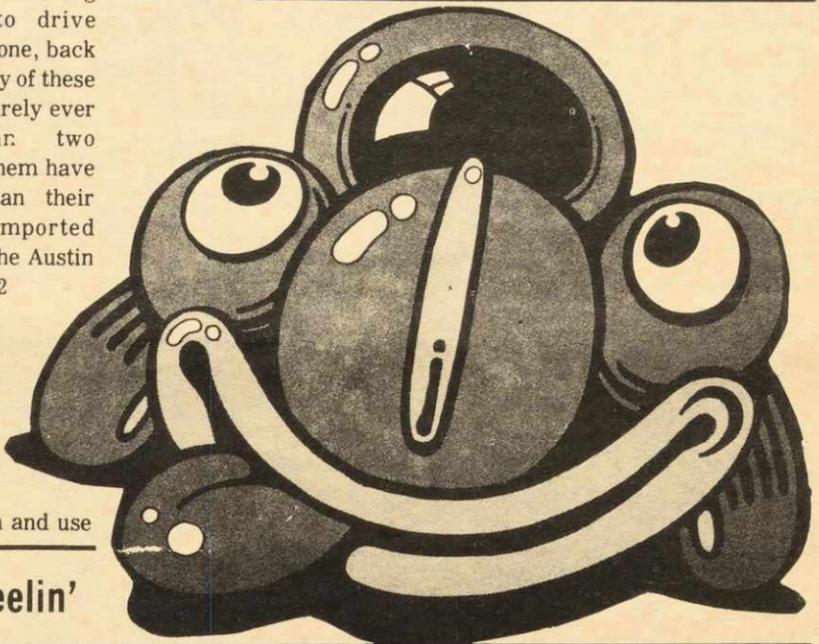
Salt or baking soda are just as good as toothpaste. Even water alone has value. Brush teeth in the direction they grow, to dislodge food particles. Also brush across the tops of the teeth. Include the gums in brushing: it stimulates circulation. Use warm water, not cold, when brushing and rinsing.

A useful supplementary item is dental floss, a special string for cleaning between teeth. Floss is good after eating fibrous foods such as oranges. Instructions are included (with the floss, not the oranges).

Visit a dentist regularly, and ask for a thorough examination including x-rays. Also see a dentist if you have a persistent toothache or gum trouble. Some dentists aren't painful. Ask around.

In case you haven't figured out the riddle above, the dentist is the boy's mother. The riddle stumps people because of stereotyped sex roles. It's very difficult for a woman to get admitted to a dental school. Her qualifications must be much higher than those of male applicants, and even that is often not enough. There'll be some changes made though, if we make them.

Keep on wheelin'



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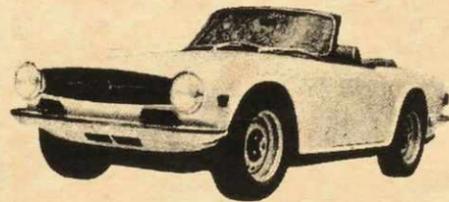
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