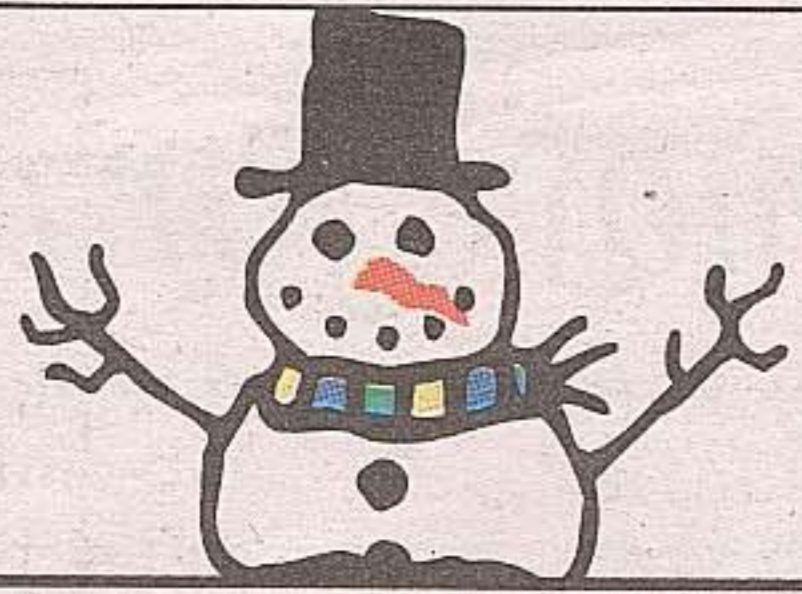
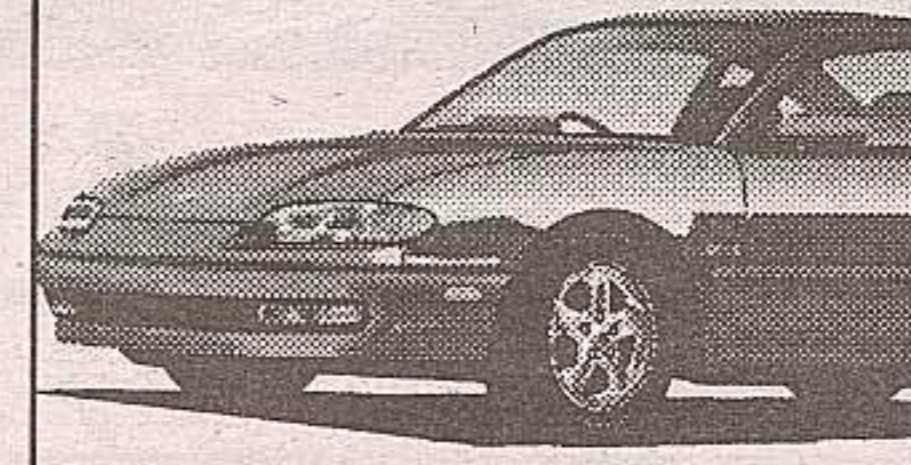


Prepare for
winter blast



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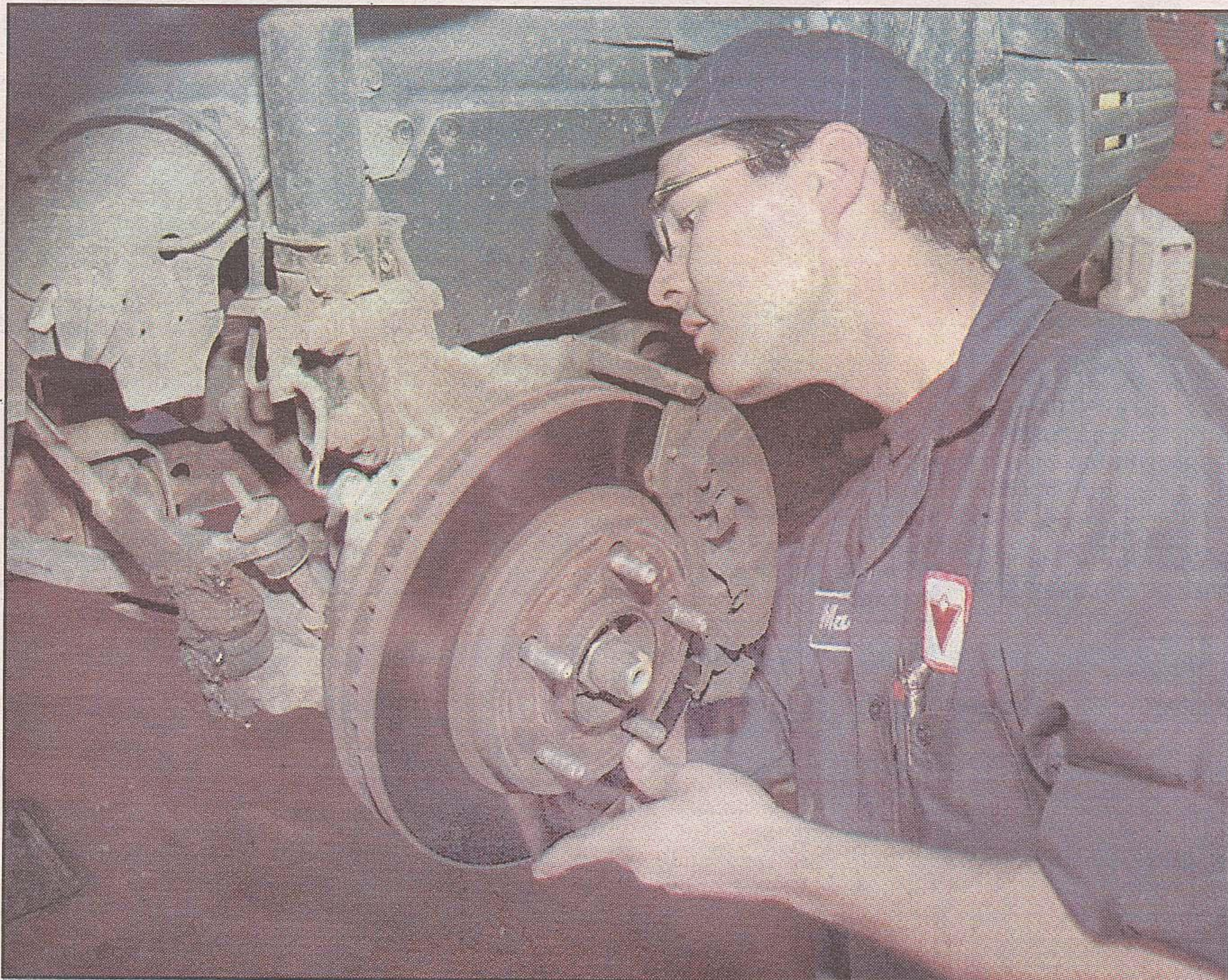
WINTER Car Care

Wednesday October 21, 1998

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Prepare your vehicle now for winter's fury

Apprentice mechanic Mark Sousa checks out the disc brake assembly of a customer's car at Canadian Tire's service department. Canadian Tire recommends a fall/winter tuneup now to prevent problems further down the road.

Photo by Ted Brown

Canadian Tire recommends a winter tune-up

Start. Travel. Stop. That's all we ask of our cars. However, when a vehicle fails to perform just one of these three requirements, the driver and passengers may find themselves in a frustrating, inconvenient and even a dangerous situation.

Action (not reaction) is the easiest solution to performance failure. Preventative maintenance can help motorists avoid car trouble, getting them to and from their destinations safely and on time. Remember, it is always cheaper to fix a minor problem before it becomes a major expensive one.

Following are several checks you may need to make to increase your car's ability to start, travel and stop during the

dangerous winter months ahead.

Starting

A car's starting ability is often taken for granted, yet approximately 45 per cent of all emergency road service calls are for "can't starts". Often the battery is the culprit. Keep in mind the age of your battery. The average life span of a battery is approximately four and a half years. Cold weather also makes batteries less efficient. Don't find yourself stranded during the first blast of winter's fury—have your battery tested or replaced now.

Other possible reasons for starting failures might be the fuel system, spark plugs, starter motor or ignition. All should be part of your fall/winter inspection and maintenance routine.

Travel

Just because a car starts doesn't mean it's travel-worthy. Having a flat tire or running out of gas can put you on a roadside in a hurry. Check your tires periodically for wear. Tire treads must have at least 2/32" depth in every groove. The deeper the tire grooves the better the traction on snow. Rotate your tires every six months and ensure that your spare tire is available and inflated.

Keep a close check on the gas gauge. The wise motorist tries to keep the tank half-full to prevent condensation in the tank. This practice also ensures that you will never run out of gas.

Stopping

In a recent survey, brake failure

topped the list as the car crisis most feared by drivers. Ironically, brake failure is the leading mechanical cause of traffic accidents.

Most automotive technicians suggest having your brakes examined every spring and fall, especially if you do much stop and go driving.

Your local Canadian Tire offers "free brake inspections" for your convenience.

All of these mechanical failures are easily avoided, but only with preventative maintenance. A properly maintained vehicle will save you time and money and give you that little extra measure of security knowing your family is driving in safe vehicle.

—Story courtesy Canadian Tire

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