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Cruisers bring 'Good News'

JABE NICHOLSON
 Special to The IFP

Fifty years ago there were no super highways across the continent, almost no fast food chains, and certainly no fuel pumps calibrated in litres. In the 1950s, gas was about 20 cents per gallon, and, in case you thought that was worth writing home about, postage stamps were only three cents. A 1955 Buick sold new for about \$2,200, but back then the average yearly Canadian salary was just \$2,400.

A great deal has changed since then, including the cars we drive. The chromed behemoths of the '50s were brash symbols of the optimism of the post-war period. Much of that glitz and glory has faded, along with marques like Kaiser and Studebaker, Edsel and DeSoto. But the Fabulous Fifties and their opulent classics haven't entirely disappeared. In fact, six 1950s beauties will soon be rolling into town.

Cross Canada Cruisers is a training program for college-age Canadian men begun this past year. Using 1950s cars, the men were trained in basic maintenance on these classic automobiles last April, then began a journey spanning almost the whole of the Trans Canada Highway's 7,821 km length. It seemed a fitting celebration since the highway, the third longest in the world, was begun in 1950 as well.

The West team began on Vancouver Island; the East team started on Prince Edward Island. Now, all those kilometres—and car repairs—later, the Cruisers East and West are joining up again after five months on the road. And where are they meeting? The 14 Cruisers will reunite right here in Halton Hills.

The cars aren't just for transportation. They are intended to be modern parables of life's journey. The team members have been spreading a message of hope across the country, using as their theme, *The Classic Story: Ruined, Rescued, Restored*. Whether you're talking about a car or a person, life produces wear and tear. What happens when we or our cars need restoration? Where do we turn for help?

At car shows, fairs, parades, or wherever people stop to admire the vehicles, the team members offer a

CD called *Highway to Heaven: Fiction or Fact?* and a beautiful print of a painting titled *New Life for Olds*. They take the opportunity not only to talk about the old cars and the happy memories they inspire. They also want to suggest, for those with broken dreams, broken hearts, or broken relationships, that there is a Heavenly Restoration Service available with 24-hour service.

The West team will be arriving in a 1952 Lincoln Capri, a 1955 Buick Rivera Coupe, and a 1956 Mercury Montclair with dual glass-pack mufflers that really rumble! The fellows from the East will roll in with the 1955 Oldsmobile Holiday Coupe featured in the painting, a bright orange 1957 Chevy Belair, and a coral and grey 1957 Pontiac Super Chief, a favorite of the ladies. Postcards will be available with photos of each car on one side and the car's vital statistics on the reverse.

The Cross Canada Cruisers will be joining with Halton Hills Bible Chapel for a week of special events in the community billed as Good News, Georgetown! There will be a series of public discussions to be held on October 7, 8, and 9 in the John Elliott Theatre, 9 Church St. Starting each night at 7:30 p.m., the forums feature talks by Cross Canada Cruisers founder Jabe Nicholson on the following subjects: *Jesus and the Climax of History*, *Jesus and the Problem of Evil*, and *Jesus and the Question of Suffering*. The evenings will include refreshments and a time of questions and answers. All Good News, Georgetown! events are free of charge.

Other activities include a Sports Day for community youth, age 7-17, on Friday, Oct. 10, 1-4 p.m. at the Gellert Community Centre, 10241 Eighth Line. That's a PA day for local schools.

The Cruisers and their friends will also be visiting area homes to distribute a special gift packet, including a free CD and an attractive book, *The Stranger of Galilee*. The team members are looking forward to meeting as many community residents as possible during their week in Georgetown.

Some of the cars will also be on display at the Erin Fall Fair, October 10-12. For details call 905-873-1005 or visit www.haltonhillsbiblechapel.com

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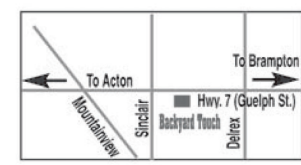
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