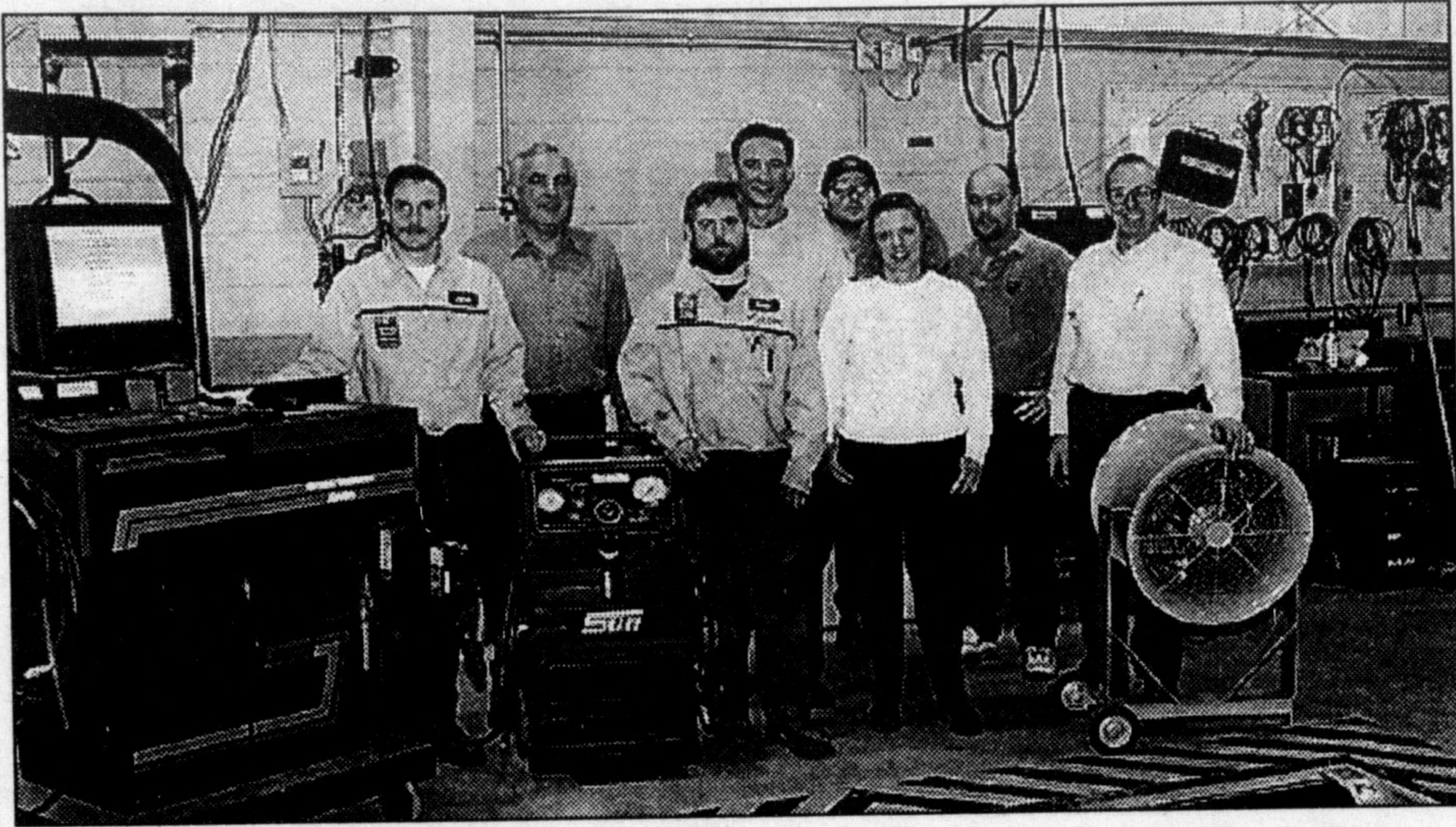


HUNT CHRYSLER JEEP



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Gary Hunt congratulates his staff for receiving their Drive Clean Inspector Licences which enables the Hunt Plymouth Chrysler Jeep dealership to be an accredited "Test and Repair Facility."



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Diagnosis Is The Key To Engine Maintenance

"No tune-up needed until the next century." This claim is realistic, based on some model car factory maintenance recommendations. So, when your technician tells you your car needs a tune-up, what are they talking about?

The term comes from the days of old when an ignition part (the coil) literally vibrated. When the sound was right, coil performance was optimum. Adjusting it to the right pitch, using a tuning fork, was called a tune-up. A tuning fork was the first tune-up tool. Even then, a tune-up included new spark plugs and servicing the carburetor and distributor. Later, along came filters, to extend the life of fluids and components.

In the 1990's federal requirements demanded not only improved performance and reduced exhaust emissions but also longer intervals between services. The component most vulnerable to wear were the ignition points, the make-break switch that controlled current flow to the spark plugs. They had to be adjusted and replaced periodically.

Exit leaded gasoline, historically the number one spark plug fouler. Enter electronic ignition. Exit ignition points, no longer needed with electronic ignition.

New spark plug technology, combined with advanced ignition system design and mandatory unleaded fuel, doubled, even tripled, spark plug life.

Exit the carburetor, to be replaced by fuel injection that were computer controlled for greater efficiency. The mechanic had become a technician, his equipment resembling a science fiction movie. No more of those "seat-of-the-pants" tune-ups, too often based on the sound and feel of the engine.

Today the technician's tool is an impressive (and expensive) diagnostic tester that interfaces with engine and transmission components, printing out a detailed report. It analyzes complex emission control systems and can locate elusive malfunctions.

"Tune-up", as it pertains to late model vehicles, translates into service known as "driveability maintenance." While there is virtually nothing to adjust on these engines, this procedure includes a complete and accurate analysis of engine functions, helping to find potential problems and/or diagnosing performance problems. It also may include a variety of periodic maintenance services that range far beyond spark plug replacement.

The Car Care Council suggests that if your car has been hard to start, or if it runs rough in the morning, or uses more gas than it used to and/or loses power on the hills, you'll be dollars ahead to invest in a diagnostic check-up. And if your mechanic says you need a "tune-up" you'll know what they mean.



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