

Northtown Texaco

Computer helps reveal your car's problems

Markham's Steve Salmon, manager of the Northtown Texaco service station at 241 Main St. for the past 16 years, says he wants to "stay away from the grease monkey image."



STEVE SALMON
Texaco manager

"Here we stress professionalism, which a lot of stations don't," he said.

To this end, a new \$28,000 computer has been added which cuts diagnostic times in half. He claimed it is much more thorough than its predecessor, the oscilloscope.

He pointed out that the old method had limited uses, such as monitoring a car's electrical system. On the other hand, the diagnostic computer can do a variety of tasks by linking-up with the car's own microprocessor.

"The computer is led down the diagnostic path to quickly reveal what is wrong with the car," he commented, adding, "our service station is one of the few in the region that actually has one."

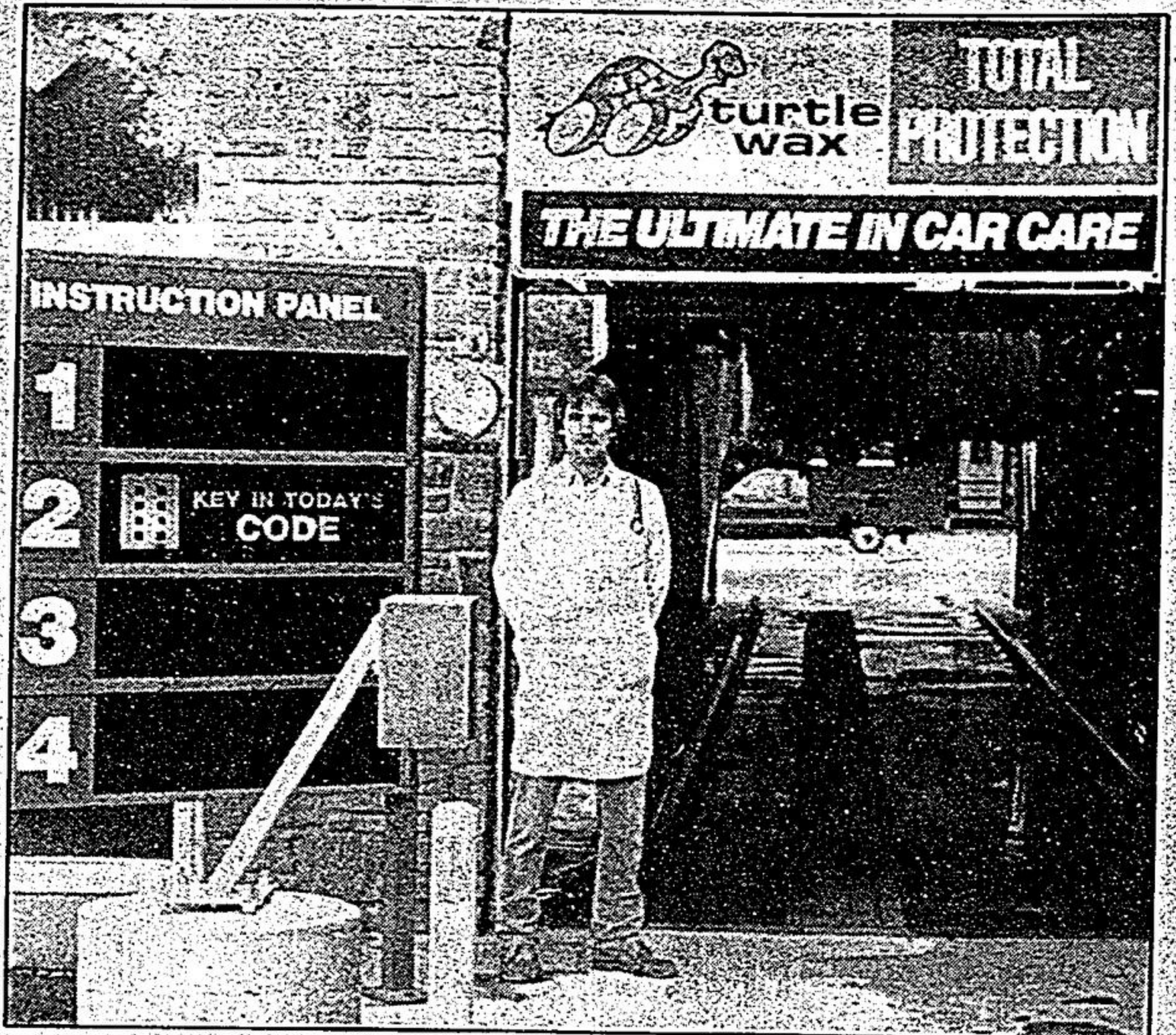
Texaco is also extending self-service from the pumps to the car wash. The company has installed a modern self-automated car wash.

The new car wash works on a code system. A customer simply punches in a code into a box at the entrance of the car wash and his car receives a 100 per cent fresh-water wash.

The customer gets a free wash with a minimum fill-up of gas or can pay \$2 without gas. This compares favorably to the old machine which cost \$1.75 with gas and \$3.50 without.

"Right now I would match ours against any car wash in the region."

In conjunction with the grand opening of the car wash there will be a Goodyear



This is the new-style car wash at Northtown Texaco in Markham. What's innovative is the coding panel on the left for customers to use.

— Rob Donnelly

Tire Sale slated for Wednesday, May 28 to Saturday, May 31.

According to Mr. Salmon, the annual sale is held in the spring because "it is the time of year when people start looking at their cars after a long winter." Between 200 to 300 pairs of tires are sold in this period, he said.

During the sale, tires are discounted 15 to 35 per cent.

As well, on Friday and Saturday (May 30 and 31) everyone is invited for hot dogs, coke, coffee and donuts from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. to help celebrate the station's new car wash and Goodyear Tire Sale.

Car care more important than ever

There has never been a time in the last four decades when care of your car was more important than it is now, says the Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association (MVMA).

Here are the reasons:

- With about 70 percent of us pumping our own gasoline, the routine but critical check performed by attendants at the full-service gas pumps are often overlooked.

- Intervals between oil changes and other maintenance procedures have been substantially boosted, points out MVMA. Example: Many manufacturers require an oil change only once in

10,000 miles. That's almost a year for many drivers. Prior to World War II, a petroleum refiner proudly advertised its product as the 2,000-mile oil.

- Average age of all cars on the road is at a three-decade peak of seven and a half years.

- The ratio of cars to mechanics has improved in the last few years but only to a point where it's estimated that there is one repair person for every 165 cars in operation.

- Car population has quadrupled in 40 years. Heavier traffic means your car should be in tip-top condition to meet today's driving demands. That means

good brakes, steering, tires and acceleration when you need it.

"Ironically, car manufacturers have made such tremendous strides in reducing owner maintenance responsibility that there is concern that such basic efforts as an oil change or replacing an air filter might be neglected," says John C. Scowcroft, Director of Contracts and Special Projects in MVMA's Technical Affairs Division.

Scowcroft points out that the recommendations can be different for two people driving identical car makes.

"Most of us can drive 10,000 miles or

whatever the manufacturer recommends, on the same oil," he says. "But, that does not apply to the motorist who stays within the city limits and makes an occasional trip to the grocery or drug store. That type of owner needs to change the oil every six months regardless of mileage."

"The same rule applies to the Texas rancher or the rural owner who sees a lot of dust in daily drives — long or short," he says. "Also, if your car frequently is used to pull a trailer on vacation trips, drain the crankcase and pour in a fresh supply often. Change transmission fluid and filter more often, too."

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