

Quality not quantity, please, automakers

Get back to the basics. Where have you heard this command?

Usually it applies to education. And usually it's applied by seniors. Basics, so-called, relates to reading, writing and arithmetic.

To us, rightly or wrongly, too little significance is attached to these areas. However, a lot has changed since you and I were young. Kids don't have to read, they can watch TV. Kids don't have to write, they can use computers. Kids don't have to add, they can exploit calculators. And while these gadgets may be intimidating, even superfluous in the minds of many, they're here to stay.

While reversing the hands of time is never easy and seldom feasible, it's a fact of life the hierarchy within the auto industry must face, and face immediately. For, if they don't, the big three, General Motors, Ford and Daimler Chrysler, will soon be distant memories.

They're on the brink. Presently, here in Ontario, chief mechanics set to repair the damage are Premier Dalton McGuinty and Treasurer Dwight Duncan, with help from Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Treasurer Jim Flaherty.

These men, despite positions of importance, are caught between a rock and a hard place, not wanting thousands to lose their jobs, yet hesitant to invest dollars in an industry headed down the drain. So what's in the wind? As sure as June follows January, a bail-out's coming. In Canada as well as the United States.

But first things first. The automotive industry, GM, Ford and Daimler Chrysler, must initially put its house in order. Each must get back to the basics.

Remember the post-war era of the mid-1940s? Some of us do.

General Motors had five basic cars: Chevrolet, Pontiac, Oldsmobile, Buick and Cadillac.

The Ford family included the basic Ford along with Mercury, Monarch and Lincoln.

Chrysler was top-of-the-line, preceded by Plymouth, Dodge and De Soto. Each also built trucks, from half-ton pick-ups to three-ton heavy-duty. Ford had an additional lineup of tractors and farm machinery.

That was then. This is now.

Does anyone except GM dealers know how many cars they currently have for sale? Does anyone



Roaming Around

with Jim Thomas

care?

The same goes for Ford and Chrysler. In an attempt to satisfy the whims of every tire-kicker in the country, they're marketing models of every price, size, shape and description. With few, too few, selling!

If the repercussions weren't so serious, they'd be ludicrous.

To make matters worse, GM purchased the bankrupt Daewoo firm, tacked on a bow-tie symbol and sold them as Chevrolets.

Then, with gas prices nudging \$1.25 a litre, GM added a tank-like oddity called a Hummer to its already over-crowded fleet. Prior to that, they resurrected the Camaro.

About the same time, Ford unveiled a car called the Five Hundred, a beautiful vehicle but out of touch with the times. Drivers avoided it like the plague. To keep pace, Chrysler re-introduced the Charger, another gas-guzzler. Since then, they've added a Calibre, a Nitro and who knows how many more?

They're competing against themselves.

Little wonder heads begin spinning when would-be buyers conjure up sufficient nerve to enter a showroom.

It's mind-boggling.

Without admitting to absurd pie-in-the-sky marketing schemes, big three brass attribute the current sales slump to an influx of competitors: Toyota, Nissan, Honda, Hyundai, Subaru, Kia and more, forgetting that, back in the 40s there was Willys, Studebaker, Oldsmobile, Nash, Packard and Hudson.

Each of these once occupied their fair share of the road, only to die insolent deaths. The same fate is due many models today.

Let's get back to the basics. Stop being all things to all people. Stress quality instead of quantity. Anything less and we'll see Ford, Chev and Dodge on the same discarded scrap heap as Nash, Hudson and Studebaker.

Jim Thomas is a Stouffville resident who has written for area newspapers for more than 50 years.

BOUR BEEF BOURGUIGNON

In our big kitchen we've been making copious amounts of our beautiful beef bourguignon. To me, this is big time comfort food for a snowy evening, like the forecast reads for this evening as I write this. I think this is great with rice or egg noodles — all you need to do is thaw and warm it, all the work's been done.

Reg. \$17.95
Serves 3-4

25% OFF THIS WEEK

WILD RICE MEDLEY

In our salad kitchen, the main guy (Louie) is busy making a lot of this. We cook the wild rice long, as you need to, mix it with some white, add some chopped pecans, orange zest, spices and finish it with an orange dressing. It's good either as a dinner side (it goes with cobia well), or as a salad.

Reg. \$1.29/100g

1/2 PRICE THIS WEEK

HONEY-GARLIC SAUSAGES

These sausages are made with fairly lean coarsely-ground fresh pork with a quite mild seasoning, rounded out with honey and jacked-up with a touch of garlic. The combo is great — and speaking of combos, everyone at the table should partake of these so that there will be no noticeable lingering after-effects of the garlic.

Reg. \$3.99 lb.

25% OFF THIS WEEK

DEGGPLANT DIP

We sell many kinds of dip in our little store, but my fave (after Doreen's spinach dip) is eggplant dip — which I must say is as unlike eggplant as anything can be, or so it seems to me. It's great with just about any cracker or bread (or chip) that we sell.

Reg. \$2.19 / 100 g

25% OFF THIS WEEK

FLORIDA GRAPEFRUITS

These are Indian River, grapefruits which are 'size 23' two sizes up from those that we normally stock. They are juicy, fairly thin-skinned and sweet. I know they are good when my kids dig in without any complaints.

- From Florida-

99¢ EACH

SMOKED TURKEY DRUMS

If you have ever been in our turkey line-up during holiday times, you will be surprised to know that we sell more turkeys throughout the year than we do for all the holidays, this being the result of making really good deli turkey cold-cuts — and if you know anatomy at all, you will know that for every breast there's a leg. When we get an accumulation of legs, we need to get them going — so we smoke them all and sell them at the amazing price of ...

— VERY NEANDERTHAL AS WELL!

.99 ea.

DA HOUSING DEVELOPMENT...

We are now building a limited number of gingerbread houses for this season. As in any housing development, they are not identical, but very similar, they're a good size (there is a model home at the bakery) and they are available on order till they are all spoken for. Cost is \$59.95, mortgages are available.

WHAT'S HAPPENIN' OUTSIDE!

We've received a couple more shipments of wreaths and boughs, as well as urn-size pots of greens and window boxes. Should you wish to make your own and are looking for some embellishments, we've got you looked after as well.

lesley stowe's raincoast crisps®

salty date and almond crackers
craquelins salés de date et d'amande



170g

6.0oz

WE'VE GONE FISHIN'

Our catch this week is Cobia, and we had to go to the Florida Keys to get it. You'll find it a fairly firm fish, similar to Sword fish, which lends itself to grilling. Now, it can be grilled in the piece, perhaps marinated first, or cut into chunks and skewered — which seems to me a great way to cook it. We'll have recipes for a marinade and grilling, as well as some kebabs made up with some of the amazing pineapple that we have this week.

14.95 LB THIS WEEK

CURRIED APPLE & SQUASH SOUP

This is a great, hearty soup which is just overflowing with flavour. This, like all of our frozen soups and entrées, is slow-cooked just like at home and, if you look at the ingredient list, there's nothing in it that you wouldn't use at home.

Great soup!
Reg. \$6.49

25% OFF THIS WEEK

COMING NEXT WEEK!

Our annual knife sale. When you open your knife drawer and don't see anything that you like, you'll need to come and see us. There's a deal happening!

GIFT BASKETS

Although you don't see too many of these in the store yet, rest assured we have made lots in all shapes and sizes — even some which are not in a basket! What's popular about them is that we use all the good stuff (read no fillers) and we price them at a flat rate upcharge — much like a restaurant corkage fee. What you get is a great assortment of my (and hopefully your) favourite products — made to order should you wish.

We offer good value!

CHILEAN BLUEBERRIES

At last, some 'blues' with flavour! During this part of the year, the first varieties come from Argentina for a while — and the first shipments were good, but the quality tails-off a bit (actually a lot) till I get complaints from my wife and my mother-in-law — and many others. Berries are now available from the other side of a Andes and they're much nicer.

Product of CHILE
1/2 pints

1.99 EACH

JUST ARRIVED!

Our order of English products has just arrived, and it includes TWIGLETS and other fancy stuff from England.

WHAT'S BAKING? THIS WEEK ...

What we'll be featuring this week will be.....

CARROT CAKES - We make these fairly tall — four-deckers — with lots of the good stuff like pineapple, the requisite carrots, raisins, pecans and coconut baked in. They're finished with cream cheese icing and some toasted coconut — and some neat little iced carrots.

We make two sizes.....**\$15.95 & 22.95 ea.**

EGGNOG CHEESECAKES - These have shortbread crust, the cheesecake portion is jacked with eggnog, rum, and nutmeg, decorated with rum-spiced whipped cream and festive 'glitter'.

Two Sizes**\$14.95 and \$22.95 ea.**

EGGNOG JELLYROLLS - You all know our jellyrolls...these are made with a bit of nutmeg in the 'roll' portion, and then filled with whipped cream and eggnog rum custard.

One size.....**\$15.95 ea.**

All these items will be priced at.....

25% OFF THIS WEEK

WHAT'S COOKING? AT THE DELI!

The kitchen folk are hard at work this week making lots of Doreen's bread pudding. We don't use just bread to make this, but lots of raisin bread too. A container will usually serve two, regular \$4.99ea. ... and, in the prepared counter, we'll have our B.B.Q'd back ribs on sale as well. They are regular \$12.95 lb — and along with the bread pudding, they'll be...

25% OFF THIS WEEK

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