

Yarnell~Hoffer

HARDWARE NEWS

Yarnell-Hoffer Hardware News

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STORE HOURS: Monday-Friday: 7:30 - 6:30 Saturday 7:30 - 6:00 Sunday 1:00 - 6:00

A VISIT TO THE FAST LANE

Craig and I don't travel very much, except to the hardware show, but it always seems that we get into the most interesting situations when we do. Several years ago, we went to the **National Hardware Show** in Chicago. We flew into the **O'Hare** airport which was enough excitement without the other problems we had. I was sure our plane was going to be eaten by either the plane in front of us or the one right on our tail waiting to land right after us. It was a good thing we carried **Advil** on board with us. Anyway, we had a fellow hardware store owner and friend of ours from **Dekalb, IL** pick us up at the airport and take us back to his house. We were going to borrow his car for several days to drive back into the city for the show. He said he had a very reliable **Volvo** we could drive. We didn't think too much about it since we knew **Volvos** were supposed to be good cars. Well, about the only thing I can say good about this car was that it was free and it was solid. I don't even remember the year of that awesome machine, but it couldn't have been newer than 1974. Our friend promised us it was a great car so off we went.

The first thing I'd like to say about **Chicago** is that unless you have at least an eight cylinder car you might as well not pull out of your driveway. The speed limit must be at least 85 mph on the interstate and a six cylinder car like the one we had didn't have a chance of getting anywhere.

It was August and about 100 degrees outside. Needless to say, we weren't equipped with an air conditioner. We had just been at the show all day and were heading back to **Dekalb** (about a 1-1/2 hour drive) when we had the great idea of driving through town before head-

Welcome to our expanded newsletter.

MY APOLOGIES for the far too numerous grammatical mistakes in the 1st newsletter. Most of them slipped in while we were doing the final editing. I got several phone calls and letters about the mistakes so I will try to be a little more careful.

INSIDE:

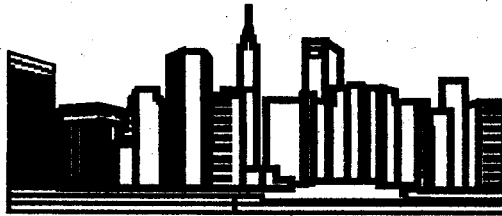
- *Store News*
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- *Home Security Spotlight*
- *Christmas Tree Orders*

ing out. I guess our southern mentality had taken over our brain for that fleeting moment, but nevertheless we set out for a different way home. I mean we had a reliable car, didn't we? Besides, what could happen to us? We were sure people would be willing to help us out if we got lost or had some trouble.

It was about 5:30pm and still seemed close to 100 degrees outside. We saw some neat high rise buildings so we cruised over to check them out. Boy, they look just like the subsidized housing that you see on TV. We started to notice a little hesitation in the car but did not think too much about it. We didn't want to take a chance on breaking down, so we headed toward the interstate. You know, almost every road in Chicago looks like it goes to the interstate. We weren't lost though (or so we told ourselves) and we turned down a long street that looked to be a clear shot to the interstate.

I was just mentioning to Craig how odd it was that all the street lights on this block were out (in fact, they were all shot out) when all of a sudden the car stopped going. I told Craig he better not try a stunt like that since I had realized what part of town we were in. Not ten seconds later, the car came to a complete stop right there in the middle of the street. Craig just looked at me and said "Mike, I think we have a slight problem". He tried to start the car but it wouldn't turn over. By this time, the sun was setting behind the high rise buildings and we were stuck on some street that we didn't even know the name of in a part of town that we were not welcome in. I got out and pushed us to the side of the road and looked around. Down the street I saw what looked like a fire hydrant that had been tampered with. It was spraying water all over the street. Then I looked down the other direction and saw the same thing. We learned it was a way for people to cool themselves off in the hot summer and the fire department opened the hydrants on a regular basis. Not only were we broken down in the wrong part of town but we stuck out like a sore thumb. We both had on nice white **Yarnell-Hoffer** tee shirts and sunglasses. That was not the proper attire for that neighborhood. We took a quick closer look around and noticed that a lot of the windows in the nearby buildings were broken out or boarded up. All the apartments above these buildings had fans in them or windows that were wide open. We also didn't see anyone on the street we were on.

We decided to fix the car and get out of there as fast as we could (easier said than done). Of course we didn't have any tools except for some electrical tape and a screwdriver. Craig likes to think he's a lot like MacGyver though so he wasn't worried (or so he thought to himself). He crawled under the car only to lay down in a pool of gasoline that was pouring out of the fuel pump. It didn't take him long to figure out that we had a fuel line problem (boy, he's smart isn't he?). The rubber hose had worn completely through causing the gas to pour out onto the pavement which, by the way, was about



135 degrees. Not to mention the fact that the gasoline immediately burned his arm since it was so hot. I stood above him with a tire iron just in case we encountered some "unfriendlies". We tried to repair the leak for about 45 minutes until we realized it was not going to work. Off in the distance, we saw a service station so we

locked up the car and headed down the street. We just knew that the car would not be there when we got back or that it would be on wooden crates without any tires. That was the longest walk of our life. We were so out of place and everyone was staring at us from their open windows.

By the time we got to the station, it was about 6:30pm and the mechanic had gone home for the weekend (I forgot to mention this was also on a Friday afternoon). There was a sign on the door that said CASH ONLY and it was barely visible through the steel bars everywhere. We finally convinced the manager to tow us two blocks to the station and try to fix our car. There was only one guy at the station who had half of a clue about cars and he said he'd take a look at it. In the meantime, we found ourselves sitting in the room with the cash register and drink machines in some lovely vinyl multi-colored chairs that looked like they came out of an old barber shop. Everyone that came in to pay for gas stared at us wondering what we were doing in that part of town after dark. We sat and sat and after about an hour and a half, the pseudo-mechanic finally put it up on the rack. After some advice

from MacGyver and myself (and some hose clamps and a clothes hanger), he finally finished the patch job by about 9:30pm. It took all the money we had (about \$100.00) to pay the bill. The manager gave us directions to the interstate and we rolled off into the darkness. We ate a credit card supper at an all-nite diner and finally made it to Dekalb about 1:00 in the morning. Needless to say, we learned our lesson that night about becoming tourists in a city you could get lost in and never be found.

NOVEMBER
HWI special
 the friendly ones of the month

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Dot
 multiple outlet
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500 318 White supplies last!