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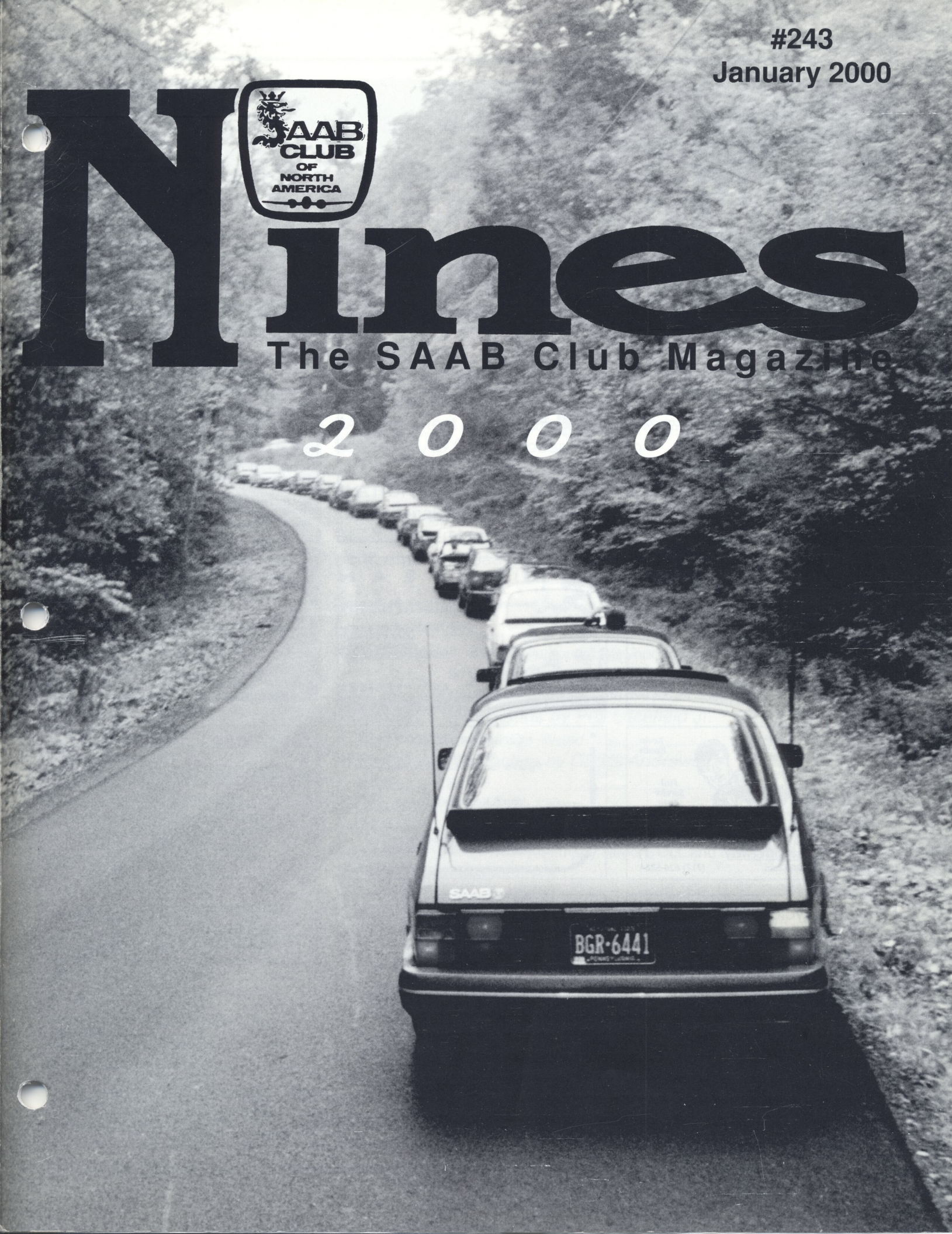
January 2000



Nines


The SAAB Club Magazine

2000



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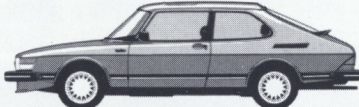
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Front Cover: SAABtoberfest 99 as captured through the lens by Marc A. Fails.

SUBSCRIBERS: We are still receiving change of address forms, and undeliverable issues from the Postal Service. **PLEASE** inform NINES of changes in your address.

I bought my first Saab in June, 1998 - a brand new 9⁵, and it has been a dream car! In October, 1998, I purchased my second Saab, a '93 900 Turbo Convertible (for my wife, Vicky), and we had a blast this summer. I offered to trade her the 9⁵ even up, but she refused. The previous owner of the convertible, Dr. Roger Hepperla, just brought his copy of NINES to me, and I'm excited!

What a great publication. I've enclosed my membership fee, and ordered a couple of back issues form "Saab Club Extras." I'm a little naive at this point, so can you suggest a good source for more information - like what the history of Saab, specific models, what's a Sonett? What's a Monte Carlo? Also, I want an SPG after reading your publication. How would I find one? (Or, should I contact Alan Snelson since he has so many?)

Dale Schaechterle
Oconomowoc, WI

Based on the 2/99 issue of Saab Magazine, which touted the attributes of the new Viggen and hints about the 2000 Aero, I quote from page 20:

"In The Driving Seat"

"In a high performance car like the Saab 9-3 Viggen, there is no room for question marks about control; the driver must be absolutely confident in the car's acceleration, braking and handling characteristics."

Does SAAB feel that the 9-5 Aero is a lesser car (than the Viggen)? Based on my trust of the SAAB engineers' wisdom and my past personal experience with Aeros, I sold my 9000 Aero and was "ordering" a 9⁵ Aero. The 9⁵ Aero came in with the same seats as my wife's 1999 9⁵ SE, and this was a real shock and disappointment. I am now "Aeroless" and may become "SAABless" hereafter. The dealer from whom I was to order the car, Suncoast SAAB, Ft. Meyers, (Mr. Mark Gray) is trying to sell the Aero he had "ordered" for me to someone else. I will not drive a car with this much capability in which I have so little confidence in the driving seat. Read quote once again! Thank you, I do not believe I am unique. If I am, then

how does your above statement express the SAAB position for the Aero? Is it to be just another car?

Jay Helt
Ocala, Florida

Just wanted to let you know!!... I am still driving this 1985 900. It has 326,000+ miles. It has had a one valve job, one fuel injector hose replaced, other than that routine maintenance, it is the original engine and still starts on the first turn of the key. It is starting to show its age, but it has better get up and go than a lot of newer cars I have driven.

I wonder if Saab needs a commercial like this?

Christy Blaha
Ft. Worth, TX

I think they just got one! -Ed.

"Why did you purchase your first Saab?"

In 1986 I was a pilot/member of a team which purchased three SAAB 340s (Aircraft) for the USAF "Lease Test Project" and went to the factory to accept delivery of the aircraft. During the delivery and acceptance phase SAAB engineers took us through everything, which included the final assembly line of the automobile factory at another location. SAAB provided 900s for us to drive while they were getting the aircraft ready and we were flying off our acceptances. I had never driven or paid much attention to SAAB cars before that, but after we finished our acceptance it was hard to return the car to SAAB. I was so Impressed that I came home, sold my recently purchased GTI and bought a 900 Turbo. Truly loved it! Been a SAAB man ever since. Since that time we now have bought 5 SAABs in our family so I guess one might conclude we sort of like those funny looking cars from the far north! SAABs are the cheapest cars I have ever driven, after purchase. That first 900 turbo went 325,000 miles, was traded for a 9000 turbo which is now for sale, being replaced with a 9⁵ Aero. SAAB cars

seem ergonomically designed for the driver as would be required for the cockpit of a fighter aircraft and as a pilot I feel right at home behind the "stick". I especially appreciate the high degree of reliability and comfort. They don't have the acceleration of an F-4—yet, but then they don't burn a thousand pounds of fuel a minute either!

Jay Helt
Ocala, Florida

"What's your reason for owning a Saab?"

Serendipity. I had wanted a Sonett II since I saw my first one in 1967 at age 8. I finally had enough money when one (a 1969 V4) in good enough condition was available. I wasn't about to wait another 30 years for the next chance.

Jonathan Bartlett

"Good enough condition" indeed! See the "SaabToberfest" story on page 22.

- Ed.

"What 'wild and crazy thing' did you do and live to tell about?"

I recovered from an oversteer condition of about 45 degrees in my first SAAB, a 66 96 stroker. I entered the downhill left turn far too quickly and the back end swung out. I don't believe that I had anything to do with saving the car (and the trees). The lack of engine braking on the front wheels prevented more rapid rotation. Several years earlier I had totaled a Dodge (Mitsubishi) Colt GT in a similar situation when it over-rotated on a freshly oiled and graveled road and wasn't saved. The three foot diameter oak died from the injuries. I got a concussion, three stitches in my lower lip, and cash back after paying off the loan.

Jonathan Bartlett

First, for the skeptics out there, let me first state that the following is a true tale in every regard, no names have been changed, for there were no innocents involved. For the cognoscenti out there who need a means of telling the difference between a fairy tale and a true story, a fairy tale begins "Once upon a time", while a true story just begins.....

My fiance' (now my wife of 27 years) had recently taken delivery of her '72 99E (which was her first ever car purchase) and had driven from her apartment in the city to the house I was renting while in graduate school in Southampton, NY to spend a wintry February weekend. The house was located on a spit of land that projected out into Peconic Bay and was surrounded by water on three sides. During the weekend a nor'easter swept into the area and the waters began to rise. I didn't pay it a lot of mind as I was enjoying my fiance's company after 2 weeks of deprivation.

Came Sunday and the time for her to take her leave and we had a problem.

While we were still high and relatively dry, the road leading back to shore was completely under water to an unknown depth. Never fear, said I, your wonderful little SAAB will make it through the waters my 240Z would drown in.

"I'm afraid," said she. "OK," I said, "I'll drive you back to the highway and I'll walk back to the house." And so off we set. The small bridge that separated our little island from the road back to the mainland was easily negotiated and as I reached the crest, all I could see on the other side were cold dark waters covering the road. Piece of cake, I thought, I only need to go a few hundred feet and the road rises. I'll simply get up a good head of steam on the bridge and the momentum of the car will carry me through the low spot.

Which is exactly what I did. Vrooom, vrooom, down the bridge doing thirty, hit the water, which went over the hood and up and over the windshield, and the car stalled! SHIT! Rrrrrrrr, rrrrrrrrr, DAMN! Won't start! Put it in reverse and backed it back onto the bridge on the starter motor. Got out, popped the hood,

dried everything as much as I could, got in, rrrrrr..... BRRRrrruuummm. Relief! Damn it's cold out there.

Hmmmmmm. what did I do wrong? Aha!!! Speed was too great! Need to eeeease it into the water. Sat for a few minutes to dry the engine and relieve fiance's anxieties, and then rolled slowly forward down the bridge and ever so slowly into the cold, cold water. There. We're moving along fine. Boy, water's deeper than I thought. Water's getting deeper, hmmm. Feels like the car is sort of floating!?!? And the engine STOPPED! SHIT!! Now I can tell that the wind and waves coming from the bay and impacting the car on the left side are definitely causing us to come afloat and are slowly pushing us off the road and into the lagoon. Hit the starter! Rrr...NOTHING! Won't turn over or even crank. DAMN!

What to do? Delving into my maritime past, I turned to my (I still hoped) soon to be wife and said, "Abandon ship!" "WHAT!?!?" she replied. "Easy, I said. Roll down your window and climb out, I'll do the same." "Are you NUTS?!?!?"

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'Wild and Crazy Things'

was the warm reply, "it's FEBRUARY!" "I know," I said calmly, "but we can't sit here or the waves will push us into the lagoon." So out we climbed. The water was COLD and up to my knees, and I'm 6'6" tall. My 5'5" wife to be was submerged to a greater amount. We pushed the car easily, as it was mostly afloat, after trading sides so I could keep it from floating off the road in the COLD water. Did I mention it was COLD!?!?

We got to high ground and I immediately picked up my intrepid companion and carried her the few hundred feet to a friend's house, where I burst in and proceeded to dump her fully clothed into a warm tub. After a few coffees and some tumbling of my clothes in the dryer, it was back into the storm to recover the car from the middle of the road. Get in, turn the key, lights come on, attempt to start it, hear the starter solenoid click, then nothing. Shit!

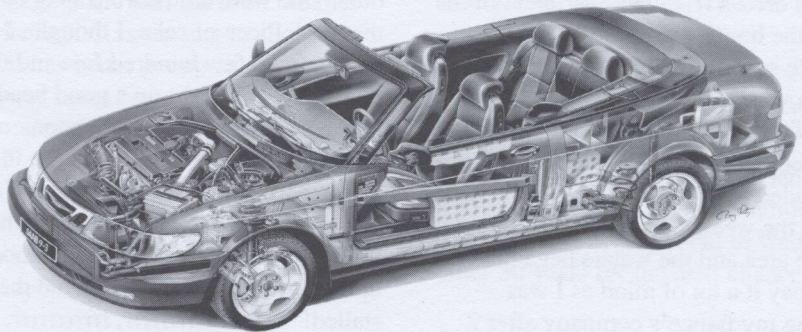
Hmmmmmm. I wonder. Use the toolkit to remove the plugs. Got into the car and told my friend to watch the plug holes and let me know if he sees any water come out as I attempt to start it. He bends over the engine, I hit the switch, the engine now cranks and the water that's expelled from the plug holes knocks his hat off! We'd picked up a slug of water via the downward pointing air intake on the air filter and the engine had hydrostatically locked!

Get out, dry everything and spray well with WD40. Dip the crankcase. No water! Install the plugs, get in and the damn thing starts on the first crank! Drove back to my friend's and let it run for another hour to ensure that everything was dry and running for the trip back to the city. I sent Dr. Elaine on her way home with instructions to have the oil changed at the first opportunity.

End of the story is that we kept that car for 15 years and a LOT of miles with no ill effects of it's baptism ever being noticed, with one exception. For years afterward, every time the car was up on the lift I would find eelgrass wedged into the weirdest places!

*James E. Maugham
Medford, NJ*

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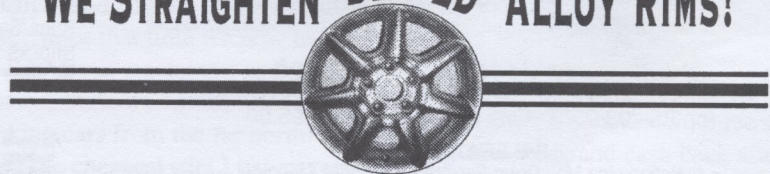
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Ramblings And Demands

by Phil Lacefield Jr.

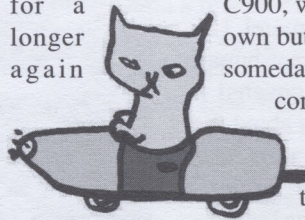
Stuff Makes the World go Round

I like stuff. Lots and lots of stuff. The daily quest for more stuff is half of the reason I choose not to stay in bed and stare at the glow-in-the-dark stars on my bedroom ceiling all day. The more stuff I own, the more enraptured with the world I become, hence driving me to obtain yet again even more stuff. I really, really like stuff.

Which drives the lovely Mrs. Lacefield quite batty most days, especially considering she shares the cramped confines of our modest abode with a mind-boggling collection of (mostly my) stuff that includes the following: no fewer than three actively working computers that sit on a desk so huge that small planes routinely mistake it for Wright Brothers Airport; two companions of the feline persuasion, one of whom is so obscenely fat that small planes routinely mistake him for Mount Fuji; more books than either of us thought possible for the Science Fiction Book Club to carry (although we're both still actively trying to clean them out, and yes, we've read 'em all); an audio CD collection that has likewise cleansed the coffers of BMG and Columbia House on a monthly basis for ten years running; a laserdisc collection numbering near a thousand that weigh so much they bow the floor; several dozen magazine collections, computer software boxes stacked to the rafters, boxes and shelves of board games and role-playing game books, fantasy and sci-fi artwork by the dozen on every wall, two red-bellied salamanders, a tree frog, and a motley assortment of dying houseplants. About the only place on the estate grounds where my precious yet harried spousal unit can find solace and still keep her cute tushy out of the biting Midwestern winter is in the garage, a

garage packed full of – you guessed it – Saabs and Saab gear.

Ahh yes, the garage. Refuge and place of contemplation for males the world over, and perfect harbor for even more of our precious stuff. A garage that at the moment contains The Tick, my beloved blue '68 96 V4 in need of minor restoration; the neatly stacked and shelved rows of parts from three other completely disassembled 96s that will serve as eternal parts donors to The Tick; ridiculous amounts of tools, yard implements and miscellaneous bits of material that “sure will come in handy for something, someday” (although I must admit, one can never, ever own too many tools); a complete set of factory service manuals for a C900, which I no longer own but may well own someday; a mostly complete set of factory service manuals for the 9000,



whose gaps I am constantly trying to fill; a nice Yamaha of the two-wheeled flavor that I've owned for two years and never once yet ridden; several mice, a couple of wasps and a strange box full of old Wayne Newton and Burt Bachrach records that the previous owners of the house accidentally left behind. I think.

The focal point of my stuff, however, would have to be my pile of Saababilia. Proudly displayed in a six foot tall, three foot square glass case salvaged from a defunct hospital gift shop, my collection of Saab stuff has grown from a small pile of knickknacks picked up here and there to a gargantuan undertaking that may well one day receive its own Zip and area codes. Y'see, I am an admitted Ebayaholic, one of those poor obsessed fools who can't seem to let an hour go by without wandering over to www.ebay.com and typing those four magic letters we all know and love into the Search box, thereby proffering up a never-ending plethora of choice tidbits from Trollhattan and beyond. Man, who knew the world had produced such wonders? Miniature

Saabs that range in size from just over an inch long to nearly a foot and everywhere in between, from such exotic locales as Finland, Germany and, of course, Taiwan. Hot Wheels, Corgi, Matchbox, Brio, Dinky...seems like every toy maker worth his salt made a Saab of one type or another at some point. Then there's the model airplane kits, 1/72 scale wonders from the more militant side of the factory. Every aircraft Saab Scania has ever made seems to be here, except the very first, the low-wing reconnaissance Saab 18. Anyone know of one? I have a spot already reserved. Dealer promos from scarves and belt buckles to Zippo lighters, postcards, books, pen and pencil sets, hats, t-shirts, you name it I either own it proudly or can tell you the gripping story of how I narrowly lost it in a bidding battle to some arch enemy Ebay user. Losing an bid on an item doesn't mean there aren't more of them out there to be found, though, and so I continue to plug in every day and bid my retirement away (although if you ever see another brown alligator skin wallet with the old airplane logo stamped neatly in the corner, let me know, we'll make a deal.)

Now I've been told by the lovely Mrs. Lacefield that our clan is about to get a little bigger, as it appears our baby-making machine has been well oiled and properly cared for after all these years. Our first child, wow. Does this mean that my stuff is in danger? Is this the end of the frenzied late-night Ebay bidding battles? No way. In fact, just the other day I picked up a lovely toddler jumper emblazoned with the timeless logo “Find Your Own Road”, and I have been lead to understand that an English company made a rubber Sonett-shaped rattle in the early seventies, and I'm certain one day I'll find one of those darling pedal-powered bullnoses that graced Saab dealer ads in the mid-60s, so the search continues unabated.

Who knows? Maybe Phil The Third will continue in his old man's footsteps, gathering Saab stuff like it's going out of style. At least he'll have plenty of stuff to get himself started.

Professional Perspective

WHERE'S THE TOOLS?

Recently I re-learned a lesson and the following story is about principles that all of you can use and probably need to think about.

The four owners of Andrews Inc. had registered early for the Nines Run the Rockies Tour (see Issue #242 for the Phil Lacefield Jr. review of the event) Since Don and I have several old cars to choose from, we didn't think much about what we would drive until near the departure time. We both decided to drive turbos since they would be fun in the higher altitudes, even though we could feel the pressure from our upper midwest friends who would be driving vintage Saabs. Don picked his '87 900T Convertible with 200K on it, which is driven daily during the summer months. Linda and I decided to drive our '87 9000T with 150K. It is driven every day, all year long.

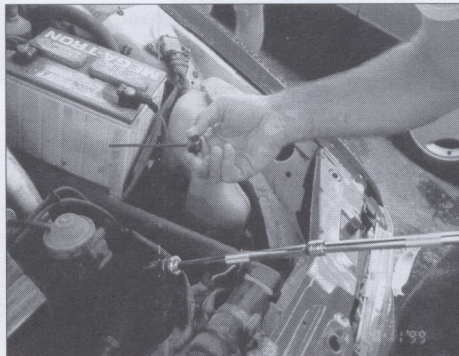


Chuck Andrews' tool box sits among his personal collection of Saabs, far from the Rocky Mountains.

Because of our changing roles in the business, neither Don or I wrench any more and depend on the maintenance done in our shop by other professionals, so naturally I took my tools home where they reside with our vintage cars. Since both vehicles had been serviced regularly, we had great confidence in their performance for a trip consisting of about 1000 miles of mountain driving and 2500 total miles for

the week. As confident as Don and I were, that didn't seem to influence our wives. We had packed our 9000 with luggage and business PR literature and equipment for the Keystone Convention. The convertible's trunk hardly had room for more than luggage so a toolbox was out-of-the-question. Just as we were about to leave for Colorado, Linda said, "You did put the tools in, right?" "No dear we'll be fine," I answered. As you can see by the picture, I don't have a shortage of tools or knowledge in these areas, but the cargo space had reached a critical stage.

As Phil Lacefield Jr. described this trip, it was glorious! Both Andrews cars performed well until (Yes, I hate to admit I was wrong) day four when we reached Durango, CO, we had a problem. When I walked to the back of the car to unload it at the motel, I discovered the rear bumper and hatch were covered with shiny spots about the size of pencil erasers. An oil leak for sure! After unloading the car for the evening, I opened the hood and checked all the fluids. Everything was okay that I could check readily. I looked under the car and, "oops"; there was a small puddle of something. The problem with some Saabs is that you need a wrench to unscrew the dipstick to check the transmission (5 speed). Not to be totally



A borrowed wrench, and the transmission dipstick confirms the source of the leak.

defeated, I looked around the parking lot and "low and behold" there were the two Saabs that Tom and Patty Donney were driving on the tour. I knew that Tom would have a toolbox on a trip like this because they were driving a 95 wagon and a '78 turbo. After stuffing my pride, the next morning I borrowed a socket, ratchet and some extensions from Tom so I could check the transmission. Not good! Out of the approximately 2-quart total, one quart had leaked out apparently from an inner driver seal in the transmission. We run MTL lubricant in our transmission and being a synthetic and very low viscosity, it may leak easier than something heavier. So, we returned the borrowed tools and went to the nearest auto parts store for supplies.



Mastering the art of the dripless transmission fill.

We bought a socket, extension, ratchet and all the cool hoses and tubes it takes to not get greasy so we could add some 80-90 gear lube. I know 80-90 isn't recommended for this transmission but I hoped that it might swell the seals, and it's definitely more viscous so would leak slower. Therefore, we might be able to finish the Tour, or at least get to Denver so Jerry Danner's crew at Mile Hi Auto Body, Inc. could fix it.

You can see the extension in the picture, dip stick and the cool bottle and tubes that made the adding of the 80-90 fluid possible without a big mess. (ALL FOR \$54). We added a quart of 80-90 (Linda in the picture) and off we went mountain climbing again. Of course, I monitored the rear bumper and hatch for spots and nightly checked the oil level. We finished the tour and got back to Minnesota without adding any more gear lube. The lesson here is about tools (yes Linda, I will always have room for them) but, more about observations.

For the second Saab Owners Convention, which was held in New Glarus, WI, back in 1984, I was asked to do a seminar



for spouses and non-technical people. I was warned that it would be outside and told to expect maybe 10 people. I had prepared a 1980 900T, and at the appointed time I was met with a mob (it seemed like 50) of technicians, do-it-yourselfers and only two non-technical people. I had prepared a demonstration on using your 5 senses to diagnose Saab symptoms. There was disappointment in the attendees thinking that the seminar was going to be some high-tech stuff. It may not have been high-tech but absolutely necessary. The reality is you, yes you, can identify the symptoms of a problem before most anyone because you are driving the car every day. You know how it smells, how it feels (rides), how it sounds, how it tastes (yes, odors can taste) and can know the temperature when problems occur. You get the picture! When a service writer asks you about the problems with your Saab, you can tell them the things you have observed about the car. If you can demonstrate knowledge about the symptoms, it will help diagnose the problems and that saves you money and helps guarantee that the problem is fixed the first time.

In my case, had I not observed the oil spots and taken immediate action, I would have had a major problem with the transmission, "like big-time!" In one day, the car leaked half of the fluid and in another it would have been low enough to cause serious damage. Not good, especially when you're on vacation 1500 miles from home. To replace a transmission would have cost hundreds of dollars. Adding the 80-90 lube which only costs \$54 saved the day and many dollars. If I added the \$54 for the tools and 80-90 oil and the \$90 which it cost to replace the seal, it was very inexpensive compared to a transmission replacement or rebuilding. Don't be afraid to drive that high-mile Saab, just observe!

How about your Saab? Noticed any howls, growls, bumps, grinds, smells, shaking or pulling. Any drips or puddles? Think about it and take a look. It could save you hundreds of dollars and aggravation.

See "Simply Saab", Page 39, for more on "your car's language." -Ed.

Filling Big Shoes and Getting Ready to Shoe a Stroker

Our new Nines has a new editor, a new subscribership, new participants, hell, it's a new club. Jack Ashcraft is covering the high-performance aspects of those other column-shift cars, the V4 models, so I'm left with these smoking 2 and 3 cylinder models to blather on about.

So where does that leave us old car guys? Right where we were, thankyouverymuch. We're standing in the shadow of those who have come before us. I'd like to reflect a bit on one of those people, who happens to be the guy you old stroker nuts kept subscribing to this rag for.

Larry Williams was perhaps best described by two of his friends; Eric Johnson, his RAC rallye car driving pal in Northfield, MN, and Ed Lorenz of Oneonta, NY. Ed said it best, back in NINES #238, an issue I read while sitting around in the lobby of the Austin, MN Conference Center at the Holiday Inn, wondering how my old '60 93F was going to get back home to Virginia: "We saw each other at conventions, all six of them, three days at a pop, for a total of eighteen days. Larry could leave quite an impression on all of us."

For me, I felt obliged to make a Larry-esque run, at least once, in a fairly unproven car on unproven territory. My former vintage racer '60 93F got a boiled out radiator, new rear brakes, and a few other odds and ends. And that was it! Off we went. Pitfalls along the way were challenging, stressful, and fun. If you follow the New England Sonett Club newsletter, look back a few issues. We met good folks, ate good fried chicken at the home of Kurt and Lisa Weisner in Columbus, IN, and drove up to a hotel in Minnesota where people looked at me as though I had just escaped from the mental facility. It was worth every penny of the U-Haul truck and trailer I was forced to rent on the way home!

Perhaps, in twenty years, we will all be off playing with Messerschmidts, or think of the 900 series in the same vein that we do the two-strokers. Somehow, I doubt it. After Larry's death, I asked Editor Emeritus Tim if he wanted fresh-faced kid Chip to continue the tradition of the Ring-a-Ding column. Tim informed me that he had plenty of old Larry material as yet unpublished. But here we are, as unpredicted as rain. Ready, set...go?

Well, enough commentary, let's get down to those strokers. I got yet another voltage regulator for my 1963 96 last week, along with some fresher rear brake backing plates off one of those anonymous V4 parts cars, and set to work. For those of you raising eyebrows, this particular '63 received a later rear axle, or at least different backing plates to accommodate the 1964-on style "Type III" rear wheel cylinders. Parts off the shelf included some new semi-metallic shoes, wheel cylinders, and various odds and ends.

Unlike my predecessor, however, I don't have the luxury of retirement, and left the rear brakes somewhat loose for awhile, replaced the voltage regulator, fixed a cooling restriction, and started driving her 60-75 miles a day all last week. No real surprises, but it will be nice to have that handbrake working again (chalk up one new handbrake cable to go in at the same time as those backing plates). Sure is nice to get in the old girl every day and go.

Another issue with the '63 is a shudder on acceleration. As this is one of the more bastardized 96es out there, it's got the later driveaxles with the "greasebuckets" as well as the V4 front calipers. The shudder in third is a common problem on the V4 cars as well as those later (1965-67 MC850, 1966-on standard cars) 2-stroke long-nose cars. If you experience this sensation under your feet, swap your inner drivers (the greasebucket parts) from left to right. These can be removed from the gearbox in situ by removing the lower balljoint bolts and sliding the axle out of the bucket. Put some heavy chassis grease in the buckets, and while you're in there, regrease those needle bearings under the caps on the T-ends, before putting it all back in!

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Wagon vs. Hatchback: Nines tests the 9⁵ Wagon

by Stephen Goldberger



Figure 1. One full measure of the 9⁵ wagon's internal capacity.

Taking Kids to College

Faced with the question of how to transport our daughter and her belongings to college, we intrigued Saab Public Relations by promising to "load a 9⁵ Wagon to the gills" with all manners of paraphernalia and to unload as much of it as we could into a Saab 9000 Hatchback. Saab responded by giving us a week's use of a 1999 "Imola Red" 5-speed base wagon, with leather seating, the dealer



Figure 2. One fully packed 9⁵ Wagon. installed roll-out load floor, and Thule Racks. The equivalent 2000 model would be "Imola Red 5-speed Wagon with Premium Package," plus the roll-out floor and the racks. Our daughter did her part by winnowing out all but the barest essentials for college life: clothes, com-



Figure 4. A packed wagon.

puter, bedding, more clothes, coffee maker, stereo, even more clothes, hampers, CD's, her plant, two book bags filled with books, papers,

writing instruments, rolls of pennies (!), and clothes. Held in reserve was our 18 cubic foot car-top carrier for a shelving unit and the extra clothes.

On to the load test. We packed everything we could into the Wagon with the short-side rear seat up. The "teaser" in NINES #242 and figure 1 show the volume of cargo which ultimately fit.



Figure 3. One fully packed 9000 5-dr.

Right away we appreciated one major design departure from the New Generation 900/9³: there is no solid bar across the

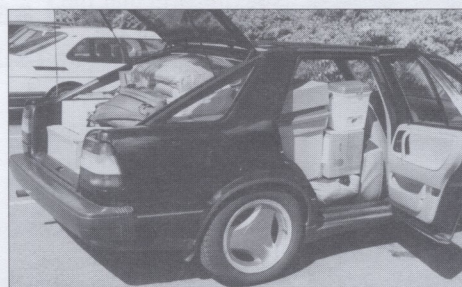


Figure 5. A packed 9000.

load path behind the seats, which on the smaller car requires that the short side seat be lowered first. Although the Wagon has provisions for completely removing the seat bottom, giving a couple or three extra cubic feet of capacity, we decided that would make for an unfair comparison.

You can't do that in the 9000. In addition,

we needed to use that seat after the load had been deposited in our daughter's dormitory.

Figure 2 shows our daughter huddled in the back seat among her belongings. Thus outfitted, we drove to The Swedish Solution, where we had arranged with Chief Technician Bob Howlett to "borrow" the back end of his 9000. Figure 5 shows the 9000 packed to capacity, and Figure 5 is the 9000 pose corresponding to Figure 4 in the Wagon.



Figure 6. The 9⁵ Wagon carries it all.

The measly box and stereo unit shown in Figure 7 were all that couldn't find a place in the 9000. This is remark-



Figure 7 The 9000 is just a little short.

9⁵ Wagon Test

able, since the wagon's rear load area is clearly longer and the rear hatch less intrusive. There are two reasons, we believe, for the apparent contradiction:

- 1) There is considerably more "rear leg room" in the 9000. When stowing the rear seat, the bottom cushion slides forward several inches before tilting upward, adding to the cargo space.
- 2) The 9000 rear compartment does not have the elaborate inside trim of the Wagon.

As shown in Figure 8, the Wagon load compartment is fully trimmed, with straight sides containing storage compartments and two lower storage compartments beside the load floor. In addition, there are a couple of inches of space between the load floor and the vehicle structure. Both features, we believe, contribute significantly to keeping the Wagon's interior noise level to the high standard established by the 9⁵ sedan. The space below the load floor is used as well to stow the roll-out floor mechanism. The side trim provides a level of refinement in keeping with Saab's competitors in the "Premium European Wagon" market in addition to controlling the noise level. There is no doubt that a much larger single box can fit in the Wagon than the 9000 hatchback. There is also no doubt that a Wagon stripped of its trim, and with the load floor dropped to the floorpan, would hold many more of the small boxes, bags, and irregularly shaped items which

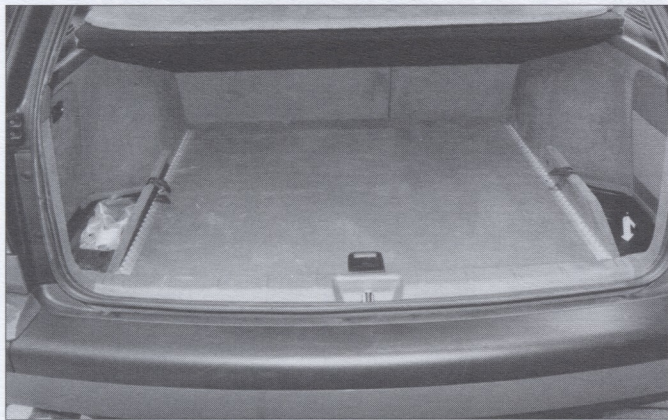


Figure 8. The well finished 9⁵ cargo compartment. Note under floor storage, and straight trimmed sides.

constituted our College Collection.

Thus, we see the logic behind the "alternate 9⁵" being a station wagon and not a hatchback. The trim and load floor,

if used in a hatchback design, would render the car less capacious than the 9000. A simple fabric trim, as was used for the 9000 cargo compartment, would be inconsistent with the level of refinement Saab was seeking. To Saab's credit, the wagon has been given unique styling, better aerodynamics than any Saab hatchback has ever had, and unique features such as the standard cargo hold-downs, the optional roll-out floor, and hatch-mounted spot lights.

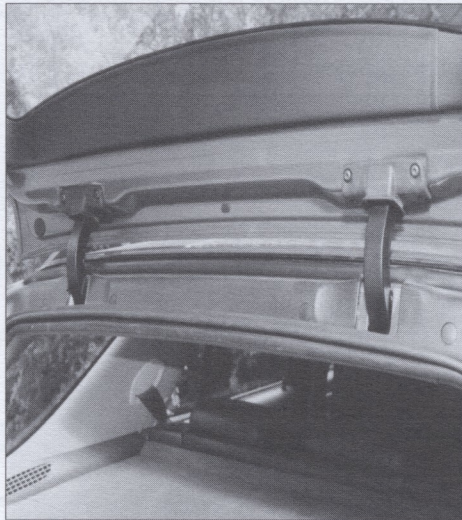


Figure 9. The Wagon hatch, showing plastic trim on window and hatch frames.

Long time readers are aware of our fascination with the small details of design. Figure 9 shows the open hatch. Note the wide plastic trim around the hatch door, and the plastic trim around the rear hatch opening. Both of these were "paint" on the 9000.

Note in particular the rubber seal for the tailgate hinge, keeping the hinge clean, dry, and cutting off a potential source of noise in the cabin: shown close-up in Figure 10. This figure also shows Saab's traditional seam sealer applied to the hatch seams. Look further, and you will see that the hatch counterbalancing is hidden in the roof.

This may become a maintenance issue, but in return it simplifies the loading process and reduces dirt-gathering clutter from the rear hatch.

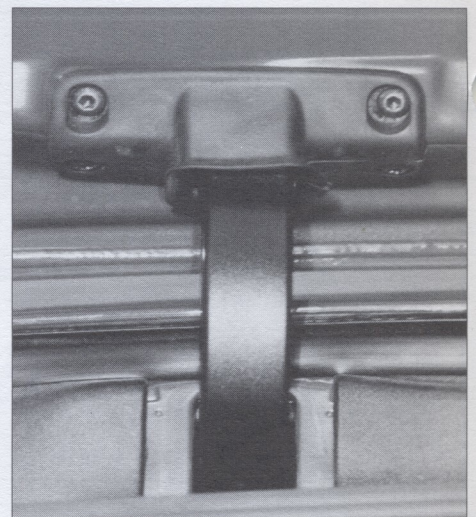


Figure 10. Hatch hinge seal detail.

9000 hatches always had small elliptical holes along the bottom inside edge: two with rubber plugs, and the third left open for ventilation. The three elliptical holes along the bottom edge of the Wagon hatch are plugged with a plastic piece which both trims the hole and

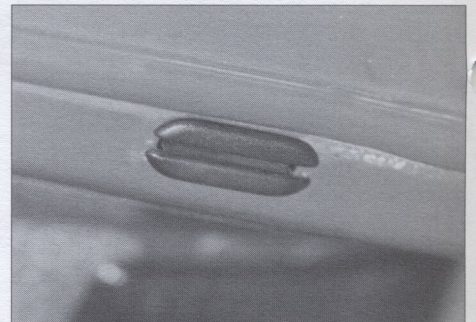


Figure 11. Hatch drain opening trim.

allows for ventilation, shown in Figure 11.

The 9000 door lights were built into the face of the door, illuminating the bottom of the seat, the door sill, and providing a red warning for following



Figure 12. Door mounted courtesy light and weatherstrip.

traffic. The location of the light also exposed it to damage (why do we know this?). The 9⁵ door light is safely shielded by the door structure, illuminates the ground beneath the door, but lacks that warning signal to following traffic. Figure 12 shows that light, along with the extensive weatherstripping used to keep the cabin quiet. Figure 13 shows an

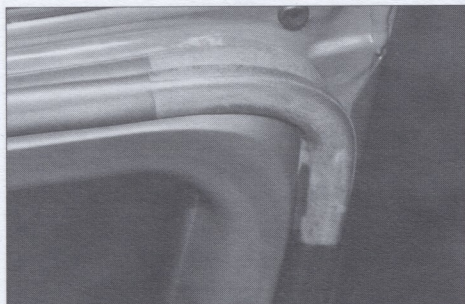


Figure 13. Teflon wrapped weather strip corner detail.

interesting detail to the weather stripping: the right angle "B pillar" corners of the weatherstrip for both front and back doors are wrapped with a teflon-like coating. "Rustling sounds from the doors" has often been a complaint with the 9000, but

it isn't with the 9⁵. Back to the doors, the little switches that actuate the interior lights, and signal the "door ajar" pictogram in the instrument panel, have been moved from their traditional location on the door jamb by the hinges to near the latch. In a stroke of the obvious, this

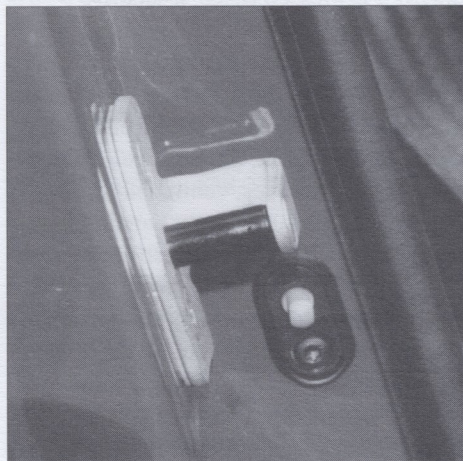


Figure 14. Detail of door switch mounting. change results in more precise actuation, and an easier repair if the switch fails. Figure 14 shows the front door switch.

Figures 15 through 17 illustrate the

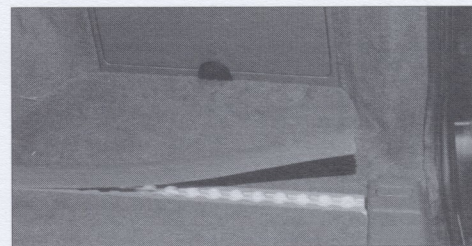


Figure 15. Cargo tie down and trim. roll-out load floor mechanism and the cargo hold down. The car is supplied with vinyl trim to dress up the hold down tracks when not being used. The space beneath

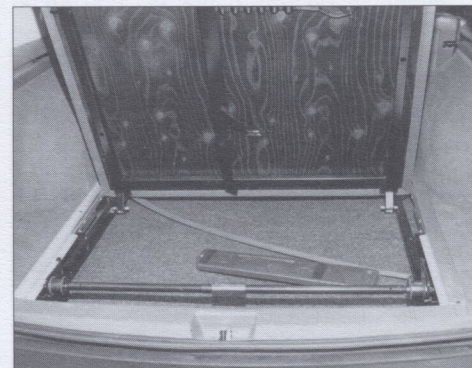


Figure 16. Roll out load floor raised to show under-floor storage.

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9⁵ Wagon Test

the load floor is ample for storing the trim strips. The rear road floor rollers at attached to a rotating bracket which locks them up in position, where they support the floor's square tube frame. The front rollers ride in a track. The floor can drop into a retracted position when the rear rollers are stowed, but it stays in the raised position when the rear rollers are deployed. When the load floor was demonstrated to my brother, who is a physician, he complained, "Half of my patients come to me with back pain. This could ruin me."



Figure 17. Detail of load floor roller.

The left-hand side storage compartment, barely visible in Figure 8, is matched on the right-hand side with either a like compartment or a subwoofer, depending on the year and trim. One subtle benefit to the Wagon body style over the hatchback style is that when using a car-top carrier, the sunroof opens to the sky, not the bottom of the carrier. This may also reduce the wind noise, we think. We didn't hear any from the cargo carrier while we were using it, but we remember a lot of wind noise when we used the same carrier on a 9000.

There are many features in the 9⁵, some of which are shared with the 9³, to delight the owner. The interior lights come on when the key is removed from the ignition (which is where it belongs - between the seats). The ACC holds its

setting for the first few minutes after shutting off the car before reverting to its programmable "default" setting. The rear hatch can be programmed to lock after a short while or remain unlocked until the automatic locks are actuated. The remote transmitter unlocks only the driver's door unless it is pressed twice, a security feature. These are all in addition to the widely advertised and comfort and safety features, such as the active head restraints, the front and side airbags, the refrigerated glove compartment, the full complement of power accessories, ventilated seating options, the bi-curved right hand mirror, and Saab's dedication to crash safety.

On first impression, driving the 9⁵ Wagon is much like driving the sedan version: an incredibly smooth, quiet ride. When the pavement gets rough some road noise filters in, but that noise is well within normal standards for luxury-sport cars. The Saab handles broken pavement like it was on rollers, not wheels. As compared to a 9000, the body is noticeably more rigid. Sharp impacts are smoothed and they provoke nary a ripple in the body's composure. Wind noise was totally absent at speeds below 80 mph, and above that there was a soft moan from the auxiliary Thule racks.

For a production vehicle, the sound system is first rate. We don't mean this as faint praise; we are just acknowledging that for some, a car is "primarily a place for installing speakers and electronics." In the Wagon we tested, music is undistorted and plays with good tonal balance up to concert hall volume levels - well, at least the concerts that we might attend. There was plenty of deep and undistorted bass, but beginning with model year 2000 that feature is sadly reserved for the "Premium Equipment Package" or SE models. We would rather see the Harmon Kardon sound system across the line and let the sunroof be part of the premium package.

Speaking of that sunroof, subtle and not-so-subtle improvements have been made there. Over the years we have owned 9000's with electric sunroofs, and when open they all rattled on bad pavement. The glass ones rattled worse, but even the steel ones could be made to clatter if the road was sufficiently rocky. Not the 9⁵: its sunroof never gave a creak or squeak. It opens fully with a single

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rearward tug on the switch, although for safety sake the closing is still an exercise in persistence. In addition, a small spoiler pops up when the roof opens.

One plus we find to the Wagon over the sedan occurs when driving backwards. With the well defined end of the vehicle in plain sight (at least when it is not packed like someone going to college), backing is easier and safer than with the sedan. We never felt that rear vision was hampered by the styling. Our only complaint in the rear-view department is that the view through the driver's side rear quarter window is rippled quite a bit by the glass. That distortion comes from slight variations in the glass thickness combined with the steep angle of view. We certainly don't know how much additional cost would be required to give an undistorted view, or even if it's possible with mass produced, curved side glass. But we do notice the distortion.

In cornering the Wagon is much more capable than the tires it comes with. It took us until the first highway exit ramp to confirm that. The feel was perfectly stable and linear, but the protests from the Michelin contingent were clearly indicating that the line between good sense and foolishness was approaching. The MXV-4 is apparently designed more for comfort than hard cornering.

In normal city and Interstate highway driving, the LPT Turbo 4 with the 5-speed manual transmission has ample power, and we achieved over 30 mpg on the highway except when we were laden down with the luggage carrier. The only time we were disappointed with the power output was when passing on a two-lane highway, and the car was empty at the time. The engine's torque output drops away noticeably above 4000 rpm, which corresponds to "60 something" in third gear. 9⁵ Wagon buyers seeking more urge may choose the V-6 model, with its mandatory automatic transmission and noticeably higher price, or aftermarket parts suppliers such as Abbott Racing, which opens up the possibility of warranty issues. An "Aero Wagon" would address the automatic transmission and warranty issue, but at a still higher price.

In terms of value, the 9⁵ fares well in comparison with the 9000. Going back to 1997, the last year that a full line of 9000 models was made available, the \$33,975 price of a 9000 CS LPT Value Package (leather and sunroof) compares with the base wagon with Premium Package, priced at \$34,570 (including heated seats). At this level, the 9⁵ brings more standard equipment, including traction control, a CD/Cassette player with subwoofer, dual-temperature "Automatic Climate Control", and additional passive safety equipment. The SE wagon at \$38,270 (including heated seats) compares with the 9000 CSE Automatic at \$39,205 (or the V-6, non-turbo CSE Automatic at \$40,965). If the Aero Wagon, which is currently sold in Europe but not North America, were imported, and if Saab's current policy of price equality between Wagon and sedan models were kept in force, the \$40,495 (including heated seats) Aero Wagon would compare against the \$41,695 9000 Aero. In the last comparison, the 9⁵ would come up lacking only in the seating department. In all of the comparisons, the 9⁵ pluses include all the interesting cargo

holding features, better ride and handling capability, a quieter cabin and a more solid structure.

Concluding, the 9⁵ Wagon carries more stuff, is quieter, smoother riding, and has more equipment and amenities that the 9000 Hatchback it replaces. With the difference in equipment taken into account, the 9⁵ price, model for model, is lower than the 9000 it replaces. The price comparisons are complicated by Saab's having narrowed the dealers' markup on one hand, while including many features on the new car which were not available on the 9000 on the other hand. Aside from pricing, the 9⁵ has better aerodynamics, and delivers better fuel economy with the LPT-4 than I have ever experienced with a 9000. It is being priced the same as a similarly equipped 9⁵ sedan, which lacks the load carrying ability, the rear window wiper, the cargo tie downs and the rear storage compartments. To our minds, this is nothing less than a thousand dollar gift from Saab Cars to anyone who purchases the Wagon.

What have you carried in YOUR Saab? We asked this question in NINES #242 under the "Teaser" photo. Below are two responses.

Favorite stories about what I've carried in my SAAB:

1) My wife had a Taurus wagon, and bought a large desk for our den. They tried and tried but couldn't fit it into the wagon. She called me at work, asking what to do. I took my 3-door down, and she followed me and the desk home in the humbled wagon.

2) I ordered a huge, custom-made file cabinet (extra-long Pendaflex-style drawers, 4-high, 2-wide). When I pulled in to pick it up, the cabinet-maker came out and laughed, asking if I planned to tie it on top — he said it would crush the car. I folded the back seat down, and we slid the cabinet in, drawers and all. My cousin (6'5") and I (6'1") got back in the car and drove home, leaving the cabinet-maker jawless.

I won't even comment on what we can put in our current SAABs now that we have a Thule Adventurer — but I will say that the other Girl Scout troops always wonder how we seem to have so many of the finer things in life at Camporees...

*Jay Vivian
Stamford, CT*



Chip Lamb responded that "a picture is worth a thousand words...here's my answer."

The crowd nervously fidgets. There is an awkward silence as the next speaker goes to the podium with his confession in hand. "Hello, my name is Bob and I'm a car owner" The crowd bursts in to applause and the speakers tensioned face melts into a relieved smile.

Car ownership is akin to a drug addiction by some standards. It costs a lot, we allow ourselves to become dependent on it, and we deny many of the realities of the situation. Admitting the realities is the first step in unraveling a lot of misconceptions about car ownership. Maybe these guidelines will help:

1) For most people, car ownership makes little to no financial sense. The cost of public transportation for routine activities is much less, and rentals are available for the times when personal needs require a car.

2) Cars are amongst the worst places to put your money. The "return on investment" is almost always negative.

3) There are two basic financial differences between the purchase of a new car versus a used car:

A) New cars require a large initial financial commitment but provide a predictable monthly outlay for maintenance and financing, and

B) Used cars take little or no initial financial commitment but result in unpredictable monthly outlays.

Let's review and comment on three strategies for car ownership.

Long term ownership of a car purchased new gives these results:

1) Its ownership satisfies the ego of the purchaser. There is nothing wrong with that, so long as you're willing to pay the price and can afford to do so.

2) Having purchased the car new increases confidence in the car not breaking down.

3) The new car's impact on cash flow is more predictable. Payments and service costs are known in advance for the first several years. Service costs can be expected to rise as the car ages, but the owner's familiarity with the car in question and history of ownership still make the expenses more predictable than those for a newly purchased used car of the same year and make.

4) The owner is rewarded with the full service life of all the parts, their having been new at the time of purchase.

5) The new car delivers a retained value after years of ownership, but that value is still small compared to initial price.

6) The new car purchase maximizes financial responsibility. The owner is responsible for the entire purchase price of the vehicle, either out-of-pocket or through financing.

8) New car ownership falls in the middle of efficient use of money.

Leasing a new car produces these results:

1) Over the period of the lease, it provides the "most" car for the lowest cash outlay. This is because the "residual value" of the leased vehicle is excluded from the principal when calculating the payments.

2) It provides the ego gratification of the new car purchase.

3) It reduces financial responsibilities.

Only the lease payments, which are lower than the finance charges for the purchase of the identical car, normal maintenance, and fuel costs are required. Leases almost always expire before the new car warranty expires.

4) The lessor receives a varying percentage of the service life of all the parts. More expensive parts tend to be the longer lived parts, so the percentage value of the service life of each individual part received by the lessor is inversely proportional to the cost of the part.

4) Provides the cash flow predictability and reliability benefits of a new car purchase.

5) Carries least responsibility.

6) Worst use of money. At the end of the lease term, the lessor is left with only a memory. During the lease period, the lessor pays interest on the entire value of the vehicle. Since depreciation is heavily biased to the first few years of a car's life, the habitual lessor will pay the most over the long run.

Purchasing a used car produces these results:

1) Used cars have the lowest initial financial outlay.

2) Used cars provide less ego gratification.

3) Used cars provide the owner with the least confidence. Parts are older, and the vehicle's use and maintenance histories are generally unknown.

4) The used car purchaser is faced with irregular and mostly unpredictable cash outlays for repairs.

5) The used car purchaser receives "the remains" of the service life of the original parts, and often a large fraction of the service life of parts which had been replaced by previous owners. More expensive parts tend to be the longer lived parts, so the percentage value of the service life of each individual part received by the used car purchaser is greatest for the more expensive parts.

6) Purchasing used cars is the most efficient use of money because on average the cost, including the purchase, insurance, maintenance, and repairs are less than the total cost of new car ownership. In some places, there is also an annual tax based on the value of the vehicle.

7) A used car purchase carries the special risk of the purchaser lacking the financial means to own the vehicle. In the case of new car purchases and leases, the large initial payments and/or income restrictions which accompany the financing will immediately disqualify those who lack the means of ownership. The purchase price of older vehicles which were high priced when new are often within the means of people who are unable to pay the price of major repairs and are either unwilling or unable to pay the price of maintenance required to ensure continued reliability. Saab's fall in this category.

8) The likelihood of necessary repairs and the need for major maintenance present the used car buyer with the task of finding a competent and honest service shop along with the vehicle purchase. Lessors need look no further than their dealer. New car purchasers have time to evaluate the quality of service from the dealer and make the transition to an independent service facility if the dealer does not meet his requirements. Used car buyers should identify their maintenance support at the time of purchase. Looking for a shop while your car is hanging on the end of a tow-hook is not going to be a pleasant experience.

Shopping for a Shop

To find a better shop you may need to become a better consumer. Looking for a shop using (the lowest) price only is rarely the best method to use for finding a quality shop. The buying habits of most of us are honed in the marketplace of similar products. Aside from issues of aesthetics, products of similar specifica-

tion will generally provide similar satisfaction. Often our buying experience is in the selection of identical products at varying prices. Certainly in these instances, selecting primarily on the basis of purchase price is an excellent strategy.

Automobile service and repair, however, is a craft, where the quality of the result is determined largely by the skill of the craftsman. Good quality repair and maintenance work initially costs more...it's unavoidable, but is also worth more and is less expensive in the long run. (Now that sounds self serving coming from a shop owner but actually it's not. If I were to be devious I would let the consumer make 3 poorly done visits at a collective cost of \$200.00 instead of one well done one at a cost of \$150.00.)

The following guidelines may be helpful to you in selecting a quality shop. Bear in mind that these are only guidelines. For every rule, there will be excellent repair shops which violate the rule.

1) Look for a shop that specializes in Saab only. That simple fact will help you tremendously because they will have the most experience with Saab and have the greatest commitment to keeping up to date with Saabs. Your next best choice would be the fewest makes including Saab: say Saab/BMW or Saab/Volvo. However, as some multi-make shops have specialists for each make worked on, being Saab only guarantees the Tech working on yours IS a Saab Tech.

2) Experience counts, so ask if they have had Saab training. Remember that if the training was a long time ago, it may not be applicable to your car if it is a more recent model. Experience and self-training is an ongoing challenge. Factory training is more relevant to the newest models, and it therefore becomes most valuable to work done while still under warranty at the Dealership.

3) Pick a simple job like a water pump to price out. Tell them you want original equipment parts (OEM) and want the installed price. Put the top 20% shop estimates in your list of possible shops.

4) Ask how long they've been in business. Longest-term shops go on the list. 10 years or more is best as many poorly run shops die before then.

5) Find out how long they retain

employees. Happy employees mean good pay and good management. That's who you want working on your car. High turn over is not good.

6) Is the shop clean? Pride and professionalism shows.

7) Do they have shop manuals and special tools? Hacks don't, pros do.

8) Right size shops give the best service. What's right? One-man shops are usually too small. The owner is always interrupted and if he gets sick or isn't there, no work gets done. Big shops have too many lines of communications. Work is divided into too many pieces. "A" may not know what "B" is doing. Too many customers mean less personal service. I like shops that have between 3 and 7 personnel.

9) Have high business standards. They are hard to find but only the highest of quality shops adhere to all of these standards:

A) Insistence on doing only complete and timely work. No partial jobs. (Like installing just a clutch disc or only spark plugs instead of a major service)

B) Give a thorough inspection every time your Saab comes in. (No matter what you came in for they look over the whole car and report all its needs.)

C) Predict reasonable longevity of part lives. (They'll tell you how long components will historically last helping you plan expenses better.)

D) Stand behind all work with good realistic warranties. (Only 30 days is just as bad as "lifetime". There is a "catch" to both of them.)

E) Refuse substandard work. (Hack parts, install used key components, bypass problems with a short-term work-around, install low quality new and rebuilt parts, swap parts from other models or years that are not applicable to yours...etc.)

F) Are honest. Admit the few mistakes they make and compensate you for them. Say things like "I don't know, but I'll find out." Make you feel good about every transaction.

G) Know their value and charge accordingly. Shops that are constantly discounting work usually need to in order to keep clientele. Something may be wrong.

Don't let the number of cars are in their lot persuade you. Cheap or poorly run shops are usually surrounded by cars... right to the bitter end. Well-run shops get customers in and out every day on time. Overly busy shops are more apt to make mistakes and/or have delays. I've seen many a good shop die because they become overwhelmed by work and can not handle it. Angry customers soon stop coming.

Being a good customer is just as important as being a good shop. The demand for poor cheap work is high and the demand for good quality work is low. If you are constantly unhappy with your repair shop choices, you may be shopping for the wrong shop.

The Mechanic Poet

The following is a true event
Experience I have actually had
Over my 27 years servicing cars.
I mean no harm to these folk
In telling my little tale
And hope that by doing so
A reader will find a reason to smile.

IBM engineer:

Comes in telling me the timing's off.
Self timing distributor - I say it's OK.
He says no it's not.
He says.. He's been driving cars since
before I was born.
He says.. He's been building computers
and is an engineer so he knows.
My light comes on.
I open hood and rattle around.
I close hood.
I say... test drive.
He does.
He says... better but not quite.
I rattle some more.
He test drives.
He says GREAT!
He says... I told ya so son.
I say.. you're right sir!
I say FREE!
He says NO!
He gives profit speech
I charge him.
He's happy.
I leaned something about people.

Mark Kline

As many of you know by now, Walter Kern died October 13, 1999. He was 80 years old and will be remembered by many as a fellow full of fun and puns. I remember him as a friend and problem solver and my personal role model for eccentricity.

The obituary is predictably factual: "Kern - formerly of Cohasset of Canton [MA], Oct 13, Walter P., age 80. Beloved husband of Barbara A. (Cobban), Father of Jill P. and Jonathan F. Kern and Shigeomi Suzuki. Also survived by one grandson. Army veteran WWII. Retired engineer Teradyne Inc. Boston. In lieu of flowers donations may be made in his memory to MIT, 77 Mass Ave, Cambridge, MA 02139-4307." But, as usual, there are mere hint at who the man really was. I know something of that and will try to put it to paper.

Walter was reportedly an irrepressibly inquisitive youngster. He interrupted his education to serve his country in the South Pacific for six years, then returned to complete his studies at MIT. With a Masters Degree in Physics from Temple he went to work as a physicist. Eventually his problem-solving prowess led him to Teradyne where he worked for many years as Head Engineer and earned the company many patents. He retired from Teradyne only last year. I already miss his quirky voice mail announcement "This is Walter Kern, please leave me a message, [mumbling] now what ..."

The second house in Cohasset was quite a design. When I first saw it ca. 1985 I thought it a wonderfully modern design. I was to find out later that afternoon it was over twenty years old. There are no interior load-bearing walls. Everything is "hung" from massive laminated wood beams. Radiant heat from the cement slab floor, a laundry chute camouflaged into the wall of the stairwell, remotely-controlled, low-voltage wiring for the lights and on and on. There was a skylight — not his favorite topic for it leaked during hurricanes and about that he was NOT pleased.

Tennis. One of his favorite pictures is of himself standing next to Stan Smith during a tennis school in South Carolina. Watching a tennis match with Walter could become an ordeal. Breaks for food (or other necessities) were prohibited. Silence and proper attention were, of course, the rule. While the rest of us retreated for a morsel we were only allowed to bring back something "easy and quick" to eat for him. We enjoyed a couple three Volvo (yes, I said, Volvo) tennis tournaments with Walter and Barbara. If he had videotaped a match you were strictly forbidden to discuss the outcome until he had viewed it in its entirety.

Model railroading was unexpected. There it was, in the upstairs spare room. More HO track than I thought possible to cram into such a space. And, the real triumph had to do with

running as many trains as possible using an automated (of course, what else) block system. The layout would last until Barbara demanded the return of the room for Summer guests. I'm told that there's a much larger layout in the house in Cotuit even now.

Cars, cars, cars. Well most everyone knows about this. He raced until a particularly bad accident that took him into the weeds. No serious damage done, he decided (no doubt with some encouragement) that perhaps he should pursue automobilia in other ways. Despite his years of racing he was a very tame driver on his daily commute into Boston. Given that he was driving a Sonett for many of those years, defensive driving was surely a necessity.

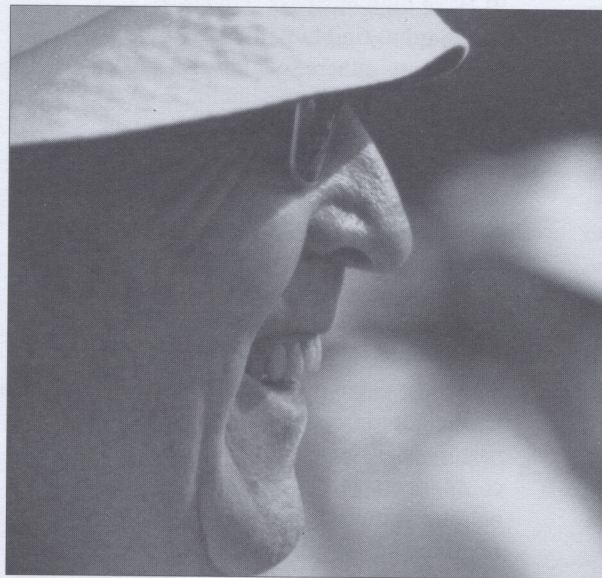
As an engineering exercise Walter and two friends set about designing a race car that would have neutral steering. That is, turn the steering wheel and then let go. You could now watch the car turn in circles forever. Perhaps the seeds of this idea were related to his exit from the racecourse mentioned above. The exercise was a success. The car could drive in circles at 40 mph without any intervention. It was an ugly thing, though, with a tube frame and Saab running gear. It was Saab Quantum #1.

Later came Quantum #2, Quantum #3, and Quantum #4 — each a bit more sophisticated and definitely better looking. A lot of help (in the form of parts) was "donated" by Saab USA, then led by Ralph Millet. Ralph tells of being accused by the Swedes of handing Walter the keys to the parts crib and nearly getting fired for supporting the project. Eventually one of the cars made it to Sweden for an evaluation. The folks there were very critical, particularly of the "fit and finish" and often deny that Walter's Quantum had anything to do with the development of the Sonett II. Some of the biggest complaints about the

Quantum were that it had a two-stroke engine, a column shift and leaked. Still it was enthusiastically received when it appeared at the New York Auto Show in 1962. The design competition for the Sonett II started in 1964 — you do the math. (And it seems to me the Sonett II has those same "faults" and perhaps a few others.)

Walter never really gave up improving car designs. One of his last auto projects was electrifying a Sonett III. With a 12 hp electric motor in a light little frame that yellow Sonett zipped right along if you wanted. But perhaps the best part was the silence. Press the accelerator and you hear a couple of clicks. With the acceleration of an electric motor you were up to speed so fast it shocked you and the neighboring traffic.

Well no tale about Walter can be complete without some of the fun. My wife tells of riding with Barbara in the Kerns' Saab 900. They were warm so Kate instinctively reached for the console switch and opened the sunroof — to Barbara's dismay. "Walter never lets me use it. It might leak." (Remember the



Gunnar Ljungstrom, the man who oversaw the creation of Saab's first car, passed away recently at age 94. Ljungstrom was the man chosen by the board of Svenska Aeroplan Aktiebolaget in 1944 to look into the feasibility of car production by the company. He went on to coordinate the design and production of the first SAAB car, the 92.

Ljungstrom came from an engineering family - his father Fredrik and his uncle Birger Ljungstrom were well known Swedish inventors. The brothers acquired over 300 patents for such items as a high-pressure boiler, a steam turbine, a milking machine, automobile transmissions, and an airplane. Birger Ljungstrom is credited with the design of a hydraulically-operated automatic gearbox in the 1920s.

Gunnar Ljungstrom was educated at the Royal Institute of Technology (KTH) in Stockholm, graduating in 1932. He went to work for A.C. Wickman & Co. Ltd. Of Coventry in England, where he was involved in the design of the Spontan gearbox. He returned to Sweden in 1936 to work for the newly formed SAAB company in Trollhattan, where he was in charge of designing wings for various airplanes. It was his expertise as a problem solver that led to his being placed in charge of the automobile project. Ljungstrom submitted a preliminary design to the Board of SAAB in May, 1945, and on June 14, the Board allocated 200,000 Swedish Kroner to study the feasibility of producing a small car to supplement the company's aircraft production.

Design of the SAAB car was placed in the hands of Sixten Sason, an industrial designer who once worked for Husqvarna and who is credited with the look of the classic Hasselblad camera. From the outset, the SAAB car was to meet the following criteria:

1. Aerodynamic. As an aircraft manufacturer, SAAB was well aware of the adverse effect of wind on a vehicle,

especially a small one.

2. Light weight. Since it was to be a car for the masses, the SAAB should be light weight, with a small, economical engine.
3. Front-wheel drive. So as not to encroach on passenger space, the engine and transmission should be kept close together. In addition, FWD was an advantage in Sweden's snowy climate.
4. Safety. The car was of a unit body design rather than the body on a separate chassis that was popular at the time. This allowed for better safety of the occupants because it allowed engineers to design crush zones to absorb impacts. The unit body was also lighter and stronger than the body-on-frame design. In addition, SAAB believed in active safety, to avoid accidents by use of better handling and superior braking.
5. Timeless. Since SAAB did not have the budget to redesign their car regularly, the original design would have to last many years.



The basic design of the SAAB 92 lasted through the Saab 96 which ended production in 1980, thirty years after the first SAABs rolled off the line in Trollhattan. Even the Saabs of today have some visual clues that lead back to Sixten Sason's original design. While two-stroke engines were found under SAAB hoods from 1950 to 1967, Ljungstrom was against developing them. He believed they were noisy, smoky, and unreliable, and that too many owners would forget to add the oil to the gas.

In 1956, Ljungstrom was one of three representatives sent to the New York Auto Show, where SAAB was displaying its cars for the first time. A couple of 93s and one of the Sonett Super Sports prototypes were on display. Ljungstrom had serious doubts that the 2-stroke engine would sell in the United States, and believed the effort to market SAAB cars in the U.S. a waste of time. Fortunately, his apprehensions were not borne out and the U.S. went on to become SAAB's largest market.

Walter Kern

skylight...) Walter didn't trust speed control. He kept shutting it off to be sure that it was still working.

Much of the rest I remember about Walter Kern I cannot put into words — those images will stay within me. They have already become part of who I am. Likely one or two will sneak out when I least expect it.

Well, as I said at the outset I know something of who Walter Kern was, but far from everything. I would like to ask any that would like to contribute to please send along their own remembrance of Walter, with or without pictures. I will gather these up with others that come in and make a memory book for his wife, Barbara. Please send your notes to:

New England Sonett Club
PO Box 4362
Manchester NH 03108

(Published concurrently in the New England Writings on Saab)

Photograph by the author.

Saab 900 best in class for injury insurance claims

Saab's real-life safety philosophy puts priority on systems and structures designed to protect Saab occupants during a real-world collision. Although Saab conducts over 40 laboratory crash tests, including simulated animal collisions and truck-to-car side impacts, it is real-life collisions and their infinite variables that drive Saab safety engineers and their work. That is why Saab is gratified by the latest reports from the U.S. Highway Loss Data Institute (HLDI).

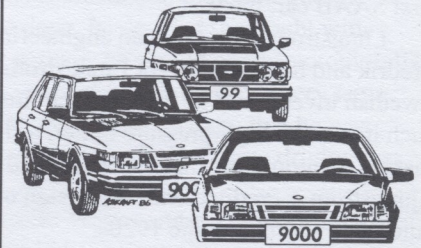
According to the recently published HLDI report, the Saab 900 had the best score of any car in its class as it scored lowest among all 4-door mid-size cars for the relative frequency of injury insurance claims. HLDI publishes the results of its study once a year in a publication entitled Injury, Collision and Theft Losses, and this is the fourth year in a row that the Saab 900 was found to have the lowest injury claim frequency rate in its class. A vehicle's safety performance is the product of many factors, including driver and occupant behavior, personal judgment and other variables. The design of the car also influences its real-life safety integrity. The 1999 HLDI data again supports that when it comes to injury insurance claim rates, Saab and Saab drivers perform well together in the real world.

Saab's performance in the HLDI's annual surveys not only validates Saab's approach to occupant protection, but it also points out the potential for error in relying on one or two standard tests for rating vehicle safety. While standardized testing can provide important and useful data, the testing performed by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), a sister organization to the HLDI, resulted in the 900 being given a "marginal" safety rating. Those ratings are primarily a result of frontal flat barrier and frontal offset barrier testing, with allowance given for bumper performance and headrest design. Saab is far from the only vehicle to change rankings between the IIHS "laboratory" testing and the HLDI "real world" results, but it probably enjoys the largest "jump". Saab's repeated placement as "safest in class" ranking is also important, because a single year's data are also susceptible to random fluctuations. For example, the 1999 ratings between the Ford Crown Victoria and the otherwise identical Mercury Marquis differed by some 20%.

The Saab 9-3 model, which replaced the Saab 900 in the U.S. market in May, 1998, adds such features as the Saab Active Head Restraint (SAHR) system, second-generation driver and passenger front airbags, dual-stage head and torso protecting side-impact airbags and a side impact force-deflecting pendulum "B" pillar system. It also has been strengthened in the front quarters to reduce intrusion into the passenger compartment. The IIHS laboratory testing gave the 9³ a one-notch better rating, to "acceptable." We expect the 9³ to continue the 900's real world standing as safest in class, and safer than most.

Readers wishing to analyze the rankings for themselves can point their internet browser to <http://www.hwysafety.org>, which links to both the IIHS and HLDI data. Readers may also wish to visit <http://www.edmunds.com/edweb/crashtst.html>, which highlight's the Edmunds site's crash safety region with a photograph of a Saab "offset frontal crash test."

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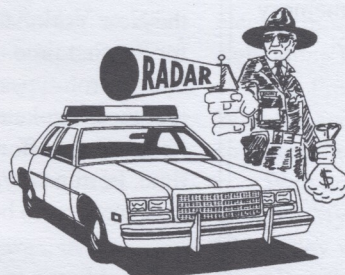
Traffic police assume Saab owners have above-average incomes, which is why they target you for traffic tickets. They think you're more likely to pay up than to contest their revenue-generating practices in the courtroom. However, they overlook the fact that Saab owners are more educated and more motivated to stand up for their rights.

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**1999 Saab Owners
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Memorabilia Available**



If you didn't make it to Colorado or you just want more of the collectable goodies, here's your chance. Limited supply of remaining items:

- Assortment of 5 decals, 2 lapel pins, HK CD and pen, and Program Book (All 10 items pictured above) - \$5
- Convention Logo Wine Glass - \$5
- Beer Mug with Saab Logo only - \$5

Add \$3 shipping per order and send check or MO (allow 3 wks for delivery)

Rocky Mountain Saab Club

519 Lipan St. - Denver, CO 80204

Info & Vol Discounts tom@purplemtn.com

Saab 1999 Sales "Hit the Wall"

After averaging 3500 per month over the first 9 months of 1999, including a "blow out" September which was helped along by a massive lease incentive on base 9³ 5-doors, Saab's sales stalled in October and November. 9³ 5-door, Saab's largest selling single model, just about vanished in October as the 1999 models were virtually nonexistent and 2000 models were only just arriving. 9⁵ sales were stellar in October with a \$3500 end-of-year incentive, then faded in November as supplies of 1999 9⁵ models dried up. Looking ahead, Saab is at least starting the new year with minimal product carryover.

	oct	nov	period
model 900	8	2	10
coupe 9 ³	99	105	204
viggen coupe	57	56	113
sedan 9 ³	117	369	486
sedan 9 ³ se	203	338	541
viggen sedan	1	5	6
convertible 9 ³	144	202	346
convertible 9 ³ se	56	106	162
viggen convertible	1	7	8
total 9 ³	678	1188	1866
model 9000	3	3	6
sedan 9 ⁵	170	192	362
sedan 9 ⁵ se	467	217	684
sedan 9 ⁵ V6 (se)	406	349	755
Aero 9 ⁵	63	105	168
wagon 9 ⁵	656	289	945
wagon 9 ⁵ V6	131	63	194
wagon 9 ⁵ se	32	84	116
total 9 ⁵	1925	1299	3224
			0
IDS	13	8	21
			0
total 1999	2627	2500	5127
last year (1998)	2562	2733	5295
percent increase	2.54	-8.53	-3.17
1999 year to date		36621	
1998 year to date		27215	

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Club Activities

Central Penn SAAB Club Visit to SAAB Cars USA, Inc. PDC; Allentown, PA
by Marc A. Fails

September is a terrific time of year, particularly in Central Pennsylvania. There is more blue sky than any other month of the year and sunrises and sunsets are equally magnificent. Saturday, September 25th, my wife Diane and I left the house well before just such a sunrise to meet fellow club members before the sixty-some mile trip to Allentown, Pennsylvania. Why Allentown? Contrary to what many may still believe thanks in part to the Billy Joel song of the same name, Allentown is growing and provides a strategic distribution location for companies like Nestlè, Daytimers, Stroh's and SAAB Cars USA, Inc. The Central Penn SAAB Club had been extended an invitation to visit the SAAB Parts Distribution Center, and naturally, we accepted.



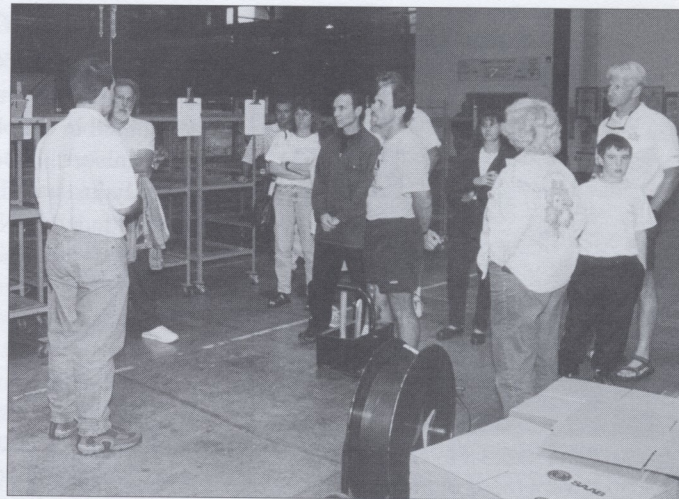
From left, kneeling: George Basehore, Nick Brown, Trudy and Dennis Hollandsmith. From left, standing: Bob Meckley, Tim Brown, John Christensen, Darren Aklan, Lisa Booth, Kevin Booth, Chris Booth, Diane Fails, and Dale Shiffer.

Making the requisite stop for a coffee refill and nourishment, Diane and I arrived at our rendezvous point, Lititz Auto Service in Lititz Pennsylvania around 7:30 a.m. Lititz Auto Service, an independent repair facility specializing in SAAB is owned by Tim Brown and Kevin Booth, who arranged for our visit to Allentown. Waiting for other club members to arrive gave me an opportunity to load the cameras and wipe the body and wheels one more time.

Making the trip were club members Dennis and Trudy Hollandsmith, 9000CSE; George Basehore, 900S; Kevin, Lisa and Chris Booth, 900T convertible; Tim and Nick Brown, 900T Convertible, Dale Shiffer, 900T coupe and Diane and I, 900S coupe. We departed at 8:20 a.m. and followed route 501 north to Route 419. Route 419 parallels Interstate 78 and the plan was to avoid 4 lane traffic and arrive in Allentown by 10:00 a.m. Our route afforded twists, turns and dipseedoos past farmlands and through small towns, which reaffirmed that our circulatory systems were on-line.

Arriving at our destination 60 miles later, at 9:50 a.m., we were greeted by John Christensen, Bob Meckley and Darren Aklan, with SAAB. After brief introductions, they instinctively directed us to the comfort facilities (if you had just driven an hour and a half over Pennsylvania's back roads, after consuming your morning coffee, you can identify with the term comfort) and had a fresh pot of coffee and donuts ready. We had an opportunity to look around the modern office area, laden with all types of SAAB automobilia, and were ever watchful of George Basehore once he spotted John's collection of SAAB miniatures. (George is our club's equivalent to Indiana Jones when it comes to the acquisition of all things SAAB).

John, Bob and Darren had prepared the conference room for a video presentation, which included the Viggen in both aircraft and automobile format, a wind tunnel demonstration and several commercial clips. Also included was a video supplied by



Darren Aklan headed the tour of the SAAB Cars USA, Inc., Parts Distribution Center in Allentown, PA, and fielded many questions from Central Penn SAAB Club members with the help of John Christensen and Bob Meckley.

Caterpillar Logistic Service or CLS. CLS maintains 45 employees, who handle the shipping, warehousing and logistical services to keep the flow of parts moving for SAAB.

Within the Allentown facility's 155,000 square feet were about 12 million dollars of inventory. Allentown supplies about 70% of the U.S. dealer network, including Puerto Rico. The remaining distribution needs are handled through a smaller facility in California, which maintains about 4 million dollars of inventory on hand. Canada has a dedicated support system in place, but in certain emergencies, Allentown can handle requests if needed. Approximately 3,500 packages, which are defined as anything from a simple O-ring to a complete engine or transmission assembly, leave the Allentown facility weekly via overnight delivery. The facility also handles the return of core parts (engines and transmissions) from dealers, and readies them for container shipment for remanufacturing.

Inside the building's 155,000 square feet is heavy duty shelving which rises over 30 feet high in many areas. 12 carousel machines rotate 7 foot tall racks, which contain smaller parts, all aided by the computer. Our tour of the facility included a demonstration of the key cutting machines and if you ever wondered why keys for some of the anti-theft equipped cars are expensive, it is because it requires a machine costing \$25,000 to cut them.

Darren then strapped on his safety belt and demonstrated one of the many vertical lift machines used to pick parts from the shelving areas.

For vintage enthusiasts, John informed us that the company has looked at how the internet might allow for the cataloging of vintage parts and their sale on-line. At this point it is an idea, but as we have seen many times with other companies, if the idea has merit and enough people will support it (which means that the economic forces of money exchanging in return for goods), it might be a worthy project. At this point, it is only an idea with no target date for completion.

Hidden out of sight until the end of the tour, John and his associates had parked a new Viggen at one of the many back receiving doors. Each of us had an opportunity to test fit the seat to our posteriors and enjoy the marvelous leather envelope afforded by the Viggen interior. The car fits very well. Many thanks to Scott SAAB in Emmanus, PA for letting us have the car for a few hours of enjoyment and photos.

After the tour, we made our way to the lunchroom, where lunch was waiting for us. Each club member received a SAAB hat, sports bottle, hat pins and window decals. John had prepared a door prize drawing with coffee mugs, golf and T-shirts, SAAB fighter jet kits and various SAAB logo items were given to the person with the winning number. There was also a generous supply of SAAB literature, reprints and the new SAAB catalog of accessories.

To conclude our day, We had John move the Viggen for a great photo opportunity with the club member cars.

Many thanks to John, Bob and Darren for putting the tour together and taking time on a Saturday to host a great event. From personal experience ordering parts from local dealers, these guys do a great job.

Marc A. Fails story of the CPSC visit to Saab's Allentown Parts Distribution Center was previously printed in the Central Penn Saab Club Newsletter. Photographs copyright (c) Marc A. Fails used with permission.

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SAABtoberfest 99



Marc A. Fails

What were you doing on Saturday, October 8th? If you weren't in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, you missed what may arguably have been the largest independent gathering of SAABs and SAAB owners in quite some time, with 48 cars (with combine mileage of 6,216,000 miles) and 85 participants coming from as far away as Detroit, Michigan, and Atlanta, Georgia. SAABtoberfest '99, hosted by Deb (Blaithin) and Dean Lusby could only be summarized as a terrific success.

The group began forming at exit 34 off Interstate 80, in the nearby Columbia Mall parking lot before 8:00 A.M.. The weather was overcast with intermittent rain and drizzle, but the weather was no match for the enthusiastic group, as they prepared to enjoy the day and Central Pennsylvania's foliage and scenery. Each driver received a goody bag containing sample car care products, from Rain-X and Lexol, stickers, literature, a free

Grassroots motorsports magazine and an event window decal. John Webber prepared the event T-shirts, which were extremely well done with the SAABtoberfest logo embroidered in gold.

At about 10:30, after the drivers' meeting, two groups of cars formed and left minutes apart for the first leg of the tour. The morning portion of the tour comprised 54 miles of scenic country backroads, twisting by rolling farmlands and crossroads. Several locals paused briefly to watch the procession of SAABs roll past. Many displayed either puzzlement or smiles to see so many cars. I'm certain they were even more surprised that they were all SAABs. Before noon, as the tour made its way through Bloomsburg and past the university, several college students shared the same curious interest about where all the SAABs came from. While waiting for a traffic signal to turn green, one student felt compelled to ask the question "What's with all the SAABs?" She seemed disappointed to learn that we weren't in

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town to celebrate homecoming with them. We rolled into the City Park around 12:30 P.M. and had the first opportunity to stretch our legs in about 2 hours. As the second group filed in behind us, we made our way to the pavilion to prepare for lunch. The pavilion was large



John Bartlett, his award winning Sonett V-4, and his award - the coveted "drool bucket."

enough to accommodate the entire group and had a massive stone fireplace, which we put to good use. Many participants brought a picnic lunch while others patronized local shops for sandwiches and the like. While everyone enjoyed their meal and the accompanying conversation, the door prizes were brought out and displayed.

Prize donations came from SAAB Cars USA, Inc., Lehman SAAB and Jim Wilson, Mequiar's, The Sonett Club, Lititz Auto Service, The SAAB Network and Scott Paterson, Thor Carlson, Seth Bengelsdorf, Central Penn SAAB Club and Marc & Diane Fails. Christine Krueger drove 890 miles from Atlanta, Georgia to claim the long distance award. As the last name was drawn from the bucket, the last prize was won; a total of 76 prizes were given away this year, so everyone came away a winner. The biggest surprise came for Deb



VIGGENS

Lusby who had celebrated her birthday two days before the event. Husband Dean baked a cake and friends presented her with a whale tail spoiler, already painted in rose quartz to match her 900T. (Deb tells us that the spoiler is already on the car and it's sweeeet!) We hope it was a memorable birthday Deb!

Upon completing the door prize drawing and surprise party, everyone made their way back to the cars for the much anticipated "Drool Bucket Award". The award is a people's choice based upon the simple question "Which car other than your own would you most like to drive home?" Sean Mullady assumed the duties of passing out and collecting the ballots. After the votes were counted, Jon Bartlett from Sterling, Massachusetts claimed the award with his restored 1969 Sonett V-4. Nice car Jon.

The afternoon leg of the tour comprised 47 miles, and by some accounts, was much more challenging than the morning jaunt. The hills seemed longer, higher and the S turns seemed quicker and tighter. Both groups made it back to the mall parking lot after 5:00 P.M. While some participants said their good-byes and started their journeys home, the remaining group went to dinner at a nearby restaurant to conclude their day.

There are many ways to judge the success of an event. In the case of SAABtoberfest, you can judge it purely on the enthusiasm of the group. People traveled to Central Pennsylvania for the sole purpose of enjoying their day in the company of other like-minded SAAB owners. Next year promises to be equally enjoyable and we look forward to seeing more new faces.

Marc A. Fails story of SaabToberfest was previously printed in the Central Penn Saab Club Newsletter. Photographs copyright (c) Marc A. Fails, used with permission.

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Club Activities: Seattle Saab Club October Fun-Run - "BLA ROC" Vintage Meet

Seattle SAAB Club
October Fun-Run
October 30th, 1999

7:00 am - My alarm clock goes off, I hit the snooze (repeat several times). Finally get out of bed, stumbling to the shower, but something's different this morning. It's the day of the SCS Fun-Run! Turn on the radio in the shower, and they're forecasting cloudy skies, but otherwise dry weather. Lather up, scrub, and rinse! Make coffee, listening to the Huskies vs Stanford forecast - the weather sounds more promising.

8:40 am - There are already two SAABs parked in the Mercer Island Park & Ride, already talking shop. Mark Jeter and Rob and Kathy Walden are talking. I pull up to them, and park my black 1993 900t somewhere in between. I get out, and Rob is stuffing his face with a pastry and a commuter-cup of joe. Mark is wearing his SAAB cap, Kathy is wearing her Scandia Autosport sweatshirt, and Rob is sporting his SAAB polo shirt (shoot! I know I should have ordered from saabcatalog.com...). Mark drove over with his buddy Kevin's Merlot-colored 99 turbo, and Mark & Kathy drove the Montecarlo Yellow 900 convertible turbo. There's something peculiar about Kathy's car... Whoa, she's got hers outfitted with the new Dunlop W-10s! Aero wheels with the polished lip, SPG panels... This fun-run is gonna be great!

Dennis is close behind. I have never noticed how aggressive the 9000 looks from the front. A very "stout" look that is amplified with the grey color of the hood... "GRRRR", it says to me, through the mirror. I can also see Chris peeking through the formation, DRLs on, and wanting more excitement! The smooth lines on the New Generation 900 took me a while to get used to, but it still has the SAAB bloodline - the grille, the nice quarter-angle profile, and the sharpness - all SAAB! Chris' 900 is surely saying "Give me MORE, you old-timers!" Sorry, the speed limit is 55mph...

I wait for a gradual curve to take a photo of all the Griffin-marked cruisers. Got it! Hey, was that a cool sign, or what? We pass by a sign that says "Griffin Creek" - a nice tribute for the club! Now, we pour into the parking lot at the Fall

City Grill. We arrive at about 11:15, and Lunch isn't served until 11:30. We opt to wait and have Lunch served. I had the Club Sandwich, and it was pretty tasty. Lots of bacon - probably left overs from the breakfast menu, though... After sharing stories and stories about Europe and future SCS events (among the ideas was a "work-day" to clean up around Scanwest, to join forces for community work, and autocross or race-track events). Stay tuned, as some good ideas were tossed around - Dennis brought up a great idea - Toys for Tots with the new 9-5 wagon "...we can set a record with stuffing as much toys into a borrowed 9-5 as we can: a great campaign for a dealer!"

After stuffing our faces with the Fall City cuisine, we stagger out to the parking lot to find a lone Talladega sitting near our group. Now, Kathy's 900 Convertible is the victim of discussion. Rob scuffed up her rear bumper corner, but the finish on the paint is mint! Rag-top is clean, the wheels... the Wheels! As I was watching all of the SAABs in formation through my rear view mirror, one thing REALLY stood out - Kathy's Aero Wheels' polished lip. Every time Rob took a sweeper or a curve, the polished lip really gleamed! I was paying so much attention to that, I swerved into the middle of the road a couple of times, hitting the turtles that demanded my attention.

Mark is in my rear sights, now. He must have changed the driver's side headlamp, because it's really bright for a 99. The face has a classy look, but at the same time, a very aggressive styling for it's time. Something about four headlamps... It seems to add "richness" (I can afford four lamps!) I can see the aforementioned curves of the hood, and it's four headlamps flanking the stylish grille. No wonder they pick the 99 as a weapon of choice in the rallies! It's ready to go as is!

We pass by the "Home of the Twin Peaks Pie" that changed it's name for the T-Mar cafe to something (I forget). We cross over the RR tracks, and I nearly fainted when I heard the new 3" exhaust hit the tracks... a price to pay, for a lower COG... We get on I-90, and off goes Dennis! Wheeeeeeeee! I follow, and I see Mark and Rob, flying. Man, isn't Dennis gonna slow down? 60, 65, 70, 75,

80, 85... Whoa, finally. We all saw red on our turbo gauge! There goes Dennis again! Whoosh! I look back, and I still see the sexy flash of yellow and the polished rims of Kathy's topless Swede! Gaining on my tail is the Ultra-modern 99T driven by Mark! After the controlled bursts of Autobahn speeds, Dennis breaks off at Issaquah to head home (or buy refill crayons for his son), waving hands through the sunroof.

Onto I-405 again, Kathy's on the cell phone, and Rob flashes a "hang loose" and engages into warp-speed, putting a souped-up Jetta and a Civic to shame, Rob breaks off to Redmond. Mark and I are back on SR520 headed for the city. Mark, with his arm nearly ripped off by the wind, waves a good-bye and breaks off to the Montlake exit - surely to get caught in the Huskies game traffic...

A good maiden-tour of SCS. I had a lot of fun with fellow SAABers, and look forward to more events to come. Next time, we'll arm ourselves with more SAABs and more stories and ideas. Thanks to all of you who joined in, and we hope to see more of you on the future fun-runs and events. Our next challenge will be to see Doug at Scanwest to come out with us... (that's another story)

*James Nakatsu
Seattle, WA*

BLÅ RØK



HERITAGE, LEGEND AND LORE

VINTAGE SAAB 2000

The Minnesota Saab Club, Andrews of Princeton, Inc., and Meyer Garage, Inc., are hosting BLA ROK - VINTAGE SAAB 2000. The event will be held on the grounds of Andrews of Princeton from June 9th through June 10th, 2000. For additional information, e-mail to pgp17@juno.com, or send your name, address, and telephone number to the Minnesota Saab Club, 200 East 66th Street, Richfield, MN 55423.

International SAAB Club Meeting 2000

9 - 12 June 2000 (Whitsun)

Luzern, Switzerland (CH)



General:

- *The Saab-Club Schweiz will celebrate its 15th anniversary in the year 2000, which is one of the reasons why it will be organising the International Saab-Club Meeting 2000. The meeting will take place in Luzern in the heart of Switzerland. We sincerely hope that we can count on the active support and worldwide participation of as many of you as possible.*
- *The meeting point and headquarters will be the AAL = Armee Ausbildungszentrum Luzern (the army training centre in Luzern). Motorway exit: Luzern Süd / Kriens > Allmend > AAL.*

Registration:

- *In writing, by way of the registration form which should be sent to:
Saab-Club Schweiz, Fridolin Spälti, Reidholzstrasse 9 B, CH-8805 Richterswil/Switzerland, Internet:
www.saabclub.ch.*
- **Registration deadline: 10 March 2000**

Fees:

- *The registration fee should be transferred, by 10 March 2000 at the latest, to the following bank account:
UBS Hochdorf 288-420264.40D, PC 30-35-9, Swift-No. UBSWCHZH60A
Adults CHF 150.- / children 6-14 years old CHF 80.- / children under 6 free.*
- *The fee includes: meeting documents, parking, souvenir, badge, dinner with entertainment on Saturday evening, snack on Sunday afternoon.*
- *Participants are responsible for settling their own accommodation expenses on the spot.*
- *No refunds will be granted on cancellations received after 1 March 2000. Prior to that, 80 % will be refunded.*

Accommodation:

- *Various possibilities are available:*
- *Hotel ****, Hotel ***, Hotel **, priced per room including breakfast. (Should the category chosen be fully-booked, kindly indicate whether you would prefer a higher (+) or a lower (-) one. Example I+)*
- *The AAL (the new army education centre in Luzern) will put a limited number of 4-bedded rooms at our disposal. The price per room and per night will be CHF 110.- (without breakfast). Reservations will be treated on a first-come-first-served basis. Preference will be given to groups of 4 people. (Please contact us if you require clarification).*
- *194 beds are available in youth hostels in Luzern – generally 4-bedded rooms. Price per person CHF 36.- without breakfast.*
- *The two camping sites in Luzern (Lido and Horw) must also be reserved. (common distribution list). Approximate prices: per tent CHF 20.- / per caravan CHF 25.-, without breakfast.*

Contact:

Saab Club Schweiz
Fridolin Spälti
Reidholzstrasse 9B
CH-8805 Richterswil/SWITZERLAND

E-Mail: spaelti@dplanet.ch
Tel: ++41 1 784 63 47
Internet: www.saabclub.ch

Schedule of Events

Friday, 9 June 2000

- 18.00 – 21.00 -Arrival of the first participants at the AAL in Luzern (Highway exit: Luzern Süd / Kriens > Allmend > AAL)
- Registration, distribution of meeting documents, check in at accommodation
 - Supper in the AAL restaurant (at your own expense)

Saturday, 10 June 2000

- 09.00 – 16.30 - Arrival of other participants, AAL in Luzern (Motorway exit: Luzern Süd / Kriens > Allmend > AAL)
- Registration, distribution of meeting documents, check in at accommodation

- 11.00 - Official opening of the meeting at the AAL
- 12.00 - Luncheon the AAL restaurant (at your own expense)

- 14.00 - "Beauty-Contest" (judgement and evaluation of the cars)
- "Stump" market (*Remember Customs regulations – copies available on request!*)
 - Other activities as announced on the AAL Info board

(Please note that on Saturdays the shops close at 16.00 hrs in Luzern)

Club News: 2000 North American Saab Owners' Convention

18.30 – 24.00 - Apéro, dinner with entertainment (AAL or Kursaal Luzern depending on the number of participants)

Sunday, 11 June 2000

- 09.30 - Films about Switzerland and SAAB (Aula, AAL) and/or -Scenic tour with own car over the Alpine passes plus other excursions depending on the weather. In the event of bad weather, it will be possible to visit the Swiss Transport Museum or other sites of interest in and around Luzern.
- 17.00 - Return to the AAL, distribution of prizes, snack in the restaurant and farewell to participants.
- End of the official part of the programme.

A copy of the registration form in printable "PDF" format will be available on our web site: <http://www.saabclub.com>

2000 Convention Returns to the Northeast! Track events return to the Saab Convention! Mark your calendars for July 5 though 9.

The New Jersey Saab Owner's Club is promoting SAAB2000 - the North American Saab Owner's Convention at the Hudson Valley Resort, Kerhonkson, NY, July 7-9. About a 25 minute drive from I-87 and New Paltz, NY, the Hudson Valley Resort is situated in the scenic Catskill Mountains of lower New York State.

The storied Lime Rock Park in northwest Connecticut, where Saabs tasted racing success as far back as 1957, will host Saab 2000s track days. Track Days will be Wednesday and Thursday July 5 and 6. There will be a parade of Vintage and not-so-vintage Saab race cars on July 6. Details on rates and programs to follow.

If you wish to obtain more information, please call the Saab Convention Hotline at 1-800-438-7222 and press '6'. Leave your name and address, and a registration package will be sent to you. Or, you can download registration forms from www.saabconvention.org. Registration materials will be mailed beginning the week of January 17, 2000. Registration forms will contain all information about the track events.

Registration fees for Saab 2000:

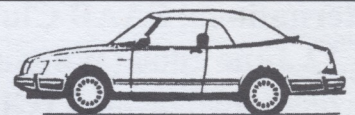
February 1 through April 30, 2000	
Adults (& children 13 and up)	\$125.00
Children 6-12 with Camp Saab program	\$75.00
Children 6-12 without Camp Saab	\$50.00

May 1 through June 15, 2000	
Adults (& children 13 and up)	\$150.00
Children 6-12 with Camp Saab	\$100.00
Children 6-12 without Camp Saab	\$75.00

After June 15, 2000	
Adults (& children 13 and up)	\$175.00

Children 6-12 with Camp Saab	* Not Available after 6/15/2000*
Children 6-12 without Camp Saab	\$100.00

The Hudson Valley Resort has given the convention a special rate of \$125 per room per night. Please call 1-888-9HUDSON, or visit their website at: www.hudsonvalleyresort.com. Be sure to mention you are booking for the 'Saab Room Block'.

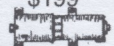
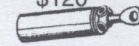


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SAAB Club of NE Pennsylvania

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1723 Clearview St.
Scranton PA 18508-
717-969-9863

SAAB Club of Texas

Craig Bobchin is no longer a resident of Texas, and we have not received information of a replacement. Please contact NINES if you know!

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Dr. Nio's Saab Klinik

My 1997 9000 Aero with 33,000 miles has a sporadic engine cutout under hard load that started around 12,000 miles. The dealer fiddled with the boost at the 15,000 mile checkup but didn't make a bit of difference. It only happens randomly and, of course, never when the dealer's mechanic is driving it. The problem is a sudden momentary total engine cutout, similar to the overpressure switch cutout, but the engine RPM's are never high enough for that switch to cut in. The cutout will happen in all 5 gears! It has even happened a number of times driving along at 65 and then moderately pressing down on the accelerator to make space for a car coming on from an on-ramp. A number of times it has done it twice in a row, i.e. on the gas moderately hard; cutout happens, off the gas; on the gas again moderately hard; cutout happens; on the gas again moderately hard and it accelerates great. Sometimes it will do it a couple times a week and then won't do it again for weeks. One of the problems of course is that to make it happen you have to be on the gas fairly hard which happens only once in a while. It does get a little scary though to be passing a slower moving vehicle on a two lane road and have the engine cutout

with traffic coming at you. I suspect a bad overpressure switch, faulty computer, or a bad DI unit, although it doesn't seem to be occurring at a greater frequency as I would expect if the DI unit were dying. The dealer doesn't want to do anything until their mechanic experiences it for himself. They have tried to pull any fault codes, but there were none. Any thoughts on what's going on that I can suggest to the mechanic?

*Richard Bohn
Hollis, N.H.*

You don't have to have high rpm to hit overboost. It sounds like you are doing just that. Notice the turbo gauge when it happens. Are you into the red zone? If so, three possibilities. One the boost solenoid is out to lunch. You can check them electrically, although I have seen them check ok and still be the culprit. Unplug the solenoid, mounted on the radiator fan shroud. (Has three wires and three hoses, a black plastic solenoid). Using an ohm meter, check the resistance on either of the end pins to the center pin of the solenoid. The results should be around 3 ohms and close to each other in the values. Usual failure mode is an open circuit in one side or the other.

We've seen DI cassettes cause the problem as well, had one with no other symptom. Test is substitution, Saab issued test units to the dealers for this purpose. They are readily identifiable because they are blue instead of red so they can't get mixed up. We've also seen Trionic ECMs cause the problem, but not as often as the above suspects.

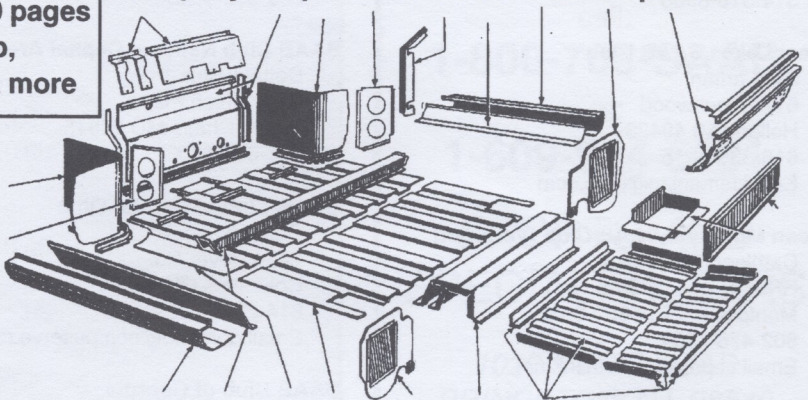
A couple of other things to try is a fresh set of spark plugs meeting the specs for the DI system and a "rebooting" of the ECM, disconnect the negative cable on the battery for a few minutes and reconnect. Then go for a 5 mile test drive, pushing the boost as high as possible for as long as possible at the time to allow the ECM to readapt max boost. This has solved a couple of the intermittent problems we've seen. A dealer with Tech 2 has several parameters to check, and if the car is doing the cut out as often as you describe, they shouldn't have a problem finding it. Ask if you can drive the car with the technician if they can't reproduce the symptom. Tech 2 can freeze the data stream from the ECM and allow a view into what was going on when the problem occurred.

DO IT THE RIGHT WAY!

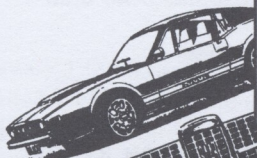
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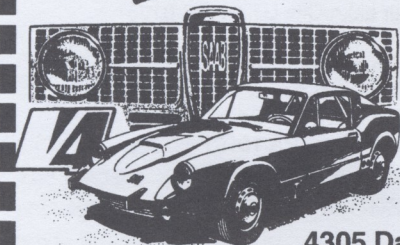
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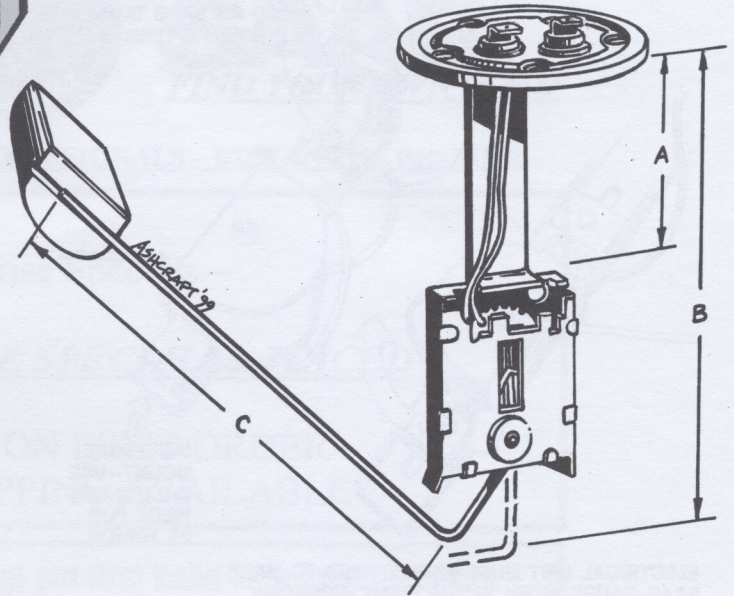
FREE CATALOG!



**SAAB FUEL GAUGE SENDER UNITS--
TESTING, REPAIR, REPLACEMENT**

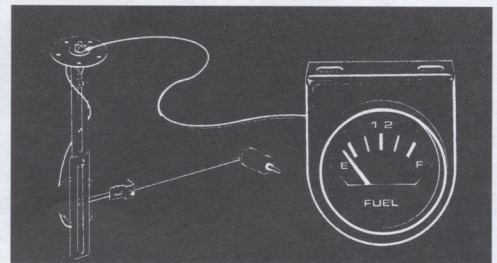
Nearly 20 years have passed since the last V4 powered Saab left the Trollhattan factory. Over 25 years since the last V4 was imported for USA sale. As the supply of new parts for these cars dries up, we must find ways to rebuild specific parts or replace them with a USA part that will do the same job and hopefully be 1) readily available and 2) relatively inexpensive. There is one that does the job quite nicely and satisfies both requirements.

The original fuel sender units were built by VDO and looked like the unit shown in this drawing. The ELECTRICAL part of each sender was the same, but the LENGTHS of the mount strap and the float drop arm was different for each model, as shown in the accompanying chart. Note that over the years, Saab may have used OTHER vendors besides VDO.

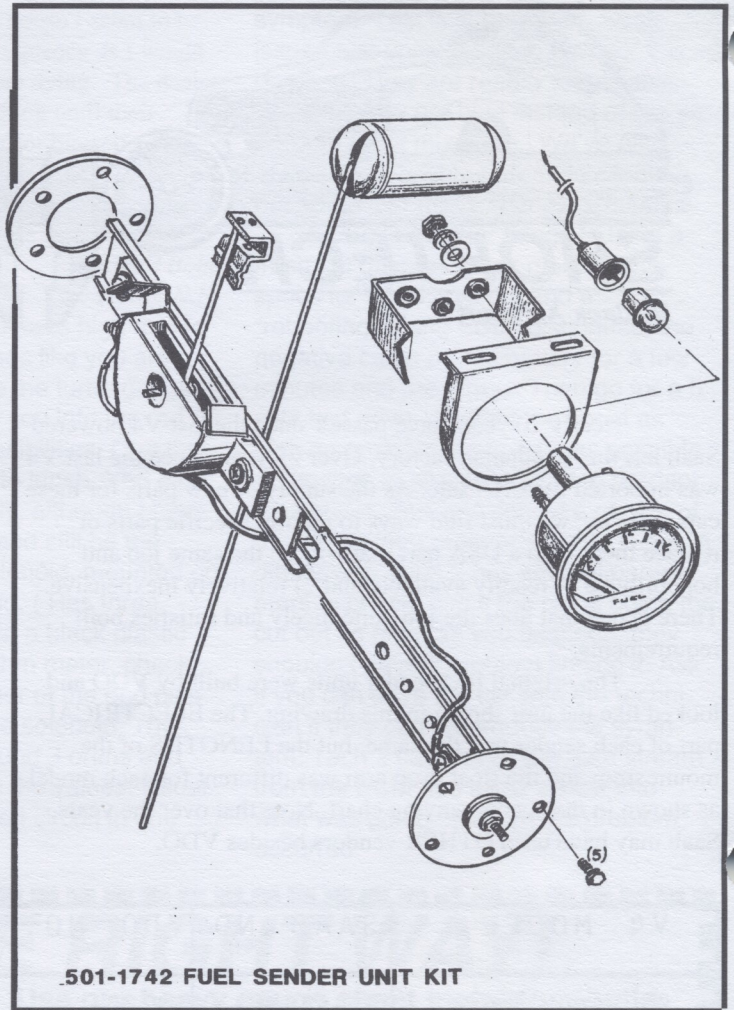
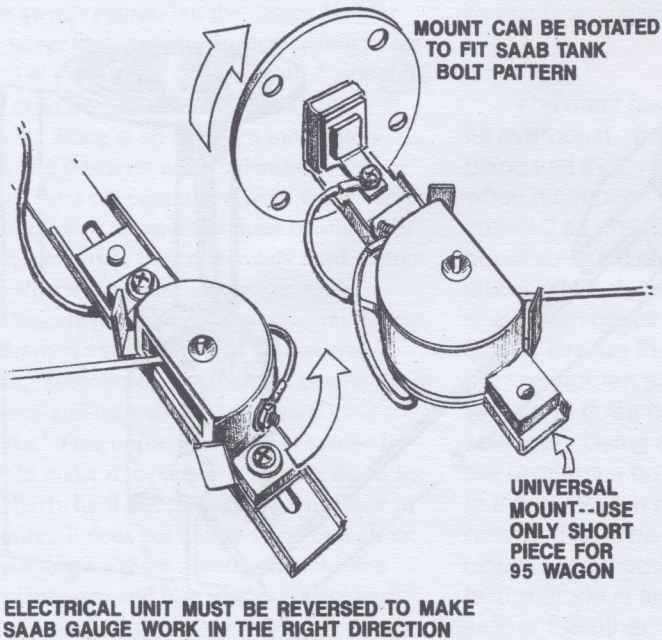


V4 MODEL	SAAB NO.	VDO NO.	A	B	C
95 WAGON UP TO VIN 57023	7246465	38/20	0	2.825"	3.51"
95 WAGON AFTER VIN 57023	8806226	38/20	0	2.825"	3.51"
96 SEDAN	8806218	38/228	2.55"	5.45"	5.65"
97 SONETT	7406390	36/382	3.50"	6.60"	8.875"

Universal tank sender units can be used. One that we have used is the NAPA No. 501-1742, and it comes as a kit with all the pieces shown in the drawing. You have a choice of using the gauge supplied in the kit or using the VDO gauge in your car. If you choose the latter, you must make some alterations to the universal sender unit.



It must be adjusted to 1) FIT properly, and 2) to WORK electrically in the V4 Saab. The mount at the top has the correct bolt pattern but must be ROTATED to fit into the Saab tanks properly. The electrical unit must be reversed in the drop strap so the gauge reads in the right direction (i.e. "full" when the tank is



full, not "empty" when the tank is full). On the 96 and Sonett, the long drop strap is used, on the 95 it is removed since the 95 fuel tank is so flat and thin (vertically).

Adjust the universal sender to approximate the drop and lift of the original VDO sender. Connect the GAUGE (not the warning lamp) wire to the electrical connector on the universal sender. Insulate the warning lamp sender wire (which cannot be used with the universal sender). Connect the GROUND wire to one of the mount bolts holding the sender unit to the tank. Presto! Instant fuel gauge operation!

TESTING THE OLD VDO SENDER UNIT

Use your ohmmeter, set on its LOWEST setting. Put one probe on the "G" (gauge) connector on the sender unit and the other to the frame of the unit. Hold the unit level and let the float DROP fully (as in empty tank). You should read about 3.0 ohms. Change the ohmmeter range on your meter so it can read up to about 250 ohms. Raise the float up to the maximum lift (full tank). You should read about 200.0 ohms. The movement from full drop to full lift should produce a nice, continual movement of the ohmmeter needle. If it jumps around but still gets to 200 ohms, you may be able to carefully clean the wires where the wiping arm contacts them to give the meter reading. If you read ZIP, the winding wires are probably open (broken) and the unit is shot.

It IS possible to have these sender units rebuilt by VDO. See ads in Hemmings Motor News for locations of these repair shops. This service will NOT be cheap, but you will be able to retain the low fuel warning lamp feature of the original VDO sender unit.

Camelback

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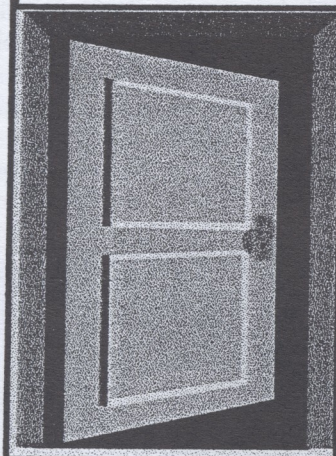
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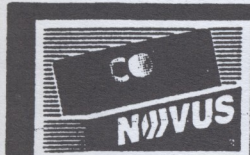
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My introduction to Saab automobiles began about 17 months ago when I drove a friend's 1986 900T SPG. It was different. I had always owned Japanese cars and the turbo on the Saab was surprising to say the least. I was convinced that if I were going to purchase a Saab, this was the one.

It took me about four months of searching and looking at several '86 SPG's before I settled on one. They are hard to find but are out there and in various conditions. The car I purchased had some front end damage to the driver's

side. The hood, grill, and front headlights('87>) were incorrect. The interior was in fantastic shape except for the usual cracked leather front seats. My friend checked out the engine and transmission and found the car to be essentially sound but in dire need of attention. My goal was to restore/repair the car to its near original condition. This is not a complete restoration. Since I had no history on the car I assumed everything needed to be done. The car had 163,000 mi and VIN#YS3AD35L3G2016617.

For the first seven months the car was not driven during repairs. I began with the clutch and replaced it with the factory Saab Clutch Kit 900T (88 18 122), flywheel bearing, t/o bearing, rear engine main seal, clutch master cylinder, and clutch pedal/bushing. Since this was my first major repair I had assistance with this one. The most difficult part was disengaging the pressure plate. My friend had a spacer ring that was wedged between the fingers and housing of the pressure plate. He also had a homemade tool to hold the flywheel stationary. I also had to drain and remove my

radiator. It was the original with slight damage and would need to be dealt with at a later time.

Next came the replacement of the entire brake system. I installed front and rear rebuilt brake calipers, Brembo rotors, Metal Master brake pads, Girling brake master cylinder and "Group 6" stainless steel brake lines. I also installed new lock plates, caliper bolts, and rotor screws. Once the brake calipers were replaced and new U-clip/dampers installed the clunking noise when braking in reverse disappeared. Since the brake work was being done I was advised to do the suspension and installed the Saab RoadHandling Kit (02 74 589). This includes front/rear springs, gas shocks and lowers the car about 1.5". The kit is essentially a '87> SPG suspension. It is a good idea to install the front driver's side shock before the brake master cylinder. Once the brake master cylinder is installed its very difficult to get at the two 12mm lock nuts(special tools exist) that hold the top shock mount. Make sure you have a good spring compressor! Once you have the compressed spring out be careful removing the compressor. We laid a board over the compressed spring while releasing the tension on the spring compressors.

I also installed a fresh set of NGK BCP7ES spark plugs, Bosch distributor cap/rotor, fuel filter, Bougicord wire set, Castrol 10W-30 oil and Saab oil filter, and



Figure 1: Poorly fitted hood, headlights, grill and side directional markers. The '86 SPG should have the headlight/light in bezel but someone tried to install '87> headlights and grill.

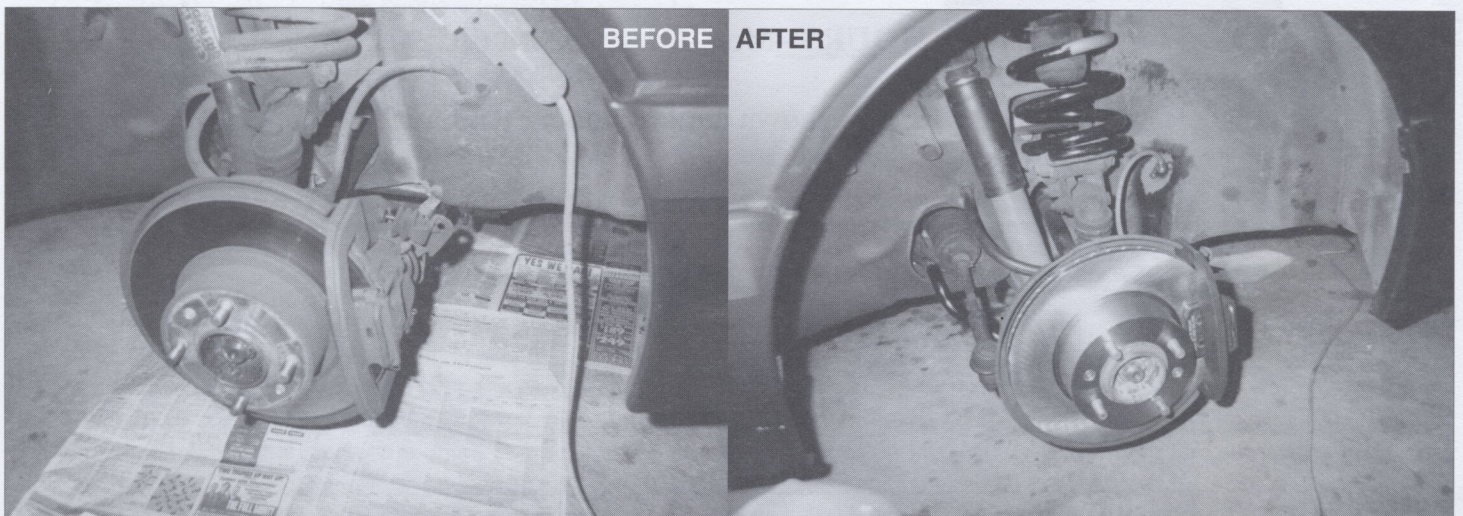


Figure 2: This is the passenger's side front brakes and suspension. The Saab RoadHandling Kit includes shocks and springs. The calipers, rotors and brake pads were replaced along with the Group6 stainless brake lines. This is before the power steering rack, tie rod ends and ball joints were replaced.

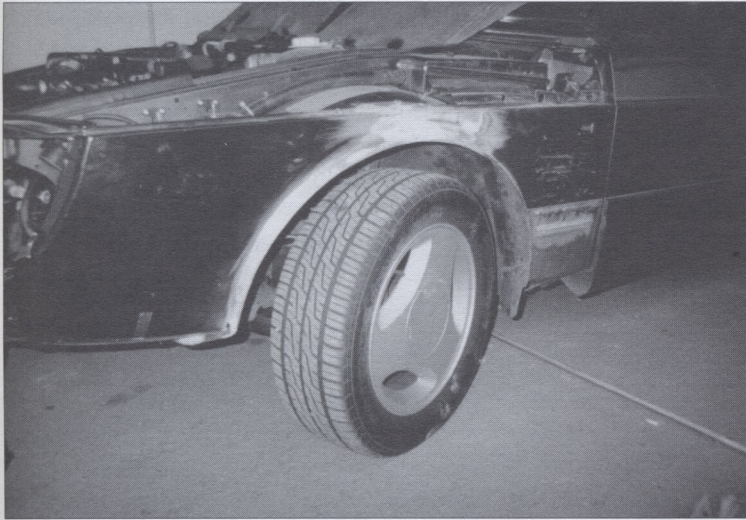


Figure 3: Front fender being cut in at All Car Auto Body, San Mateo CA.

replaced the transmission fluid with Redline MTL. The muffler(88 22 280) and tailpipe(75 35 925) were replaced with a stock Saab exhaust.

From the advice of the Burlingame Saab Parts Department I next visited All Car Auto Body in San Mateo, CA. This shop specializes in the factory repair of Saabs. It was assessed that I would need a hood, radiator support, front bumper, headlights/bezel, side direction markers, grille, fender edges, left-front fender section, lower front spoiler assembly. All parts were new factory Saab except for the hood ('91), radiator support and bumper. Interestingly enough it was decided that I should obtain ALL the parts for this repair. Shop owner, Rod Dowiat, convinced me that locating and purchasing the parts myself would be more economical than his shop doing that task. Since this repair was a non-insurance job, Rod said I would get a better price on parts purchasing them as an individual trying to repair his own vehicle. An autobody shop doing an insurance job would more likely be charged full price for the parts. Locating all the parts for this repair proved to be challenging to say the least.

During the course of the repairs I also needed a new engine oil cooler(75 46 567), protective oil cooler housing, oil hoses and



Figure 4: Final assembly. New hood, radiator support, grill, bumper and spoiler.

A/C condenser. They also recharged the A/C system and rewired my headlights back to H4's. The car was painted in the original Saab color (paint code 158 B) with Sikkens two-stage polyurethane base/clear coat. The entire process took ten weeks and I picked the car up just two days before Christmas!

While the Saab was in the body shop I managed to locate a pristine set of grey leather front and back seats from a 1988 SPG. The car had been in an accident in 1990 and the interior removed and stored in a warehouse until I purchased them. When I purchased the car the Clarion cassette/equalizer was missing. I installed a Blaupunkt Reno Cassette indash stereo with detachable face plate and Boston Acoustics Rally RX47 speakers. The cassette stereo was purchased from Crutchfield and included a wiring harness/plug which connects into the back of the stereo. This plug fits exactly into the wiring harness/plug in the Saab. It was almost too easy and took approximately one hour to install. I did remove the original DIN box and wiring from the equalizer to the stereo. Because of the larger magnet on the 4" speaker some of the foam behind the glove compartment had to be trimmed away for the magnet to fit. In the space where the Clarion equalizer resided I put one of those fuzzy boxes which come in models without an equalizer. Headlights were replaced with Hella H4's (46476) and the fog lights with new Bosch pilot lens/fog light covers and 100W bulbs .



Figure 5: Interior. Front and rear seats replaced with a set from a 1988 SPG.

All this took seven months. With this amount of time and money invested I removed the non-functioning factory alarm and had a Clifford Sabre II remote keyless entry alarm system installed. The hood, trunk and windows were fitted with motion sensors.

Clifford Quan's "Resurrection of an SPG" will be continued in the next issue.

I purchased my 1985 16-valve 900 turbo 4 door sedan new in January, 1985, and nearly 14 years and 253,044 miles later, it still provides reliable, daily transportation. The turbo motor burns no oil and shows no signs of slowing down, despite its age. The manual transmission has never been touched. The original paint is still in excellent shape. The following history does not contain routine maintenance, otherwise it would be REALLY long. But I've included that in a separate section afterwards. I bought the car not too long after graduating from the Electrical Engineering program at UT-Austin. My friends thought it was cool, my relatives laughed and made jokes about Saab stories. Guess who's laughing now? Me, all the way to the bank. I haven't needed another car in 14 years! The relatives with the big mouths have gone through several since then, but they are very quiet these days about 'Saab' stories! Original major components that have not been replaced to date include: manual transmission, fuel pump, starter & solenoid, heater control valve, gas tank sender, fuel injectors, front motor mount, shocks, exhaust tubing, windshield.

Maintenance By Section:

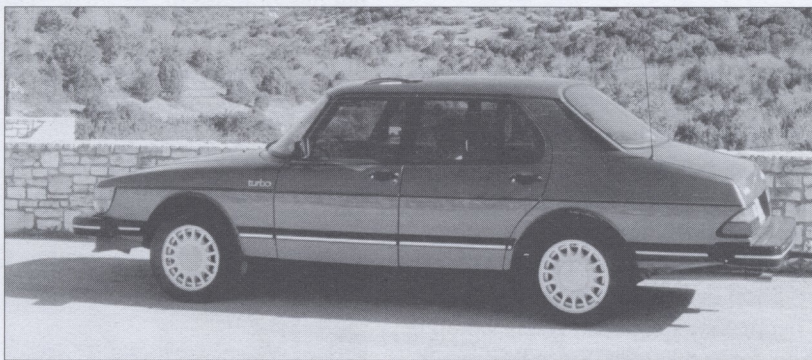
Cooling System: Cooling system is flushed and new coolant installed every year due to the heat in Texas. Once a year, I pick stones & bugs out of the radiator and use an air conditioning coil cleaner to clean it; I also wash the fins of the intercooler & engine oil cooler at the same time;

Electrical System: Several wires have been replaced in the engine compartment wiring harness due to the insulation breaking down. Periodically I clean major ground points & connectors and treat them with Cramolin. Battery terminals are also treated with Cramolin.

Manual Transmission: I use Mobil or Valvoline synthetic oil 5w-30 in the transmission and change it when it looks dirty or every two years, whichever occurs first.

Engine: I've used synthetic oil for a long time and change it twice a year. Summer is 20W50 and winter is 10W30. Mobil One or Valvoline. Mann oil filter is changed every 3500 miles, regardless if oil is changed or not. I fill the oil filter up and allow it to soak as much as possible before reinstalling. Rear & front main seals are replaced as needed.

Fuel System: The original fuel pump & injectors are still on the car and working fine. Several years ago after experiencing hard starting, declining gas mileage & performance, etc., I used three products made by BG products. One can is throttle body intake cleaner, the other is used in conjunction with a device that hooks up to the fuel rail and runs the car for 10 minutes or so and the last goes in the gas tank. Final result was restored performance & gas mileage, idle increase of



Mark Florian's High Mileage Saab.

around 600 rpm, no more hard starting. I highly recommend them for high-mileage cars.

Brakes: Pads & rotors are replaced as needed; Brake & clutch fluid is flushed and replaced every year due to heat and humidity of Texas. This prevents rust problems in calipers. Repco must have changed their formula, because they do dust after a short period of time

Power Steering: Fluid is flushed and replaced every year; I hear that GM makes a filter for it which would really be a good idea.

Suspension: Shocks are original though rubber bushings have been replaced as needed; Boots on CV joints are replaced as soon as tears are noted; Front end alignment checked every couple of years when tires are replaced; The drivers side lower control arm did break while backing out of my driveway with

the steering wheel turned sharply as noted above. I read in Nines a couple of years ago that this was a recurring problem in Australia, of all places. My mechanic reported that they had seen a steady increase in this problem on high-mileage 900's. The car was immovable and had to be towed. Fortunately, it didn't give way while traveling 70 mph in traffic as the car would have suddenly spun to the left.

Body: Paint is waxed regularly with carnauba wax, Meguires marine vinyl & rubber conditioner used on all appropriate interior and exterior surfaces; All windows except rear have 3M sunshield metal film applied. An exterior sun shade for the rear window is used during the hot months. A couple of years ago I used Griots Machine polish #3 (the finest grit) and a Bosch random-orbit sander with a foam pad to polish out the clear coat. It

added another foot to the depth of the paint.

Highly recommended. For cleaning out rock chips in the finish before using touch-up paint, try a device that looks like a pen with a tip made of many tiny fiberglass strands. The small tip diameter of 0.15" allows you to avoid scratching surrounding paint. These can be found at Radio

Shack (#64-1986) and some marine stores that carry Starbright products. To prime the area, I use 3M's Avenger rust pen, which stops any corrosion. Then I lay in touch up paint in thin layers. To clean off tar, wax, adhesive, dried bugs, etc., I use 3M's General Purpose Adhesive Cleaner (#051135-08984) which is safe for cured paint. Highly Recommended.

Headliner: Replacing/repairing this in a 4-door is another trick. When I finally decided to do this myself, it came out in two pieces through one of the doors. After making it whole again, and recovering it, you can't get it back in without pulling the rear window. It's not as bad as you think though. If there is enough interest, I'll write up how I did this in a subsequent issue of Nines.

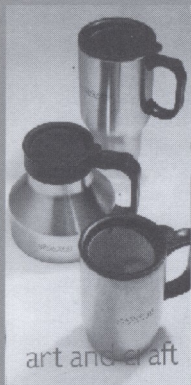
Windshield Wiper Mechanism: Ever had your driver side wiper stop during a downpour? I have, more than once. Makes

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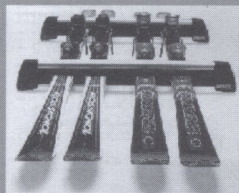
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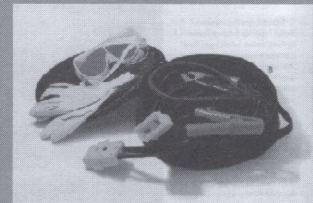
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you want to cuss! Getting the thing out to fix it is the hardest part. My mechanic uses a 2x4 and a hammer to put a dent into the firewall shield so that the shaft has enough clearance. Don't try to remove the motor and mechanism at the same time. Disconnect the mechanism at the motor and remove it alone. As you finagle it around, you'll find a place where one of the shafts will hang up on the firewall shield, that's where you put the 2x4 and hammer to work. A couple of times, the driver's side eccentric cam nearly came off, causing the cable to skip off it. Another time or two, the cable just loosened up. To fix this, I used Loctite to keep the cam in place. And then tightened the cable tensioning nut really firmly, with emphasis on really firmly. And then I Loctited the cable tensioning nut. It hasn't come loose since. After it broke the first time, I added some Rain-Off to my bag of tricks in the trunk. When it happened again, I headed for the nearest overhang, dried off the windshield and applied the Rain-Off. This enabled me to see through the rain without the wipers until I got to where I was going or home to fix it. Clearly, not one of Saabs most intelligent designs.

Stereo System: The original Clarion radio gave out a long time ago. I bought an Alpine unit, power amplifier and installed 6x9's in the rear shelf. This worked well for a couple of years until the foam surrounds in the 6x9's disintegrated and left me looking for a better solution. I finally wound up redoing all of it with much better results. The two-part article on how I did it appeared in the 2/95 & 3/95 issues of Speaker Builder magazine entitled, "From Sad to Sparkle: A SAAB story," Back issues are available from Audio Amateur Publications Inc., 603-924-9464.

Items needing attention:

Starter solenoid is showing signs of weakening.

Vibration in front end at speeds of 80 mph is probably due to front left inner driver being worn, as it's never been replaced. The right front has already been replaced because it carries most of the torque load when moving from a dead stop.

Manual transmission is stiff to shift, but it's always been so. I've always double-clutched on downshifts, never

forcing it, to take the pressure off of the synch. rings. This may be why it's lasted so long with no problems. I'm also easy on the clutch. How long these last depends on how you drive.

The recent trip I took to Albuquerque in June went fine with no problems. Round trip distance was around 2,400 miles. It was extremely hot driving across the desert of Texas, but I experienced no over temp. problems. I averaged 70 - 75 mph on the freeways.

One unusual habit I've maintained for over 10 years now is to open the hood and allow the heat from the engine compartment to escape when I get home at the end of the day during the long, hot, humid summer months. It's not at all unusual for the outside air temp. to be over 90 degrees F. after 10pm in the summer! I do this because the engine nearly kisses the backside of the hood and the heat just builds up. Furthermore, the turbocharger and additional tubing contribute greatly to heat under the hood. There is a time when you need that heat, but then there's a time to dump it.

Back in the Summer of 93, with about 160,000 on the odometer, I left on a road trip I've always wanted to take: I headed North up through the Midwest to Winnipeg in Canada. Then turned West and traveled all the way to Vancouver via the Trans-Canadian Hwy., took the ferry over to Victoria and another to the Olympic Peninsula. Then down the Pacific coasts of Washington and Oregon and then back to Texas via Nevada, Utah, Colorado, and New Mexico. That trip alone was 7,894 miles. Only problem I experienced was losing my AC while driving across the desert of Utah & Colorado. It worked fine at the beginning of the trip. When I got to Denver, I found the low-pressure switch had tripped because the freon had leaked out. A shop there said the reason was that the solder joint on the cap on the evaporator tube had cracked. They re-soldered it, filled the system, checked it and it ran fine keeping me cool all the way home. You can bet I wasn't going any further South in late July with no AC!

I've enjoyed finding my own roads in the Saab 900T and look forward to new ones.

Maintenance Log

Mileage	Description
35,215	Dashboard fuel gauge replaced.
48,327	Front pads & rotors replaced.
	Rebuild front calipers. Oil filter adapter updated.
49,000	Left-front wheel bearing replaced.
52,114	Broken shifter repaired. Blower motor replaced.
54,215	Brake master cylinder and AIC valve replaced.
60,592	Valve cover gasket replaced.
67,075	Interior light switch replaced.
68,007	Two freeze plugs on exhaust side replaced.
69,050	Oil pressure sensor replaced.
82,175	Thermostat replaced.
85,000	Cracked exhaust bracket under engine replaced.
87,851	Electric antenna mast replaced.
95,916	Muffler replaced, A/C hose bracket updated.
98,215	Original battery replaced.
99,668	Original water pump replaced.
112,860	Front calipers rebuilt, pads replaced, rotors turned, right & left outer CV boots replaced.
114,131	Started using synthetic oil.
117,613	Original ball joints replaced.
121,894	Replaced worn alternator bushings, drive belts, cylinder head gasket (first time head has been taken off), updated chain tensioner & cam oiling tubes installed.
125,517	Cabin blower motor replaced.
127,230	Cabin blower motor replaced again under warranty.
130,770	Radiator removed, steamed out and crack repaired.
137,863	Water pump and leaking front crank seal replaced, left outer CV boot replaced.
138,532	Ignition switch locked up, then freed after lubricating.
139,841	Evaporator drip tray update installed.
143,536	Drivers side wiper stopped due to loose cable.
145,414	Thermostat replaced, turbo cooling fan repaired.
150,000	Original clutch pressure plate, throwout bearing and slave cylinder replaced.
156,049	Valve cover gasket replaced.
166,915	A/C leak found in capillary tube, expansion valve replaced.
168,524	Aux. fan relay and thermostat replaced.
177,931	Cracked coolant reservoir replaced.
178,027	Water pump replaced.
182,000	Ignition module replaced.
186,600	3rd battery installed.

190,010 Original seat heaters replaced.
 191,891 Original power steering pump, front seal, oil pump o-ring replaced. Right inner & outer CV boots replaced.
 192,681 All air intake plumbing and intercooler removed, cleaned and reassembled.
 193,690 Muffler replaced.
 193,955 Original oxygen sensor replaced.
 200,375 Original ignition coil replaced due to cracked terminal.
 203,181 Original power steering rack replaced, cracked coolant res. replaced.
 205,900 Original turbocharger replaced. Worn ball joints replaced.
 212,719 Original AC idler pulley and voltage regulator replaced.
 213,131 Original oil cooler hoses replaced, drive belts & alternator bushings replaced.
 214,228 Original (?) right front wheel bearing replaced, original cooling hoses replaced (I can't believe they lasted this long!)
 217,814 4th battery installed, original alternator replaced.
 220,215 Original clutch pedal replaced.
 223,538 Clutch slave cylinder, throwout bearing, rear main seal, pilot bearing, and clutch shaft seal replaced.
 223,725 AIC valve replaced.
 224,980 Water pump and timing chain tensioner replaced.
 225,902 front lower control arm on drivers side broke, both sides replaced.
 227,916 front pads & rotors replaced.
 230,498 Original brake light switch replaced.
 233,121 Original AC compressor, receiver, manifold & hoses replaced.
 239,982 Faulty power steering rack replaced. Original power steering reservoir replaced, muffler replaced under warranty, both tie-rod ends replaced.
 243,665 Brake master cylinder replaced, cracked brake fluid reservoir replaced.
 246,310 Cylinder head gasket & other gaskets all replaced; head resurfaced; Both original side motor mounts replaced; Shift rod seal replaced; transmission filler tube o-ring & seal replaced; oil pressure switch replaced; pvc valve replaced; Thermostat & gasket replaced; Red line water wetter added to coolant; Oil filter replaced.
 246,868 Original 90 elbow coolant hose replaced.
 248,217 Throttle dash pot replaced; original Hall effect sensor in distributor replaced.
 249,054 Valve cover gasket replaced under warranty: faulty installation. Wiring harness near fuse box fixed.

Mark Florian
 Austin, Tx

Repairs: Your Car's Language.

In case anybody is wondering what the wife of the editor and mom of the college student does while others are risking the health of their backs by loading and unloading boxes into SAAB wagons, I had the pleasure of talking with Bob Howlett who has been a master technician since 1985. He has won prizes by submitting tech tips into "Import Service" a magazine subtitled "Information for the Professional Automotive Repair Technician" www.gemini-comm.com, phone 330-666-9553. He regaled me with stories of how inexpensive repairs become expensive repairs when the owner doesn't know the car's language.

Listening to your car.

One sound your car can make is a clicking when making turns. This clicking may mean that grease is deficient because the constant velocity (CV) joint covering, called a boot, has torn inside the wheel. The clicking is from the little balls that make the CV joint work rattling around

because there isn't enough grease to lubricate them. Cleaning and repacking the CV joint, and installing a new boot costs about \$20.00 in parts. Ignoring the problem results in over 200.00 plus labor to replace the CV joint or shaft. Bob warned that it's the drivers of older cars who generally ignore new sounds. These sounds may be faint at first and the driver gets used to them. As these sounds become louder the driver just assumes that this is how older cars are suppose to sound. It's not.

Other noises that customers tend to not notice with older cars are belt noises. One customer had his 9000 towed in because he thought the increasing noise of his belt was normal. The underlying problem was a worn out idler pulley. The idler pulley controls the tension in the belt and ensures that the belt wraps around whatever it's supposed to at the proper angles. The idler pulley has a ball bearing which allows it to turn freely. When the bearing wears out the belt may break. The water pump which is driven by the belt stops, and the car can overheat. The power

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steering stops working which could cause control problems. At best, the car owner will have a towing bill added to the cost of a new belt.

If the driver hears a scraping noise when pressing the brake pedal, this noise should be checked out asap. This sound means the brake pad has worn away. The metal on metal contact begins to destroy the brake rotor, adding 200.00 for replacement rotors to the 100.00 of new brake pads. Ignoring the scraping sound for 1-2 months may result in the piston popping out of the brake caliper adding another 200.00 in parts to the repair bill.

Looking at the Temperature Gauge

One customer's car overheated and died on the road. He complained that no warning light went on so he could stop before the engine overheated, resulting in a tow to the shop. Bob explained that SAABs and VOLVOs don't have warning lights but temperature gauges and the driver must look at the temperature gauge occasionally to see if the car is overheating. Price of new water pump: \$200.00 plus labor, but running the car until it smokes can add a head gasket: \$800.00, cylinder head: \$1500.00, and maybe more. Why is this?

The car engine has 2 main assemblies. There is the block assembly, which has all the parts that make the car go, and the head, which has the parts that let air and fuel into the engine so that the parts in the block can work. The head gasket fits between the block and the head to form a seal so that oil, coolant and products of combustion stay where they belong. A leaking water pump allows the coolant to empty out of the engine. The engine

overheats which cracks the head gasket. If it overheats enough, a lot of smoke may come pouring out the tail pipe. That is either oil or what's left of the coolant going into the cylinder, where it doesn't belong. Excess heat can also cause the head to warp, or bend. This requires disassembly for repair or replacement. The engine can even become so hot that a piston expands so much that it can't move. Then, the engine seizes and can be completely ruined. Bob said that running an overheated car is probably one of the most common reasons a SAAB is towed into the shop.

That temperature gauge also is a primary indicator of the overall health of the engine's cooling system. Checking the gauge occasionally and making a mental note of its position at the various times of the year provides early warning of impending failure. A car running at too low a temperature, because the thermostat needs replacement, can result in carbon deposits fouling the intake valves or plugging the catalytic converter. Depending on how the thermostat fails, a bad one can also lead to overheating, with the consequences already mentioned. If your temperature gauge is behaving differently than it has in the past, that is an indication that something is amiss.

9000 For Sale

1993 Saab 9000 CD, Silver-grey, automatic, 115,000 miles. Excellent condition, leather, heated seats, in dash CD, turbo, good tires, well maintained with service records, moonroof, selling because away from home next year. \$12,000 OBO Sue Shaw, Floyd VA Email: sshaw@swva.net Phone: (540) 745-6390

1990 Saab 9000CD Turbo, 4 door sedan, A/T, 132,000 miles, white w/ tan leather. VGC with lots of miles left in it. All standard goodies on this top of the line model. Serviced regularly. Driven daily until the recent purchase of a new/used 1995 900 ragtop. \$4,900/best William Cheney, San Diego CA Email: wcheney@qualcomm.com Phone: (619) 283-7551

1989 SAAB 9000 Turbo, 5dr., Garnet (Maroon), 117,000 miles. Original owner, always garaged, no accidents, well maintained by SAAB Technicians, drives great, sharp, everything works. 5spd., alloy wheels, power windows, power locks, ABS, climate control, heated seats, alarm, cruise, fog lights. Recently replaced clutch, alternator, tires. \$3,850. Photo at <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/>. Wayne Oberschelp, Park Ridge IL Email: obersch@earthlink.net Phone: (847) 692-2470

900, 99 For Sale

1997 fully loaded 900SE Turbo, black, automatic, 36,000 miles; stone leather interior, moon roof, alloy wheels, heated seats, 6-disc CD changer, carefully maintained, garage kept, new tires, new brakes, 15,000 miles remaining on warranty. \$22,400 Photo at <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/>. Kati Robinson, Bethesda MD Email: katisonrob@aol.com (301) 986-4678

SAAB SWAP CLASSIFIED AD RATES:

Ads offering parts or Saabs for sale, or wanted, are available to members and non-members. Ad rates are for 25 words - more less - EXCLUDING your name, telephone number, address, etc. Extra words are charged at \$1.00 per 5 extra words. Classified ads MUST be prepaid. Ad rates are as follows:

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CAR FOR SALE	\$10.00	\$15.00
PARTS FOR SALE	\$5.00	\$7.50
WANTED ADS	\$2.00	\$3.00
COMMERCIAL AD	\$10.00	\$15.00

DEADLINE: 15th of every odd numbered month for inclusion in the next issue.

Mail ads with full payment to: Saab Swap
2389 Chestnut Hill St. NW
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NINES can also place your ad on The Saab Network (internet classified ad) for you. Include the TSN ad rate, \$15.00 for cars, \$10.00 for parts, for up to 150 words. We can also scan and submit your photograph at no extra cost. Please enclose SASE for return of photographs, if wanted.

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1996 Saab 900S, black, 5-dr A/T, 57,000 miles. Tan leather, - moon roof, 6 cd changer, power everything, heated seats, serviced only at dealer every 3-5K, all papers, Excellent condition, garage kept, must sell- have company car. \$16,000 Photo at <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/>. Michelle Martin, Chicago IL Email: mmmchicago@yahoo.com Phone: (312) 560-7491

1995 900 SE Convertible, V6 automatic, red w/ black leather, sport transmission, loaded w/ every option, all service records, needs nothing, 99,000 miles, \$14,900. Possible delivery. Dan Marlett, Dallas, TX. (214) 505-8719 or (972) 539-9985 home.

1995 Saab 900SE Turbo Coupe, Red w/Black leather, 5-speed, moonroof, CD changer, heated seats, keyless entry, all power, new tires, 89,000 highway miles, \$11,900. Photo at <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/>. Rob Howard, Huntersville NC Email: rhoward@gcts.edu Phone: (704) 502-3400

1993 900S 3-door w/spoiler, 5-spd, white, tan cloth interior. 88,000 miles, excellent condition, oil changes every 5000 miles, service records available, new Pirelli tires May, 1997. Asking \$7500. Carol Lindsay, Plainfield, NJ. 908-226-9088 (info line 9AM - 9PM EST)

1991 Saab 900SE Turbo Convertible in Monte Carlo yellow. 81,300 miles, auto, strictly maintained by Morrie's Saab, MN and Gossett Saab, TN. Brand new head @ 80K mi, A/C, exhaust, 205/55 Goodyear Eagle T/Rs dual power heated front seats, power heated side mirrors, alarm, etc). pics via email for buyers. You are almost guaranteed to be the only one in your town, county, or state with this rare gem. \$12,900 nego. Photo at <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/>. David Rokosky, Memphis TN Email: darokosky@netscape.net (901) 527-3207

1988 900 SPG: 160K highway miles, grey/grey leather, new headliner, all receipts kept on a well maintained car. \$5500. Moyné Metzger, 606-272-7216. Email: mnbm@lex.infi.net

1988 Saab 900 3-dr, mauve, std. 5-speed hatch. 192,000 miles. New tires, radiator, brake pads, muffler & exhaust system, new belts/hoses. Smoooooth ride. \$2000.00 southern New Hampshire/Nashua area. Janet Curcio Wilson, Amherst NH Email: jcurcio7@aol.com (603) 672-5468

1984 Saab 900 Turbo 3-dr./m5 with pre-production 1985 16 Valve engine, former Saab Scania test car, silver with maroon, sunroof. Car on Long Island, NY. 150,000 miles, good condition, \$1500. Steven Rossi, Commerce Township, MI. 248-366-9082.

1984 900 Turbo 3-door. Auto, whale tail, sun roof, Shelby alloy wheels. \$300. Russ Brown, Lyndhurst, OH 44124. (216) 382-4821 home or (216) 692-1296 work.

1980 Saab 900T 3-door. 5-speed, black. New or rebuilt: brake rotors, calipers, pads, M/C, "Group 6" stainless brake lines, Clutch & M/C, Tranny, water pump, fuel pump, ball joints, suspension bushings, motor mounts, head gasket, headliner, all with "0 miles". EMS manual rack. Straight, solid body with NO RUST. Buy for cost of parts - \$2100. Stephen Goldberger, N. Canton, OH. (330) 497-0346,

Email: nines@neo.rr.com, or Jim Phillips, (330) 376-3003.

1978 SAAB 99 TURBOS. Identical cars. 1 for parts and 1 for restoration Both: 103K Miles, Maroon/Red, 4 Speed. Sunroof, Electric Mirrors, Inca Alloy's, and factory Motorola cassette player. Body and Interior in Fair Condition. Well maintained. \$1000.00 Photo at <http://www.saabnet.com/tsn/class/>. Chris Houser, Bensalem PA Email: Chris.Houser@mail.tju.edu (215) 750-3310

92, 93, 95, 96, Sonett For Sale

1973 Saab Sonett III, orange, 70,000+? miles. Extra body and door. Rear of original body damaged. Runs. Clutch frozen. Wife won't let me drive car - forced to sell. \$800 Josef Bock, Huntingdon Valley PA Email: Bockje@juno.com (215) 322-8165

1970 Saab 96. Original, hastily repaired body damage, otherwise good. \$400. **1965 Saab 96** V4 conversion, straight, good, new paint. \$900.

1967 Saab 95 V4 complete, towable basket. \$600. Stephen Nicholoff, Box 82, Erie, CO 80516. 303-828-4342.

1965 LeGrand H mod w/BMW 700 or Saab w/ Webster adapter, last ran as D-sports; complete, basket, value undermined. Also Devin bodied H Mod w/'65 GT susp. & drivetrain; 1970 Sonett complete, straight, totally rusted (from Ohio). Stephen Nicholoff, Box 82, Erie, CO 80516. 303-828-4342.

Parts and Misc. For Sale

Factory Service Manuals, 1986 900 including turbo. Manuals 0 through 9 including binders. \$75 obo. W. R. Schultz, (518) 377-5818

NEW Ford 1498cc V4 engines, for conversion to 95/96/97 use. Only 2 left at \$1500 each, plus crating & shipping. Instructions for conversion included. \$2995 each if we make the conversion (plus crating & shipping). Jack Ashcraft, 4305 Dark Hollow Road, Medford, OR 97501. Phone 541-779-0731.

Electronic Control Unit (Lucas 14CU) for a 1991 Saab 900 Turbo 16V. never been used because it was a wrong choice to solve a problem with the "air mass meter". Bought from Abbott Racing who ordered it to the factory. Abbott invoice is available to compare. \$500 (transport included) Nuno Moura e Sa, S.Joao da Madeira Email: nunomouraesa@mail.telepac.pt Phone: 2273142781996

Set of four Soccer Ball Alloy Wheels with caps and lug nuts, \$120; two Inca alloy wheels with caps, \$60. Both FOB. Mike Moran, 4014 Palisades Park Drive, Billings, MT 59106. Phone 406-652-2619.

Soccer ball alloys, like new 96 front seats, dashboards, gauges, starters, complete V4 & 2-stroke engines, many, many more 2-stroke & V4 parts. Moyné Metzger, 606-272-7216. Email: mnbm@lex.infi.net.

Parting '83 900 Turbo 4 Blizzak Tires 195/60-15 on 1985 factory alloys \$400 4 Ronal alloy wheels with new Pirelli P6000s- \$600 1983 Instru. clusterworking Odo(!)- \$85 5-speed trans- fits '79-'87 GC- \$300 Improved 8-valve, turbo head, incl valves and cam, certified flat- \$350 transaxles(2), radiators, fans(2), 8-valve Bentley Manual, (2) Fuel dist., steering wheels, hatch lifts, etc. All FOB. Cory Kelsey, Auburn NE Email: ck94527@navix.net (H) cckelse@nppd.com (W) Phone: (402) 274-4439 (H) (402) 825-5813 (W)

Parting out Saabs: '84 900, 85 900T, 86 900 Base, 86 900 SPG, 87 900T 16V, 89 900S 16V, 94-98 900, 900S, 900T. Drivetrains, Interiors, Body Parts, Suspension, Wheels, Misc. Parts & Accessories. Dave Anelli, Walingford, CT. 203-949-4881.

Steel Wheels, Black set of 4 for post '89 900, \$100 for set. Steven Rossi, Commerce Township, MI. 248-366-9082.

Pansport 8-spoke alloys for 900, Saab wheels, Best offer. 1978 99T parts car. Very solid, complete except wheels, \$150. Will part out. Moyné Metzger, 606-272-7216. Email: mnbm@lex.infi.net

Wanted

Wanted 1990 and 1993 Saab 900S, 4-door, 5-speed, no wrecks, no damage, no rust, no repairs needed, no black exterior, clean. Kraig Walker, Lancaster PA Email: walker@redrose.net

Saabs Wanted: Sonnets, & 85-90 900s, Run/ not, 6 sons & I having fun Accident/Damage/ Flood/Totaled/ Parts Cars, OK Leave Info.; Yr., Trani, Miles, Maint., Etc. John T. Jacobson, Appleton WI Email: Saab46son@aol.com Phone: (920) 954-8864 fax 8847

Wanted - for 1992 Saab 900 Need drivers side headlight lens/assembly. My car is a Turbo Convertible. Manuel J Mathew Jr, Alexandria VA Email: mmathewjr@hotmail.com Phone: (703) 625-0476

Wanted - for 1987 Saab 900 owner's manual for, standard transmission. Josef Bock, Huntingdon Valley PA Email: Bockje@juno.com Phone: (215) 322-8165

Wanted - for a Saab model 96 Chrome door moulding strips. These are the flat sections with rubber backing. I am looking for excellent quality, with as few dings, bends, and oxidation as possible. Steve McNamee, Scottsdale AZ Email: saabnut@doitnow.com Phone: (480) 905-8325

Wanted Old rally timing equipment: Heuer stopwatches + wristwatches; (Montecarlo, Mastertime, Sebring, Autorally, Super Autavia, Etc.) Halda Speedpilot, Dtwinnmaster, Tripmaster, 3 stopwatch clipboard, Curta Calculator, Judson/Shorrock Supercharger. Macgodies@aol.com. Castle, Box 2030, Redondo Beach, CA 90278, USA. (310) 793-0129

First, I would like to thank those who have conscientiously sent their change of address. This mailing thing will never be perfect, but with everyone's co-operation, we'll get as close as we can.

Along a similar vein, we are changing (not again!) our "new member" subscriptions. The practice of sending a "back issue" with each subscription, along with the introductory decals, requires us to print a number of extra copies which may or may not be used. Collections of outdated NINES being inconsistent with our idealized view of basement decor, we will from now on offer new subscriptions of six issues each, along with the Club decals, for the same price as a one year renewal. We recognize that there are lots of subscription forms in circulation which have the old policy on them, and for the time being we will honor those forms as best we can. The new policy means that there will be very few back issues available, but with the computer age being well upon us, we will be able to supply reprints of whole issues or parts of issues at attractive prices.

With some trepidation, I have both encouraged and printed Mark Kline's essay on automobile ownership and shop selection. Imagine an automobile enthusiasts magazine carrying an article which begins by questioning the entire prospect of car ownership! To be sure, we are not encouraging our readers to turn in their Saabs for bicycles. We do, however, encourage readers to accept the financial realities of car ownership. Purchasing an older Saab, which can have a very attractive price, will often be accompanied by some rather hefty repair costs. The saving grace is that an older Saab can still be a very satisfying and attractive car. For example, we have talked at length with Gary Grimes, whose 1983 900T was a Concours winner (third) at the 1999 Owners' Convention. Despite some extensive repairs over the years, the total cost of purchasing and maintaining this car has been relatively low, considering the aesthetic and driving quality of the car.

Even more controversial might be Mark's prescription for finding a repair shop. As a shop owner, Mark Kline has his own way of doing business, and in some ways it is unique. For example, he limits his practice to "regular customers",

or those who would become regular customers, and he even limits the size of his "practice." If you like to perform your own routine maintenance and call on a professional only for those jobs you can't handle, or if you like to patronize a variety of shops depending on the nature of the repair, don't call Mark. His philosophy of providing "sole source" support does not permit either course of action. Mark would (reluctantly and gently, I hope) toss me out the door of Scandia Tek because I habitually tinker with the car, but I assure you that both Mrs. Goldbergers in my life (my wife and my mother) would eagerly seek out such a shop which provides comprehensive and quality service.

I also wish to stress that his rules for selecting a quality shop are **GUIDE-LINES**, intended to increase the odds that any particular shop will turn out to be a good one. Since there are many excellent shops which violate one or more of his "tenants", someone seeking a quality Saab service facility should first of all seek out the advice of satisfied Saab owners. Some of the points Mark lists are essential, such integrity, experience, and the refusal to perform substandard work or use substandard parts and supplies. Others, such as the size of the shop or the number of brands serviced, are much more open to interpretation. With good management and attention to detail, a very large shop can also be a very good shop. In rural areas, where the total number of Saabs is limited, a "Saab Only" shop may not even exist.

This leads into our newest "Survey" question: Which Saab repair facility do you recommend the most, which others do you recommend as viable alternatives, and which (if any) would motivate you to drive a Ford instead of a Saab? Unlike the previous survey questions, these may be answered with a single word, but if you have (hopefully) an exceptionally good experience, or (regrettably) an exceptionally bad experience with a Saab service facility, please write or e-mail it to us. We will be publishing a listing of "recommended shops" in a future issue of NINES and on our web site, so please do send your recommendations.

For many years, NINES has covered the most esoteric details of maintenance and repair. Which kinds of oil, which

brands of oil filters, frequency of service, all have graced our pages. But we haven't all been subscribing to NINES for a decade or more. Norma has introduced her column, Simply Saab, which will cover some of the more basic issues in a way that a non-technical person can appreciate. It is located toward the back with the technical articles in this issue, but we may move it forward into the "general interest" portion next issue. Readers are invited to comment on such issues.

We also welcome William C. W. (Chip) Lamb as a regular writer. Chip has recently become the proprietor of "East of Sweden", a repair and restoration shop half way between Williamsburg and the Richmond, Virginia suburbs. I know there's a story in there, but I haven't been able to extract it yet. Chip is one of the youngest of our columnists, writing about the oldest of the Saabs.

It has been a fertile couple of months for local Saab clubs. In the East, the Saab Club of NE Pennsylvania learned about how Saab Parts find their way to us by touring the Allentown Distribution Center. Dean and Deb Lusby again treated Saab owners by organizing SaabToberFest, their annual fall tour through the hills of Eastern Pennsylvania. And at the other end of the continent, the Seattle Saab Owners Club had their tour. Others are at work organizing future events, including BLA ROC - VINTAGE SAAB 2000, an early summer meet in the north central part of the country, and the year 2000 Owners' Convention in the Hudson Valley. In Europe, the International Meeting is also in early summer, in Luzern, Switzerland. Participating in local, national, or international events really brings the ownership experience to a higher plane. This is where you meet and get to know your fellow Saab owners. With the internet, the folks you meet are as close as your fingertips, and I speak from (biased) experience that Saab owners are among the finest people you will have the pleasure of calling your friends.

Finally, a comment about James Maugham's story of floating away in his Saab (January Survey). Do keep those stories coming! As Art Buchwald used to say about many of the stories he wrote about, "I can't make these things up".

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Example: Year 1995 Model & trim 900 SE Body style 5 door
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#1: Year _____ Model & trim _____ Body style _____

Engine _____ Transmission _____ VIN# _____

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Engine _____ Transmission _____ VIN# _____

Please include additional cars on a separate sheet of paper. VIN for VINTAGE cars only (92,93, 95, 96, or Sonett). Visit our website: <http://www.saabclub.com> for information on owner surveys.

Brief comments here; use another sheet for longer comments.

Membership fees for the SAAB Club of North America/NINES are as follows:

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Subscribers: Please help to make NINES stronger by encouraging your fellow Saab owners to become members of the Saab Club of North America. Our "Bandito" promotion in NINES #240, which you can also see at our budding website, <http://www.saabclub.com>, shows how you can be rewarded for helping.

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- SPG 9 18 psi Waste Gate Actuator Air Research Turbo's 900T & 9000T \$95.00
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