

Giammalvo Quarterly

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Odds & Ends

- Our sales hours are Monday through Friday 9:00 - 9:00 and Saturday 9:00 -4:00. Our service hours are Monday through Friday 8:30 - 5:00 and Saturday 8:30 - 12:30.
- Giammalvo Quarterly is edited, designed and printed by our staff right here in our facility.
- Feel free to let us know what you think. Give us a call or send us an e-mail at: samgauto@samscars.com

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Beware Of Latest Car Warranty Scam

We have been receiving many calls from customers lately regarding another car warranty scam. It seems that several companies are peddling a product that they claim to be an additional warranty for your car. It is uncertain if these companies even actually represent any actual warranty company.

We have even been receiving these calls at the dealership. Evidently these companies are purchasing registry of motor vehicle data to determine the address then phone numbers of vehicle owners. Typically you will receive the call at your home address where your vehicles are registered. Most of the calls start out with a tape message as soon as you answer the phone. Many of the messages are given in a threatening tone stating something to the effect of: 'This is the last call you will receive . . . if you do not act now you will no longer ever be able to extend your vehicle's warranty...press the number one on your keypad to speak to a warranty representative now.'

Last year, a similar scam showed up in consumer's mailboxes as post card or letter stating, "your car warranty is running out" or has expired. It appears that these companies are targeting people at random as they are even calling people who's cars' are sometimes still under factory warranty. One of our customers called Sam after falling for this mail scam. Sam received a call from a customer who recently received one of these post card type mailers. These post card mailers are made to look like an "official notification" or "recall" from your car manufacturer and this customer was duped into the scam. Our customer called the company and was given information on a so-called "bumper to bumper" warranty for \$2,973.00. This particular company was in Missouri and our customer told them that she purchased the car from us at Giammalvo's. Evidently, in order to build confidence with the customer in the conversation, the salesperson at the company then stated: "We know that dealership and you can have the car repaired there under our warranty plan". The customer then gave her credit card information to secure the transaction and agreed to monthly billing, via her credit card, until the entire amount was paid. Shortly thereafter, our customer got a "bad feeling" about the transaction and called Sam. Sam then instructed our customer to call the company back and cancel the transaction. The customer called several times but was only able to get a computerized message and was never able to get a "live person" on the phone. Sam then advised the customer to call her credit card company and have them place the item in dispute and then cancel the credit card so that the continual monthly billing of the warranty will not continue.

We urge our customers to watch out for these mailers and phone scams regarding automotive warranties. Often times, your vehicle is still covered by factory warranty as well as the U.S. Government's "Federal Emission Warranty". In addition, we do offer a quality warranty plan through the Wynn's Warranty Company, which is a legitimate 60+-year-old company that we have partnered with for more than 15 years now. Feel free to call Rosie or Glenn with any questions about your vehicles warranty.

Nevertheless, diehard auto enthusiasts such as Buffamanti -- who is on his third 7 series BMW -- say a few glitches would never stop them from shelling out extra cash for their geared-out wheels. "Even though I've had a lot of issues, I'd rather have the technology," Buffamanti said. "I'm one of those customers that says, 'the more technology, the better.'"

Quotes To Ponder

"There is hardly anything in the world that some man cannot make a little worse & sell a little cheaper & the people who consider price only are this mans lawful prey" - Ruskin

"Never let your greed overcome your common sense"

"Try to remember that the cheese in the mousetrap was free...and we all know what happened to the mouse"

"The bitterness of poor quality lingers long after the sweetness of cheap price is forgotten"

"A good name, like good will, is got by many actions and lost by one" - Lord Jeffery

"An investment in knowledge always pays the best interest" - Benjamin Franklin

"Quality means doing it right when no one is looking" - Henry Ford

In Passing

Obituaries Courtesy The Standard Times

Note: Due to recent requests, we will be adding family survivors to our customer's obituaries as space allows.

Gertrude (Craven) Hinkley, age 92 years, passed away on Wednesday, March 18, 2009. She was the wife of the late Charles R. Hinkley. Born in New Bedford, daughter of the late William and Mabel (Slater) Craven, she grew up in Padanaram and attended Dartmouth schools. Gertrude created a happy and loving home for her family, and will be missed, always loved and always remembered.

She is survived by her daughter Marsha Hinkley of New Bedford, two sons Peter C. Hinkley of Palm Bay, Florida and Richard W. Hinkley of New Bedford, four grandchildren, three great-grandchildren and several nieces and nephews, her sister-in-law Phyllis Peckham and her special friends and caregivers Lea Britto, Mary Ann Cabral and Germaine Damm. She was mother of the late Martha G. Hinkley and sister of the late Mary Gelette and Agnes Hughes.

Geraldine A. "Geri" (Sherman) Miller, 72, of Fairhaven, died Friday, March 6, 2009, at Alden Court Nursing Home. She was the wife of the late Paul A. Miller. Born in Mattapoisett, she was the daughter of the late Thornton and Gladys (Westgate) Sherman. She was raised in New Bedford by the late Lena and Walter Cleary. She had lived in Dartmouth, Bourne, and Naples, FL, before moving to Fairhaven. Mrs. Miller was formerly employed by Sears at the Dartmouth Mall. She was an avid bowler and cribbage player. She enjoyed wintering in Florida, summering on Cape Cod, and spending time with her granddaughters.

Survivors include a son, Thomas J. Miller and his wife, Robin of Seekonk; two brothers, her twin Gerald Sherman and his wife, Patricia of Fairhaven and William Sherman and his wife, Jackie of Pennsylvania; two half-sisters, Marilyn Urquhart and her husband, Sandy and Marjorie Borsari and her husband, Peter, all of Marion; two granddaughters, Ashley and Jessica Miller; her 100 year old mother-in-law, Irene Miller of New Bedford; her sister-in-law, Carol Sherman of Florida; and nieces and nephews. She was the sister of the late James Sherman.

Rev. William "Alphonse" Mitchell, SS.CC., 87, died Saturday, March 21, 2009. Born in Cleveland, Ohio, the son of the late Vincent Mitchell and the late Ursula (Cizauskas) Mitchell, he is survived by his two sisters, Zita-Jean McCartney of Highland Heights, Ohio, and Dr. Ruth U. Mitchell of Apex, NC. Fr. Alphonse joined the Congregation of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary and took his first vows in the community on September 14, 1944, in Wareham, MA. He made his perpetual profession on September 14, 1947. After finishing his studies in philosophy and theology in Washington, D.C., he was ordained to the priesthood on June 6, 1950.

He was first assigned to the work of the Enthronement of the Sacred Heart. In 1951, he was one of the three missionaries that were sent to Japan to work in the Mission of the Congregation in Mito, Ibaraki Prefecture in Japan. They joined the other three missionaries there and began their studies of the Japanese language. He was stationed in various places, both in Ibaraki and Yamagata prefectures. In 1981, he returned to the U.S. to continue the first work that he started back in 1950.

We appreciate your business. Please drive safely.

Helpful Tips For Driving At Night

Source:
Zurich American Insurance Company

How many of us have trouble seeing at night?

Don't feel alone, this is true for most people. Why is night driving so dangerous? According to the National Safety Council, 90% of a driver's reaction time depends on vision, and your vision is severely limited at night. Depth perception, visual acuity, and peripheral vision are all compromised.

Older drivers have even a greater difficulty seeing at night. A 50 year-old driver may need twice as much light as a 30 year-old. Older drivers also take longer to recover from glare. The reason that drivers have these difficulties is because different parts of the eye are used to see at night than during the day. According to the National Safety Council, more than one half of all traffic accidents occur at night, and traffic death rates are three times greater at night than during the day – even though there is much less traffic at night.

A low level of lighting makes objects more difficult to see. This means that the driver must be closer to hazards before he can see them. Consequently, if a driver is caught by surprise, he will react slower and is less capable of avoiding an accident. Headlights limit our visual range to the area ahead of us, which is only 250-350 feet of the road.

The greatest danger in night driving is the area beyond the headlights. This is especially true on a road you've never driven before. Even if a driver is familiar with the road, he can't be certain in anticipating the area beyond his headlights. Slowing down will allow more time to detect a hazard and avoid an accident. It's important to drive at a speed that allows stopping within the driver sight range.

Driving smart at night

Other drivers can see vehicles better at night when marker lights, tail lights, and brake lights are clean and working properly. Drivers also should be careful not to blind others with high beams. High beams must be dimmed when oncoming vehicles are within 500 feet. Do not use high beams to retaliate against drivers who refuse or forget to dim their high beams – that is a dangerous game to play. To avoid temporary blindness, the driver should look slightly to the right when oncoming vehicles have their “bright lights” on. In addition, drivers should switch their rearview mirrors to the night time setting after sunset.

The National Safety Council recommends these steps:

- Prepare your car for night driving. Keep headlights, taillights, signal lights and windows (inside and out) clean.
- Properly aim headlights. Improperly aimed headlights blind other drivers and reduce the driver's ability to see the road.
- Don't drink and drive. Not only does alcohol severely impair driving ability, it also acts as a depressant. Just one drink can induce fatigue.
- Avoid smoking while driving. Smoke's nicotine and carbon monoxide hamper night vision.
- If there is any doubt, turn the headlights on. They'll make it easier for other drivers to see you. Being seen is as important as seeing.
- Reduce speed and increase following distances. It is more difficult to judge other vehicles' speeds and distances at night.
- The driver should be able to stop inside the illuminated area. If this is not the case, he is creating a blind crash area in front of his vehicle.
- When following another vehicle, keep headlights on low beams so the driver ahead is not blinded.
- If an oncoming vehicle doesn't lower beams from high to low, avoid glare by watching the right edge of the road and using it as a steering guide.
- Make frequent stops for light snacks and exercise. Stop and get rest when necessary.
- If the driver experiences car trouble, he should pull off the road as far as possible. Warn approaching traffic at once by setting up reflecting triangles near the vehicle and 300 feet behind it. Turn on flashers and the dome light. Stay off the roadway and get passengers away from the area.

Hi-Tech Cars Bug Drivers

By *Wired.com*

The complex technology that automakers pack into their cars -- navigation systems, throttle controls, pressure sensors and the like -- are designed to make life on the road easier, but many buyers are being driven crazy instead. As with most other new technologies, there are a lot of glitches to deal with, and consumers are complaining, manufacturers are recalling, and government agencies are investigating.

Sati Achath, a 51-year-old World Bank employee, was driving to work one icy morning last February when he says his 2002 Toyota Camry accelerated on its own. He was about to pull away from a stop sign in his Maryland neighborhood when the car surged through the intersection. Nothing he did -- stomping on the brake pedal, shifting the car into neutral, pulling on the hand brake -- stopped the Camry, which raced for several blocks before he swerved into a snow bank. "I am absolutely sure that I did not press the gas by mistake," said Achath, who was not hurt in the incident. His case is one of dozens of "unintended acceleration" claims the government is investigating in Toyotas related to a somewhat new technology called the electronic throttle, which uses sensors to determine the gas pedal position instead of cables. Technical glitches tend to show up initially in luxury cars, which rely on dozens of computers to power assorted entertainment, navigation and equipment-monitoring systems.

Not long ago, Mercedes-Benz faced the largest recall in its history for problems with its highly touted "Sensotronic" braking system, which relies on sensors to calculate the optimum brake pressure for each wheel. The German carmaker recalled 680,000 vehicles, saying bubbles in the system's hydraulic tank may cause braking failure, although no accidents were reported. Likewise, Jaguar recalled 67,798 cars in April after discovering a defect in an electronic module that could inadvertently cause cars to slip into reverse gear. Neither Mercedes nor Jaguar responded to repeated interview requests regarding the particulars of the recalls.

"There is certainly a list of amazing electronic gremlins across all these cars," said Donald Buffamanti, publisher of AutoSpies.com, a website featuring automotive news and rumors about high-end vehicles. He said hundreds of AutoSpies readers have written him to complain about technological backfires, including buggy software in the BMW 7 series that causes the sports cars to stall at freeway speeds, and electronic suspension failures in Range Rovers that convert the \$70,000 SUV into gangster-style low riders. Buffamanti's own BMW 7 series left him stranded last month when he was driving from Pasadena to San Diego to pick up his kids in an unknown neighborhood and the car's pioneering satellite navigation system croaked. He hadn't stocked his glove box with an old-fashioned paper map (of course), so he was forced to make a series of cell-phone calls to get directions to his destination.

And while some automakers force car owners to sign nondisclosure agreements to avoid bad publicity when their electronics go hay-wire, the Internet is abuzz with the horror stories. A widely posted Associated Press story reported that the Thai minister of finance was trapped inside his BMW when a computer malfunction locked the car's doors and windows; a bystander had to break one of the car's windows with a sledgehammer to let him escape. Most of the BMW complaints have centered on the iDrive, a computer system that controls the car's navigation, audio and communications. "There is a not-uncommon shakedown period of one to two years with technology this new," a BMW spokesman told *USA Today* in the wake of the complaints.

On several automotive discussion boards, Range Rover owners have vilified the vehicle's electronic air suspension system, or EAS, which relies on a network of microprocessors to automatically adjust suspension levels according to terrain and road conditions. "A few months ago, my wife was driving our 2000 Range Rover SE, and the EAS failed while she was driving it on the interstate going 70 mph," wrote one man on AutomotiveForums.com. "She lost control and hit a guard rail and was injured." (Such complaints have sparked a whole cottage industry of mechanics who specialize in retrofitting "air springs" with traditional steel springs.)

But high-tech hiccups are bound to occur as cars transition from mechanical to electronic controls, said Dan Benjamin, an analyst with ABI Research. "What you have now are a lot of first-generation systems," said Benjamin. "Automakers feel compelled to deliver bleeding-edge stuff, and it doesn't always work out. But given that the shift to electronics is unavoidable, the challenge is to make these systems more user-friendly." Automotive computers can be every bit as quirky as personal computers -- something as simple as a loose gas cap can trigger the "check engine" light -- and drivers are being forced to take their cars in for diagnostic scans and software updates at an irritating pace.

"We see less and less mechanical failures today," said Mark Giammalvo, who works at his family's repair shop in New Bedford, Massachusetts. "Engines and transmissions are lasting longer than ever. The large amount of failures we see on today's vehicles is electronic, namely the sensors, wiring and computers."