



Parts For Sale

Package unit in excellent condition: 327 cu.in. eng. (less alternator); H.D.12" clutch, trans, w/OD. (trans & OD. have all new parts & bearings) (+a carton of used usable parts that were replaced; Diff. (3.7.P) completely overhauled w/drums & hubs; steering column & wheel; Front Steering Knuckles, Hubs, drums & bearings; Robert D. Hodge, 6811 NW. 7th Ave. Miami, Fl. 33150

Checker Wagon for parts; Joseph Schwartz calling during the day, 1-800-HOT-Tips (1-800-468-8477); evening (215) 927-2361. (this message or note was placed under a club members windshield wiper in the area of the Medical Arts Building in Philadelphia, Pa. who owns a "CHECKER".)

'75-'76 used body panels; Fen. \$75.00 each (no rust) - (6); Doors, \$40.00 each (fair to good) - (4); Grill (painted) \$40.00 (1) Bob Hinkley, P.O. Box-14, Newark, NY. 14513

Parts Wanted

Older Model Taxi Meter; Mfg., 1930-'60; S.S. Roberts, 970 So. Oneida, Denver, Co. 80224

'66 checker, tinted windshield; Don Gunn, 727 Gregory Rd. Ft. Collins, Co. 80524

Parts Advice

A new "Interchange" & "Spec's column is going to be started by Mr. Paul F. Willer, 3890 Hartman Rd., Sodus, Mi. 49126. He suggested & volunteered to do this because of a club members problem involving his '70 4-Dr. w/350 cu" eng. with "flywheel" problems. When you need Mr. Paul Willer's assistance, don't forget to send an "S.A.S.E."

The vote for #3 Logo was first & #5 a close 2nd for the club members who took the time to "vote". I recieved a lot of "comments on the other four "logo's" so I decided to let Mr. Richard G. Thomas know of the Members "feelings", so-o-o Dick came up with a "compromise", he took the "oar" off of #3 logo & inserted onto #5. Mr. Thomas went to a lot of work & especially "patience" to keep everybody "SATISFIED".

~~I still have some belt buckles available \$8.00 each (postage incl.) MY LOVE AFFAIR WITH THE CHECKER AUTOMOBILE BEGAN BACK IN 1960 --~~

AND IT HAPPENED LIKE THIS: MY HUSBAND HAD AN AUTOMOBILE REPAIR/DEALER SHOP BACK IN THOSE DAYS IN WHICH HE SOLD USED CARS (MOSTLY DOMESTIC) AND HE SOLD NEW CARS FOR THE BRITISH MOTOR CO. WE ALWAYS RECEIVED FREE TICKETS TO ATTEND THE VARIOUS AUTO SHOWS, SO ONE NIGHT AS WE WENT AROUND 'KICKING TIRES' AND 'SLAMMING DOORS' AND CRAWLING IN AND OUT OF VARIOUS CARS, THE VERY LAST CAR I GOT INTO, WAS A CHECKER! UP UNTIL THAT TIME, I HAD NEVER HEARD OF THE CHECKER (HAD NEVER RIDDEN IN TAXIS THAT MUCH). WELL, NEEDLESS TO SAY, THAT AFTER I SAT ON THE BACK SEAT AND STRETCHED OUT MY WEARY FEET AND LEGS, I REMARKED TO MY HUSBAND, "THIS IS THE KIND OF CAR I WANT TO OWN." (I HAD HAD MY FILL OF DRIVING ALL THE TRADE-INS AND THE ITTY BITTY 4-CYLINDER AUTOMOBILES. EVEN THE AUSTIN-HEALEY SPORTSCAR HELD NO ATTRACTION FOR ME.)

SO, FROM THAT NIGHT IN 1960, UNTIL AUGUST 6, 1968 WHEN I PURCHASED MY CHECKER FROM THE SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA TAXI COMPANY IN INGLEWOOD, CALIFORNIA, ALL I TALKED ABOUT WAS A CHECKER. IT TOOK ME THAT LONG TO SAVE UP ENOUGH MONEY TO PAY CASH FOR MY AUTOMOBILE. I PAID \$3426.00 FP (EVERYTHING BUT AIR AND JUMPSEATS).

I HAVE DRIVEN MY CAR FOR 18 YEARS NOW (IT IS A 1967 MODEL, BUT I BOUGHT IT BRAND NEW) AND THERE ISN'T A DAY GOES BY BUT WHAT SOMEONE COMPLIMENTS IT!!

I HAD IT RESTORED TWO YEARS AGO - NEW CHEVY ENGINE, NEW INTERIOR, SEATS, CARPETS, RADIO, ETC. HAD IT RECHROMED AND REPAINTED AS NEAR THE ORIGINAL LIGHT BLUE COLOR AS I COULD. IT COST ME ABOUT \$3200.00 TO RESTORE IT, BUT I HAVE A CAR THAT SHOULD LAST ME THE REST OF MY LIFE!! (AND THAT IS EXACTLY THE STATEMENT I MADE 18 YEARS AGO!!!) I MIGHT ADD, I'M NOW 58 YEARS YOUNG!

WHAT FUN IT IS, TO BE DRIVING DOWN THE FREEWAY, KEEPING UP WITH THE REST OF 'EM, AND HAVE PEOPLE IN OTHER CARS TURNING AROUND CRANING THEIR NECKS TRYING TO FIGURE OUT WHAT KIND OF A CAR IT IS! PEOPLE EVEN STOP ME WHEN I'M PARKED SOMEWHERE, ASKING ME ABOUT MY CHECKER, OR EVEN IN THE GAS STATIONS WHEN I'M PURCHASING GASOLINE, I HAVE PEOPLE ENGAGE ME IN CONVERSATION ABOUT MY CHECKER.

AT ONE TIME, YEARS AGO, I CONSIDERED HAVING A PERSONALIZED LICENSE PLATE READING 'TAXI' BECAUSE I TAXIED TWO OF MY SONS ALL OVER THE CITY, BUT I DECIDED TO STAY WITH MY ORIGINAL LICENSE PLATE. MY TWO SONS LEARNED TO DRIVE IN MY CHECKER, ALTHOUGH THE YOUNGEST SON GOT TO WHERE HE THOUGHT THE CAR WAS EMBARRASSING BECAUSE THE OTHER KIDS WOULD LOOK AT IT WHENEVER I TOOK HIM TO SCHOOL. (HE'S THE SON THAT TOLD ME YEARS AGO, 'YOU LOVE THAT CAR!!!!')

(2)

Letters from our Club Members .

October 23, 1980

Mr. Don. E. McHenry  
469 Tremaine Avenue  
Kenmore, NY 14217

Dear Don:

Enclosed please find my \$5.00 for annual dues -- so glad I happened to have seen the article in one of the newspapers out here mentioning your Checker Car Club.

I think the Checker automobile is the finest automobile that was ever manufactured. It can't be beat in the way of comfort, durability and maintenance! I've driven my 1967 Checker Marathon Sedan since August 1968 (even tho' it's a '67 model, I purchased it new) and I never had any major repairs done to it until about 4 years ago when I had the trans repaired. (You can't make a claim like that about the cars produced these days!!) And, two years ago, I had it restored to mint condition! (I am enclosing my 'resume' concerning my proud ownership of my Checker! You may wish to edit it since I could go on and on about my Checker - and sometimes I feel I get carried away!)

My car is such a conversation piece -- everyday someone here at work asks me all about it, and compliments it. Would like to know how one goes about putting the market value on a Checker; they are not listed in the Kelley Blue Book out here.

By the way, I took the 'liberty' of retyping your address list. If you can use it, okay; if not, at least I familiarized myself with the names of the other Checker Owners & Friends!

My vote for the Logo would be for Number 3.

Enthusiastically,

*Kathryn D. Fonteno*  
Kathryn D. Fonteno  
1410 Alhambra Road  
South Pasadena, CA 91030

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WELL, PERHAPS I DO 'LOVE' MY CHECKER -- AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, IT'S THE BEST MADE CAR THAT WAS EVER MANUFACTURED. ( I WAS SO SAD TO HEAR BACK IN 1982 THAT THEY WERE DISCONTINUING IT -- I HAD LOOKED AROUND IN 1981 TO PURCHASE A NEW CHECKER, BUT AT THAT TIME, THEY WERE PRICED ALMOST 3 TIMES WHAT I GAVE FOR MINE IN 1968!)

ANYWAY, I'M GLAD I HAPPENED TO SEE A LITTLE ARTICLE IN ONE OF OUR NEWSPAPERS OUT HERE IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA THAT MENTIONED YOUR CHECKER CAR CLUB.

ENTHUSIASTICALLY YOURS,  
*Kathryn D. Fonteno*  
KATHRYN D. FONTENO  
1410 ALHAMBRA ROAD  
SOUTH PASADENA, CA 91030

PAGE 2

(some "dedication")

Dear Don,

Many thanks for the August edition of The Checkerboard News. As always, it is interesting and informative.

The logos are excellent and a choice between them is a bit on the difficult side. However, my wife and I decided to opt for #1.

We thoroughly enjoyed the article about you. Even though, like us, you are "retired", it's hard to see where you find the necessary time to compile the newsletter and tend to all of the other chores the club entails.

Our experience with Checker ownership began in 1967 with a 4-door Marathon. We are now driving our third Marathon and all of the cars have given excellent service at reasonable cost. Probably our most notable experience with the cars has been the lack of any major problems.

All of the Checkers were ordered by mail and picked up new in Kalamazoo on the promised delivery dates. We "lost" the '67 when the sale of some real-estate became contingent upon the car being included in the deal. We bought another Marathon in 1973 and in 1977 acquired our present sedan as a reliable "back-up" and retirement car. In 1984 the '73 became surplus to us and we sold the unit. Both the '67 and the '73 were in excellent condition when we let them go.

The '77 continues to give good service in daily use after 65,000 miles. As with the previous cars, I try to keep the unit in the best condition possible. With no new Checkers being manufactured, our present car is going to have to outlast me. Besides, my wife will drive no other car.

We have driven the Checkers a total of 204,000 miles, up hill and down dale, across country and border to border, from sea level to over 11,000 feet in temperatures ranging from 40° below zero to 120° above and more, without problems. I have kept accurate and complete records on all of the cars and I venture to say that the overall cost per mile, including purchase price and taxes, has been less than that of small imported or domestic autos. To date, all costs for the 1977, including 8 1/2 years of operating and maintenance expenses, is less than today's cost of a new Oldsmobile. Besides, I can get in and out of the Checker without cranking my head and banging my hip on a steering wheel that I forgot to "tilt" out of the way.

Enough of this braggin' and BSing. And thank you for listening.

Sincerely,

Eric O. Anderson

Article below about our "Chief" designer for the "Clubs" Logo.

In previous years he has designed and built "custom" Checkers. (which I think are Superb)

## OSU Professor Thomas Designs New Supertruck

If an OSU engineering technology professor can find funding to construct a prototype, the problem of not being able to pass one of those big rigs during a rainstorm on the freeway due to the severe spray may become a thing of the past. The new design would also result in safer highways and better gasoline mileage for the trucking companies.

Professor Richard Thomas of OSU's Department of Mechanical Design and Mfg Technology has been working on the project since 1980. Inspired by an editorial in a national trailer body magazine which called for new aerodynamic designs, Thomas was named a professor at OSU, he continued his efforts here.

By 1985, Thomas produced a 1/24th scale plastic Kenworth model called the Windclipper. Thomas is trying to interest individuals into constructing a full-scale model and hope stories about the concept will stimulate interest.

The Windclipper design is unique in that the tractor's cab is abutted directly to the trailer and revolves with the trailer as a single unit. A "fifth wheel" arrangement permits remote control of the tractor from the driver's high position in the center of its spacious cab with its sleeper accommodations below deck. Thomas says he believes the futuristic orientation has many driver comfort and safety advantages beyond the fuel-saving, aerodynamic design. And, because the wheels will be covered, the heavy spray which trucks spew out behind them will be almost totally reduced.

One of the primary problems today's current designs present is fuel inefficiency caused by the drag created in the open gap between the cab and tractor. In addition, this configuration, Thomas believes, contributes heavily to jackknifing. The Thomas design eliminates all that he says, but "...actually the basic chassis layout remains fairly conventional."

Thomas had originally designed the super truck with the idea that someone would manufacture one from scratch, construct a prototype, and begin marketing activities. However, the cost factor was limiting, so he modified his design to enable a manufacturer to rebuild a conventional truck to fit the specifications.

"All we need to do is find the financing to build a prototype," he said. "And I know when one is built the idea will catch on."

Thomas says he hopes to get the model into the OSU Mechanical and Aerospace wind tunnel soon. He is also trying to interest some selected race car enthusiasts into building a model to carry around their automobiles. In the meantime, if financing can be found, and the wind tunnel results are positive, his efforts and response to a small editorial may help revolutionize tractor/trailer design.



**SUPERTRUCK** — Surrounded by many of his other automobile designs, OSU mechanical design professor Richard Thomas poses with his super truck. Thomas is currently seeking funding to construct a life-sized model using a Kenworth chassis.

Stillwater NewsPress, Tuesday, October 15, 1985

## Bullet-proof compound wins award

Don't try wrapping aluminum foil around your car for bullet insulation.

Yet Andy Baughman was looking for a bullet-proof aluminum compound for an "anti-terrorist" limousine.

In the spring, Baughman found his compound and, after his graduation from Oklahoma State University, won honorable mention in the Aluminum Association's Student Automotive Design Competition.

Baughman won \$350 for himself and \$150 for the Mechanical Design and Manufacturing Technology Department. The award was a first for OSU because

the competition was the association's first.

Baughman was inspired with the anti-terrorist idea from the version of an armored limousine of his faculty adviser, G. Richard Thomas.

The lightweight characteristics of aluminum fit well into Baughman's plan of a "lightweight, high-speed and bulletproof" limousine, Thomas said.

"If you want an armored vehicle that performs, weight is against it," he said, adding that armored vehicles average about 7,000 pounds.

Baughman sought a bulletproof

compound utilizing aluminum and discovered that boron fibers and aluminum might deflect bullets like the car on "Knight Rider," Thomas said.

Other features of Baughman's winning design include bullet-resistant fuel cells, puncture-enduring tires, a one-and-one-eighth inch windshield of composite plastics and an aluminum bumper.

Besides Baughman's entry, all winning entries in the 1985 competition were class or team efforts, Thomas said.

Eligibility for the 1986 competition, with the deadline of May 15, has been expanded to include all undergraduates in the engineering disciplines he said.

SEE CURRENT (WINTER) 1985 ISSUE OF "CAR DESIGN" AND WATCH FOR SOME FUTURE ISSUES OF "POPULAR MECHANICS"



G. RICHARD THOMAS  
Assistant Professor  
Mechanical Design & Manufacturing Technology

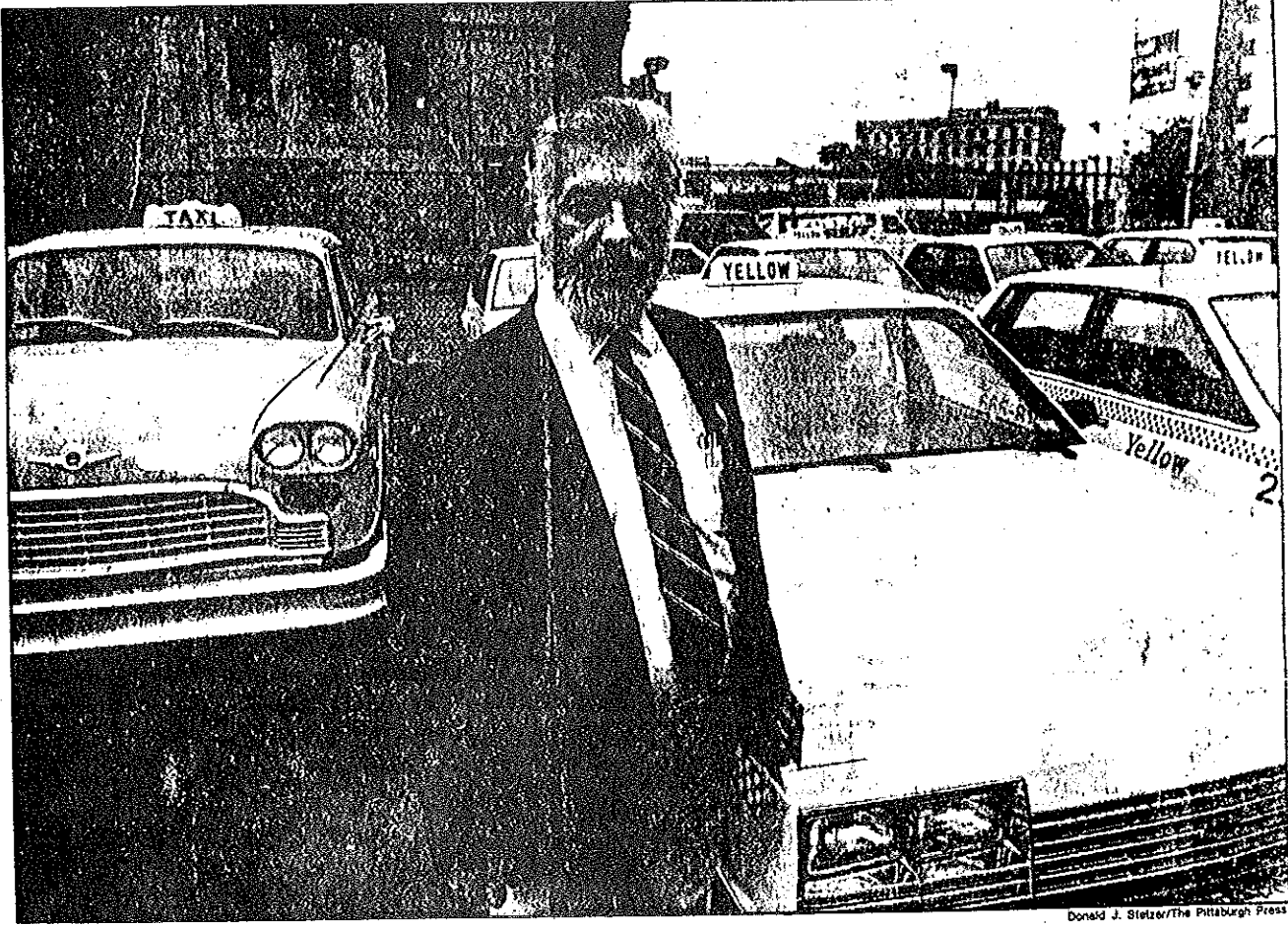
DIVISION OF ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY  
OFFICE OF ENGINEERING  
MECHANICAL DESIGN & TECHNOLOGY  
OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

(over)

(4)

Alfred Krupp, president of Yellow Cab Co., says he "can't guess what the reaction will be" as his firm's old Checker cabs leave the streets and Pittsburgh's...

# Taxis Begin A New Era



Donald J. Stetzer/The Pittsburgh Press

Yellow Cab Co.'s Alfred Krupp stands amid his firm's old and new taxis.

By JOE GRATA

The sign on the roof says "Yellow," but the cars are white, trimmed in black.

They represent the new look in taxicabs that Yellow Cab Co. will put into service late next week.

As conspicuous as the change in color is the fact that the cabs aren't the familiar box-shaped Checker Motor Co. models that have traveled the bumpy, hilly streets of Pittsburgh for decades.

The new taxis are Chevrolet Celebrity models that weigh about 1,000 pounds less and are supposed to get twice the mileage of Checker cabs. Also, they have front-wheel drive.

They are more compact, so they are not as roomy as the Checkers, but they still will be able to accommodate four passengers. They do not have jump seats that still can be found in some of the Checkers.

"There is a certain nostalgia to the Checker cabs," said Alfred Krupp, president of Yellow Cab Co. "I can't guess what the reaction will be (to the Celebrity) because Pittsburghers are so used to seeing and riding the Checker cabs."

But Checker cabs are an endangered species. High production costs forced Checker Motor Co. out of the taxi-building business last year. The Celebrity costs about

\$9,000 compared to \$12,000 for the last of the Checkers.

Yellow Cab Co. purchased nine Celebrity models as part of a General Motors-sponsored research and development project involving a potentially significant taxi market now that Checker has departed.

The new cars are equipped with heavy duty springs, brakes, alternator, seats and other special items to test how they hold up mechanically, under the stress of traveling about 100,000 miles a year under some of the nation's most severe driving conditions.

If they prove themselves, Krupp said that entire fleet of 331 Checker cabs may be replaced with the

Celebrity or a comparable model. "For the first month or so, we want passengers and drivers to evaluate the Celebrity. We want to know if people are comfortable and how the cars handle. I think regular riders will find the biggest differences."

About half of Yellow Cab's Checker taxis are propane-powered. Gasoline models average about 10 miles a gallon — half of what the smallest six-cylinder engine manufactured by GM is supposed to achieve in the Celebrity.

Better gas mileage will be important to the company as well as to the cab drivers, half of whom work on a commission basis and half of whom lease taxis on a daily

basis and pay for fuel themselves.

The new vehicles are not air-conditioned, because Pittsburgh's climate isn't considered that hot, initial costs and maintenance are high, and more fuel is consumed by air-conditioning units.

"Drivers sitting on the post (parked with air-conditioners on while waiting for a fare) would be burning gas needlessly, and you would have engines overheating," Krupp said.

While Yellow Cab Co. has stuck with a buy-America policy, taxi firms in a number of other cities have not. In Philadelphia, Checker taxicabs are being replaced with foreign-manufactured Peugeots and Volvos. Fuel-efficient Japa-

nese-made taxicabs are taking to the streets in other places.

Krupp and Al Hayes, traffic manager for Yellow Cab Co. implied the Celebrity may have a hard time slacking up against Checker taxis, which have been around since 1922 and evolved into a highly refined workhorse of the taxi industry.

The oldest Checker cab in the Yellow Cab Co. fleet here is a 1977 model. A few are 1978s, but most were built between 1979 and 1981.

"The mechanical components of the Checkers are terrific... we could keep them running forever," Hayes said. "But the bodies shake, rattle and roll. Salt rusts them away, and our streets vibrate them to death."

To the best of my "ability" I'm thanking everyone individually for their contribution of the fine articles for the "Newsletter" (just in case I forgot this is THANKS AGAIN.) (there will be some more of the "personal experiences" coming, also, keep 'em comin') (recognize the railroad station in "Philly, Pa.") (above)

The Checker Car Club of America was organized in May <sup>1982</sup> 1983 for the preservation, enjoyment and exchange of information on Checker automobiles from 1922-1982, (ceased production). Ownership is not a prerequisite of membership. Annual Dues are \$5.00 and a quarterly Newsletter is sent out.

"WELCOME ABOARD"

Don. E. McHenry

Annual Dues \$5.00, Next "Checkerboard News" in Feb. 1986 "On The Road Again", Don. E. McHenry, 469 Tremaine Ave., Kenmore, WY. 14217, (716) 877-3358 (375 members+)