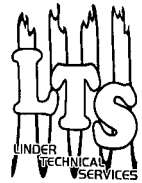


Networking

Newsletter



Guru-3

We just concluded another weekend Guru-3 class on February 8-10, 2006. We have offered the same Guru-3 class twice before in 2002 and also in 2004, but this was the largest group yet with 24 attendees. Guys traveled as far as Florida, California and Massachusetts to attend the weekend school and I don't think any of them left disappointed. The class ended up being on the same weekend of the blizzard in the Northeast, so we were concerned about how that would effect flights and travel plans when the guys went home on Sunday. All but 2 made it out of Indy on time on Sunday, but our friends from Massachusetts had to stay over an extra night and leave early on Monday morning. I doubt they were too upset about missing work on Monday and shoveling cars out from under 20+ inches of snow!



Thanks to Troy Spratling of BYU Idaho for arranging a "road trip" for some of the early arrivals to the local Navistar Engine Plant on the Eastside of Indianapolis. The trip was put together at the last-minute and we were only allowed to take 10 guys to the tour, but for those who went, it was a great experience. We have since decided to make this, and possibly other trips, available to our Guru-2 group next year and maybe even for early arrivals to this year's conference.

The weekend officially started at 12:30 on Friday afternoon with an introduction and welcome from Jim. After that, John Thornton took over and didn't look back until dinnertime. John's class on Chrysler and Asian EVAP was great as usual and it was enhanced even more by some lab time. It's always nice to put into practice what you learn right away. Dinner was at the shop and Susan made her famous homemade chili while Jim tried out his new hot dog steamer. No activities were planned after dinner, but I noticed an impromptu meeting / class in the lobby of the Sleep Inn around 9pm that night.

Saturday morning started off again with John's class on graphical scanners and finished up just in time for lunch. Randy Dillman took over after lunch with his class on MAF testing which tied in nicely with John's morning class on graphing. Randy struggled with a horrible cold and crackly voice, but he stuck it out until dinner and I know the class appreciated his effort. A Bubba-style cookout was prepared for dinner and many of the guys stuck around after eating to talk about the day's information.

Sunday morning Scot Manna took off with his case-study based class titled: "Arsenal '06". Many of the attendees had never been in one of Scot's classes before and I think everyone was very impressed. He combines John Thornton's energy with Randy Dillman's "let's just fix the car" attitude and it makes for a great presentation.

It was once again a great group of guys and we were sad to see them go. Hopefully we will see them all again for our conference in September.....as well as all of you! Details coming soon on our website: www.lindertech.com

For all you past Guru's wanting to know when you next chance is to get back to Lindernapolis, we will hold a Guru-2 class in February 2007. Look for more details in the fall of this year.

From the “Sleuth”, Michele Winn

Slow Times?

How is business? Busy? Between walk-in customers and hot line phone calls, I talk to at least 20 different shops each week from all over the country. If you said that your business is slow, you're not alone. I started seeing this trend around the Fall of 2005 and it seems to continue. Interest rates are still fairly low, the unemployment rate is in check and inflation is still down. It seems like the perfect formula for a thriving business. So, why are so many shops slow?

I have a theory and I've been doing some research over the past few months to see if I can prove it. 2000 and 2001 were two of the best years EVER for new light-duty vehicle sales. After 9/11, car dealers were worried about a slump in sales and started offering lots of incentives such as cash back bonuses and 0% financing. These incentives continued well into 2005 which produced 4 more banner years in new car sales. By my calculation over 100 million new vehicles were purchased between 2000 and 2005. Now let's factor in how many cars are licensed in the U.S. My research shows that number is about 200 million. Let's take into account people like me (and probably you) that have licensed vehicles that seldom, if ever, get driven. Between my husband and I, we have 9 vehicles licensed between us. We regularly drive 4 of them. I suppose not a great portion of the population is like us, but let's say 2%. That's about 2 million vehicles. That leaves about 98 million vehicles left for us to service and repair. Divided by 50 states, that leaves about 1.9 million vehicles per state. In an area like Indianapolis with more than 1 million residents, that doesn't leave many cars for the outlying areas, does it?

What's my point? With all these new vehicles on the road, we may need to change how we think about our business. Not only did carmakers offer huge incentives to buy new vehicles, but they are giving longer warranties and even including some “normal wear” items like brakes for a certain period in their warranties. This can really hurt the independent service shop if we aren't willing to change. For a long time, Jim has been preaching that we need to be in the business of “service”, not “repair”. We need to push maintenance services such as brake fluid flushes, transmission flush, coolant flush, fuel injection cleaning, etc. We also need to educate our existing customers that have recently purchased new vehicles. They need to know that just because the salesman said the car didn't need a tune-up for 100,000 miles, doesn't mean there aren't plenty of other systems that need help long before then. Plus, bear in mind that the 100,000 mile tune-up is under IDEAL conditions. No sensor failures, no short trip driving, mild weather, etc. If any of those conditions aren't met, these vehicles will need service well before the 100,000 mile mark, but the customers need to be aware of it.

I guess the other option to fill the gap is to cater to people like me with lots of extra “classic” cars sitting around their garage. I think that my husband thinks that by saying over and over again that his cars are “classics” it makes it true. I think my 1974 Impala is a classic, but I don't want to work on it! Even though it's garaged and rarely driven, it still needs something fixed before each drive. Last time it was new points and condensor, the time before that, it was new brake lines. I found out quickly that the local auto parts store doesn't keep enough brake line in stock to re-do a 1974 Impala 2-door! My point is, it's probably not worth trying to get 2% of the business and having to deal with cars like this and the work they bring. Therefore, I say again, we need to re-think how we're going to do business. Sure, just like anything else, it's a cycle and in a few years we'll be right back where we used to be. The question is, what are you going to do to survive until then???

1st Annual Lindertech North Conference!!

John Cochrane, owner of Cochrane Automotive in Ontario, Canada has had a great desire to bring expert technical training courses to the automotive technicians of Canada and the Northeastern U.S. This year, Cochrane Automotive, in conjunction with LTS, is proud to announce that the 1st annual Lindertech North Conference will be held on April 21-23, 2006.

Spend the weekend learning from top instructors as well as networking with fellow technicians. You won't want to miss the trade show with vendors such as: AC Delco, Vetronix and other diagnostic suppliers, as well as Bob Greenwood from E.K. Williams who is a leader in business management and development. You won't find any booths with alignment racks, lifts or body shop tools, only the latest in diagnostic test equipment, service procedures and related emission parts.

Seminar Content:

Transmission problems of today: Wayne Colonna
Wide Range A/F and Lean A/F Sensors: John Thornton
Vehicle Theft Deterrent: Randy Dillman

For more information:

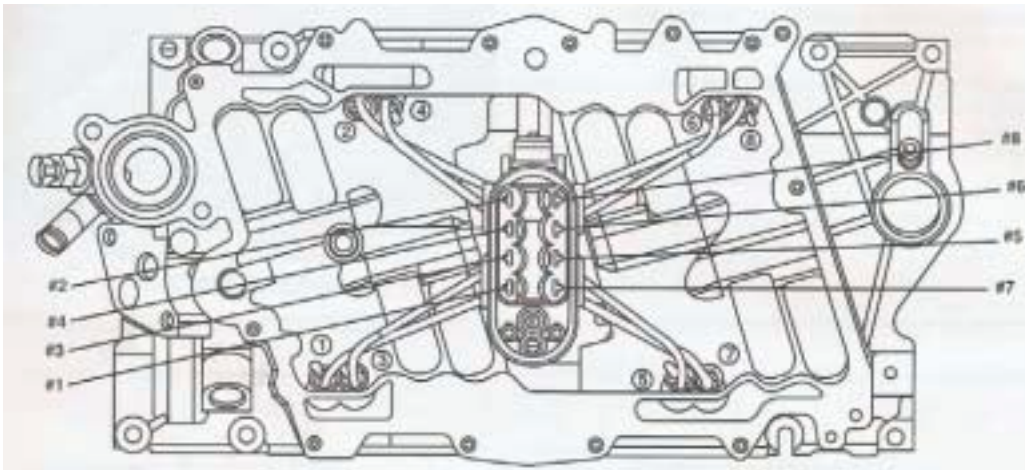
www.lindertech.com or
Cochrane Automotive Training Hot Line: 416-236-1763.

"Stay Connected"

Seating is limited, so sign up today! Jim, Doug and Michele are looking forward to seeing you there!

From The "Wizard" GM CSFI Bulletin

For some time we have been offering NEW replacement units that utilize a "mini-injector" instead of a poppet valve. These units are a direct fit and very cost effective. They have become so popular that at times, we have trouble keeping them in stock! We have found recently, that some technicians are not installing the lines correctly which results in a misfire. Please refer to the picture below for proper installation.



**THE METERING BODY IS NUMBERED FOR PROPER INJECTOR PLACEMENT.
ON A V-8 ENGINE, THE LINES CROSS, PAY CLOSE ATTENTION DURING INSTALLATION.**

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“WIZARD” JUNIOR

“Who is this kid?”, you ask. He might look familiar to some of you. Well, it is my oldest son, Evan. If you have been to any of the LTS conferences you have seen him before (he use to be shorter). In January his high school offered their students a program called J-Term. It was an opportunity to intern in a field in which they are interested. The students choose where they wanted to work, submitted a petition to the school to work in their desired field and interviewed for the job. The school’s intent was to let the student find out if the real world job was what the student thought it would be.



Just for Laughs



Evan spent two weeks in the injector lab learning the complete injector reconditioning process, from sorting cores to flowing sets. Each night he had to write a page in a journal about what he did and learned that day. A school representative also came to visit the students at work to see if there was any question or concerns. At the end of the internship he had to write an essay about his experience and if he still wanted to pursue his chosen career.

I was little apprehensive about having my son working with me, but have to say, he did a good job and I was proud of him.

—Doug Garriott, *The Fuel Injection “Wizard”*