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*Ottawa Outlook, nee North Hero News and World Review …. ……. Mostly stuff no one else would print.*

Saturday, November 27, 2010 outlk10, 10wc29                                                                                                     (2010 NHN&WR letter/story/poem/card #18)

**Snow Tires.**

On site family were fairly adamant. Wintering in the Canadian capitol really required snow tires. Snow tires do not just have a deeper tread, they are formulated from a rubber which provides better traction under very cold conditions. Hmmmn. Well, … do as the Romans we guess. In Vermont we’d always gone with all weather tires on the car, cause we had the F150, snow ‘*attired’* so to speak*,* at hand. ( Hey, how about that double entente![[1]](#footnote-1)[1]) A little background. Ken and his late brother Dave, both had a 2002 Saturn. Dave was one size bigger than Ken in all respects, i.e. tee shirts, jackets etc. So it follows, … the wheels on Dave’s Saturn were one size larger than Ken’s. Ottawa circa 2002 priorities: Lucile, hairdresser. Ken, mechanic. A neighbor recommended his mechanic who happened to be within easy walking distance. He operated *“Peter’s Garage”.* Great. Ken visits *“Peters”.* Perusing the reading material in the waiting area it was readily apparent, … somebody here was German. When the owner appeared Ken asked, *“Sprechen sie Deutsch?”* Answer, *“Ya.”*  Ken had his mechanic, his name is Bob. Following the first work done, *“Peter’s Garage”* keys all pertinent Saturn model info into their computer. Fast forwarding: Dave passes away, Ken totals his Saturn, Dave’s car is sitting in the barn in Connecticut, Ken buys Dave’s car.

 Now then, back to the present. Decision made, get snow tires. (Regular tires, all weather tires, snow tires, … whatever, we’ve always had them on separate rims, easier to change sets). The totaled Saturn’s regular tires and rims were still in the 219 Atlantis garage. A check is made. The discrepancy discovered. Current Saturn wheels, 15 inch. Old Saturn wheels, 14 inch. Good Grief, … Dave comes out bigger once more. Well, it’s going to be both new tires & new wheels.

 A trip to *“Peter’s*” is made and snow tires and rims are ordered. Bob comes out, looks at the current tires and says *“I should have everything by Friday.”* . Fine. Friday comes. Early Friday A.M., a call from *“Peter’s Garage”*

 *“How many lugs do you have on your Saturn wheels?*

 *Think it’s five.*

 *Five? Can you check?*

 *Sure, just a minute”*

Off to the door, peek out, count lugs.

 “*Yes, … it’s five.*

 *Hmmmn, … are you sure?*

 *Yup.*

 *Ok, thanks.”*

A short interlude transpires then Lucile hears voices in the driveway. She looks out the window. A strange man is standing by the Saturn talking on a cell phone. He sees her, smiles and waves. Lucile is puzzled, but returns both.. Ken is called and looks out, it’s Bob’s son who Lucile doesn’t know from Adam.. Now it’s Ken who’s puzzled and thinks, …” *guess they don’t think I know what a lug is”*

Ken goes out and says, “Hi”.

Bob says, *“Hi, just checking the lugs. Sometimes the hub cap shows five lugs when there are really only four underneath. But your lugs show right through the hubcaps. There are definitely five and we were sent wheels for a car with 4 lugs. I thought that there was something wrong here. .”*

Five lug wheels would be ordered and a new installation date is set. A comedy of errors. The original order was placed on the basis of the totaled Saturn’s specs due to an un-updated computer record. Well, no real harm done and the work was subsequently done as scheduled. However, … one last twist.

 Ken picks up the Saturn. Presented the bill, Ken presents his credit card. As the transaction is en process, Ken scrutinizes the bill.As most do, the grand total is absorbed first. What, … how can that be? 4 new wheels, 4 new tires, balancing et al, and it only comes to that? Off to the detail.

 Install snow tires on wheels

 Balance

 4 wheels

 1 Tire

 Shop supplies

WHOA! ONE TIRE! Good Grief, got 4 tires for the price of one.

Without a moments hesitation, *“Wait, this is not right”.* (Mother would be so proud.)

Bob’s turn to be puzzled, *“ How did I ever do That?”*

The bill is adjusted and Ken leaves, Snow Tire gambit finally complete.

 In retrospect one wonders how simple transactions/events can get so involved. Take the above, bought new tires and ended up with a two page letter[[2]](#footnote-2)[2]. They also seem to occur in increasing frequency as we increase in age. Is it us? Don’t know what we could have done differently, not totaled the car I guess. Safe to say though, Dave proved a bigger lug all around.

 Anyway, … safe winter driving all.

Lucile, Bailey & Ken

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1. [1] Am sure this will draw comment. Our two French dictionaries have it this way. An English one has it entendre. Take your choice. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [2] If we ever finish, *“How to Import a Car into Canada”* it may run 4 pages! [↑](#footnote-ref-2)