

**CULTURE**

For the past several weeks Pam Peterson of Succulent Productions has been ambushing women on the street in their mint-conditioned cars inviting them to partake in a "five dollar soapy hand job."

Needless to say, some of them have been a little shocked. Some she's approached, though—including at car shows—have been interested, but often their boyfriends-in-tow have laughed it off with bemusement.

In the end, most who have heard of Peterson's woman-centered car wash and show June 9 at Garry Small Saab are chomping at the bit to show off their creative and well-loved autos. They also have a chance to be photographed for an appearance in her upcoming coffee table book, *Women and Their Kick Ass Cars*.

Peterson's aim is to uplift women and their cars out of the cliché Americana symbol of bikini-clad gals draping themselves over some guy's car and instead project the pride and sense of empowerment cars instill in their female owners.

"Cars mean freedom, mobility, independence, power, accessibility, transportation, pleasure and opportunity," she explains. "The book is about wanting to show off these gals and their great cars to everyone. Because I am so proud of them for being creative, spontaneous, carefree, bad-ass, independent and maybe even a little rebellious!"

The idea for the book and car show came to Peterson while she was living in East Atlanta as a traveling nurse for two years. She saw women with cool cars and admired that they carried themselves with such a great sense of power.

She says "more and more women...own and drive great cars—cars that [we] would stereotypically expect a man to own and drive. After almost two years of thinking about this project and, I'm sure, nearly driving all my friends insane talking about it, I decided to do it."

When she returned to Portland she found herself a "bad-ass" 1972 Buick Skylark to work on and to tool around in, cementing her love for the world of creative cars.

"I love that people do a double take when they see me and my car," Peterson smiles. "I feel like they really don't expect a girl to be driving such a bad-ass muscle car. For me, my car means strength and freedom. Freedom to do whatever I want. I have a sense of power and attitude...like I've never experienced before. It's crazy! I love it!"

Getting more involved with her car show and book has also opened up a new world. "I've had so many great experiences while putting this event together. I've met so many wonderful women—all because of one common...interest: cars. Whether it's women with muscle cars, classic 4x4s, imports or art cars, I feel this camaraderie with them."

Peterson adds that one of the most important and exciting aspects about bringing women together with their cars is to hear and share stories about the adventures they've had and what the cars mean to them. Like making music or paintings or elaborate meals, owning an other-than-average automobile expresses

Pam Peterson and her kick-ass Skylark



**Soapy hand jobs**

Pam Peterson offers the car wash of a lifetime

BY MELISSA SAYLER

something otherwise ineffable about the soul of the owner. Peterson wants to offer an opportunity to celebrate that expression.

"I want to thank them for being strong and different and taking chances that may not always be practical or responsible. I know that nine miles per gallon in my Buick is not very practical or environmentally responsible, but it sure is damn fun to peel out in!" she exclaims.

Although *Women and Their Kick Ass Cars* is exclusively for women, she hopes to attract as many people as possible to the car wash and show. That definitely means men, too, and also those with any old car that needs a good scrub.

Peterson hopes to "expose a whole new...group of people to the thrill of the car culture" and to "provide an opportunity for other artists to show off their talents and gain exposure at a really cool, unusual event!"

So be prepared to pick your poison: For the low, low price of \$5 the Tube Top Girls, Beefcake Boys or Seattle Gay Guys will be at your disposal to give your car the best "five dollar soapy hand job" it's ever had.

Your \$5 also buys your entry into a raffle for prizes donated by Portland businesses, and you'll be treated to food, beverages and music from Portland DJs Rachel Arnold, Emily Huffman and DB Womack. Portland photographer Erin LeFevre will be on hand to take pictures for the book.

And, of course, you'll be surrounded by women and their kick-ass cars. **J**

The FIVE DOLLAR SOAPY HAND JOB car wash is noon to 8 p.m. June 9 at Garry Small Saab, 1940 S.E. 82nd Ave.

MELISSA SAYLER has a kick-ass 1995 Nissan pickup named Jodi and loves soapy hand jobs in or out of her truck. She is also the Production Assistant at Just Out.

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