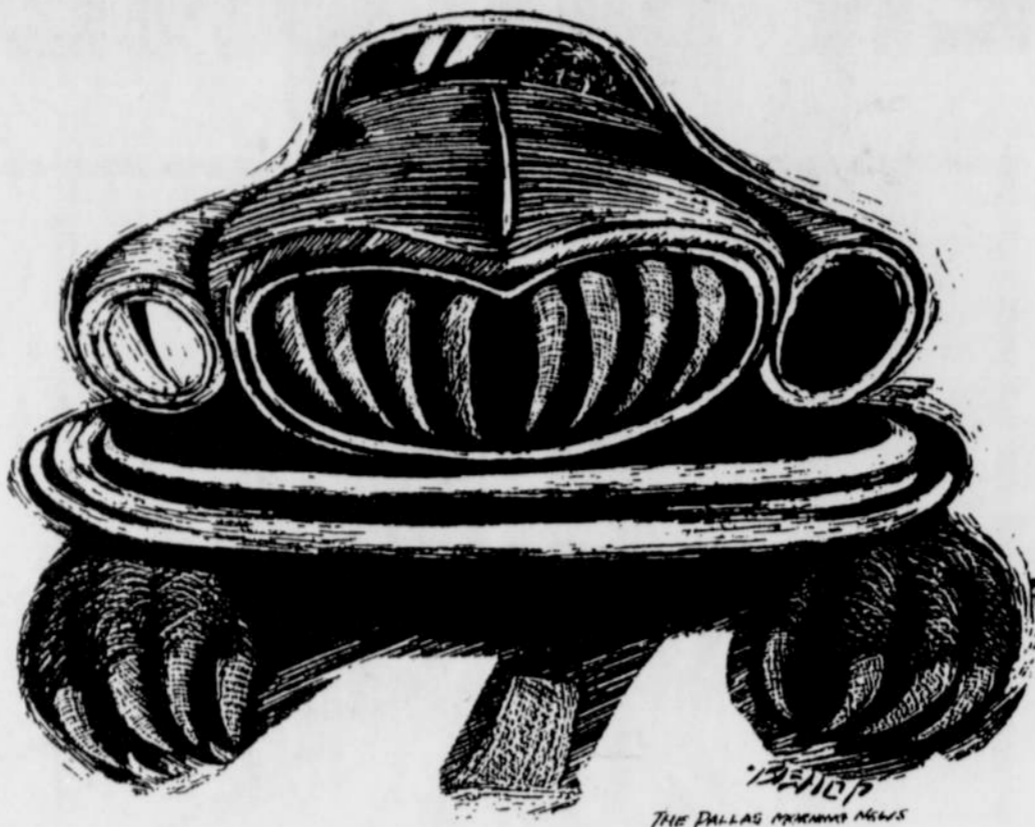


## GREAT AMERICAN CAR

we wear our cars  
 glass-plastic-steel clothing  
 clothed in boxes  
 heavy as houses, plated and armored  
 license to drive our desires  
*cinema verite* on rubber tires  
 tirelessly headed for anywhere, for nowhere  
 auto-motivated  
 we wear our cars  
 skins shine  
 straight-jackets lined  
 with custom upholstery  
 red-white-black  
 leather, 100% pure naugahide  
 inside, outside  
 walk  
 don't walk, drive  
 drive your car  
 wear your car  
 graft the transmission to your brain  
 put the plugs in your ears  
 and drive  
 drive shaft  
 drive fast  
 faster, race  
 racing  
 tailgating  
 overtake and passing  
 elude a police officer  
 traffic infraction  
 license suspension  
 habitual offender — go to jail  
 curl up on a steel cot  
 and dream  
 dream of your car  
 of a million mirrors  
 of rear-view mirrors  
 filled with trucks  
 singing songs of exhaust  
 and burning oil  
 harmonious fumes  
 we can never pause  
 we have no time to look  
 we cannot breathe  
 we can drive  
 in a blizzard of landscapes  
 (diamond in the back)  
 we can drive  
 in a blur of signs  
 (sun roof top)  
 we can drive  
 in a tunnel of fragments  
 (diggin' in the seam with a gangster lean)  
 mean,  
 bad,



THE DALLAS OPERATING MILES

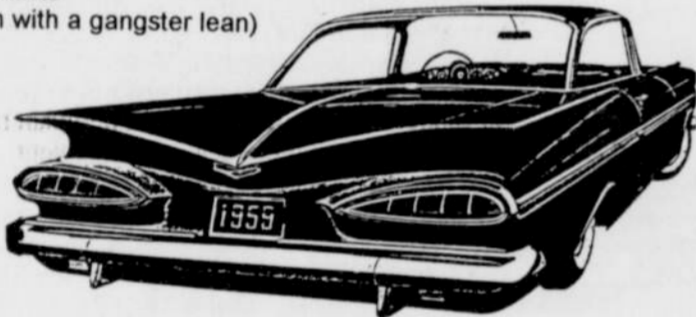
wreckless,  
 wreckless metallic beast of the nation  
 drinking asphalt  
 drinking air  
 thousands of double-white fiery eyes  
 slicing through wheatfields  
 cutting the forests apart  
 to unzipped strips of blue-white sky  
 fly  
 fly-wheel  
 flies on the windshield  
 afternoons running opaque under a slanted sun  
 nights spun on dark rivers of tar  
 car  
 war  
 war for blood  
 war for business  
 war to keep us moving  
 moving to gas stations  
 moving 9 to 5  
 moving to sheer madness  
 radiator, generator, alternator, accelerator  
 keep cool

when your hood flips up  
 and the jack in the box pops up  
 asking you for proof of insurance  
 keep cool  
 and use your horn  
 to warn other drivers  
 when you're completely out of control  
 slow down  
 before entering  
 metaphysical,  
 transmeditational,  
 sexual curves  
 but never forget to wear your car  
 daily  
 like a vitamin  
 daily  
 like a prayer  
 like a universal/differential/manifold/shock-absorber  
 because the world's a scary place  
 we cruise through  
 we loose through  
 on the highways,  
 biways,  
 skyways, your way, my way  
 wearing our cars  
 wearing our general motors mason jars  
 our chebby chevrolets  
 our macho machines  
 our duel-injection erection machines  
 with gabardine pants, a gold watch  
 and a cigar in your mouth  
 with pantyhose, lipstick and a perm  
 with all the cosmetic wonders  
 in a stop-go maze

in a fast-slow craze  
 of constant red-rosary bead taillights  
 votive candles of empty nights  
 with the windows rolled down  
 and the wind whippin in  
 pullin out, streaming out  
 the cheeseburger wrappers and beer cans  
 pullin out the condoms, the radio kingdom of billy graham  
 pullin out road maps and wedding rings  
 pullin out st. christopher and all kinds of things  
 pullin out the half-thought thoughts  
 the twice feared fears  
 the profiles of tears  
 the cigarette silence  
 for years of miles  
 along the road  
 made of cars  
 tattooed in rust  
 tattooing the earth  
 with long indelible scars  
 lined with weeds and dust  
 we wear our cars  
 our polished cases of velocity  
 strapped to mechanical necessity  
 and all is visible and elusive  
 all so near, yet can't be touched  
 hypnotized deep by the yellow ribbon  
 hypnotized deep in the middle of an eye  
 into a blank stare  
 staring back  
 wearing black  
 our cars  
 glistening  
 listening  
 in a closet of vanishing echoes  
 through streets of instantaneous architecture  
 of instantaneous cars  
 cars  
 junkyard carcasses  
 carpal tunnel syndrome on the steering wheel  
 carmen miranda on a dashboard veranda  
 carnal desire for a jaguar  
 carhop fill er up with a rootbeer float  
 carnivorous soul, freeway to everything  
 cartoon-axle pointed straight at the moon  
 carlos, muchacho you look fine in that gran torina-el camino  
 carbon cop — 4x4's multiplying to infinity,  
 aerial view of used carlots on t.v.  
 cardinal virtues: gears, brakes, pistons, points  
 of a motorized destiny

bumper to bumper  
 like words of an endless sentence  
 sentenced to speed  
 talking at 80 miles and hour  
 and over the limit  
 wearing our cars  
 our sacred cars  
 our holy cars  
 in cars we trust cars  
 hallelujah  
 amen

~JUANITA HUEBNER



## WE CAN START...

Fear, ever present, surrounds us, thick with heaviness, choking out light.  
 We can resist.

Greed, ever present, slimy and slick, coaxes us to sell our souls and buy, buy, buy.  
 We will resist.

Hatred, ever present, beseeches us to harden our hearts against those who are different.  
 We must resist.

Fear, Greed, Hate. Hate, Fear, Greed. Greed, Hate, Fear

This is our culture's chant, repeated over and over and over and over, relentlessly bombarding all aspects of our lives and the lives of our CHILDREN until our minds, our hearts and our spirits are numb.

The time is now to create a new chant. Perhaps it could be  
 Love, Respect, Peace. Respect, Peace. Love. Peace, Love, Respect.

Respect, called forth, illuminates the worth of all beings.  
 Love, brilliantly radiating from each of us envelopes the world, nurturing all.  
 Peace gives space to creatively untangle the web of destruction that ensnares us.

The loudest cheerleaders of our current cultural chant are the powermongers who, under their rules, only gain if we, the people, lose, for ours is truly government of the rich, for the rich and by the rich.

The time is now to change the rules. Perhaps they could be that everyone and everything wins.

Imagine a world where those who give the most are the ones most admired and revered.

Imagine a world where every child, woman and man is full — full of food, full of love, full of health.

Imagine a world where the very Earth that sustains all life is nurtured back.

Yes you say, I want a new chant. I want new rules. I want to live in this imagined world.  
 But how are going to get there?

We can start by believing that it is possible.

We can start by using our incredible powers of creativity to image Peace, Love and Respect.

We can start by staying strong and not giving in to the despair that so easily overwhelms us in these Orwellian times.

We can start by unplugging ourselves from the media stream, which is the currency that keeps us subdued.

We can start by turning a deaf ear to the misinformation that permeates the sound waves.

We can start by recognizing that our leaders only want to "sound-bite" problems for they have no intention of actively seeking solutions because they perceive that if the people gain, they lose.

We can start by looking inward and repairing our own inner damage.

We can start by looking around our neighborhood and finding ways to help each other survive; nay, flourish.

We can start by picking a problem, any problem in our community, and find creative solutions.

We can start by mending one of the myriad tears in the fabric of our society's so-called safety net that is full of holes.

We can start by refusing to be shrouded in the tatters and rags the elite would have us wear.

We can start by praying or meditating on Love, Respect and Peace.

We can start by honestly and openly asking the hard questions that may point out the paths we need to take to find real solutions for real people.

We can start by trimming our egos and reaching out to our opponents and find out who they really are.

We can start by greeting each person we meet with a smile and giving them our undivided attention, in the name of Mary Elizabeth.

We can start by honoring our own true nature and the true nature of all around us.

We can start by using our gifts and our talents to assist the whole.

We can start by doing what we love, doing whatever works for us in our lives.

We can start by holding the space so that when maelstrom has finally passed there will be somewhere to start anew.

We can start by preparing the ground so that the new crops are rooted firmly in fertile, rich soil.

We can start where we are and make any movement we can towards a Respectful, Peaceful, Loving world.

~BARBARA McLAUGHLIN

Barbara McLaughlin and her husband Chuck live in Wheeler. They have long been political activists for peace.