

Newsbrief

SCHOOL PROGRAM FOR THE ENVIRONMENT:

Senior Environmental Engineer Michael Simpson has been selected to serve on a special task force to develop a nationwide program to educate young people about the public works industry, announced Public Works/Sanitation Director Enrique C. Zaldivar. The American Public Works Association (APWA) is sponsoring this program in a continued effort to reach high school students and provide them a wide range of opportunities to explore the field of public works.



Senior Environmental Engineer Michael Simpson

"Simpson joins a team of five top public professionals in the United States and Canada who are serving as subject matter experts, providing feedback and guiding development," Zaldivar said. "He was selected for this project because of his long time affiliation with and contributions to the City's Sewer Science Program."

Through 2009, the task team aims to develop, review and release this outreach program for ninth- to 12th-grade students and link disciplines, bridge academics to real-life situations, and allow young people the freedom to examine the role of public works in daily life. Designed for use during classroom instructional periods, it will continue a path that elementary and middle school students undertook during a recent "Discovering and Exploring the World of Public Works" program. One pilot-program, expected to culminate by spring 2010, will be conducted with high school students.

Simpson brings to the program more than 20 years of experience. He serves as assistant division manager for the City's Industrial Waste Management organization and oversees the Federal Mandated Pre-Treatment Program and Pollution Prevention operations. He is a member of the APWA, California Society of Professional Engineers (CSPE), the California Water Environmental Association (CWEA), and serves on the National Society of Professional Engineers Government committee.

In 1995 the Institute for the Advancement of Engineers and the Los Angeles Council of Engineers and Scientists selected Simpson as one of the top Engineers in Southern California for his contributions to the Northridge Earthquake clean up project and infrastructure management effort.

**Tell Santa:
Everybody
wants
Club gifts.
SEE PAGES 66-71**

THE CAR CLUB



BY EVERETT BENNET
Assistant Inspector,
Public Works/Contract Administration

**PROUD OF YOUR WHEELS?
SEND IN A PHOTO!**
(SEE DETAILS AT BOTTOM)

Between a Ring and a Buick, Buick Wins

1963 BUICK RIVIERA

As far back as I can remember, I have always been a car nut. Perhaps it stems from the fact that I was born in the back seat of a 1967 Volkswagen Bug. I'm unsure if that's the reason, but not a day goes by where I don't think about what else I can do to one of my current projects or what project I want to take on in the future.

To most people, cars are just a means of getting from point A to point B. But with all the time we spend in our cars, why not make it an extension of our personality and add some comforts? Some people will invest in some of the many aftermarket products available like rims and easy bolt-on accessories. Then there is another breed out there (like myself) that goes the extra 10 miles and put as much money into a 50-year-old car as you could for a new pool in your backyard. Is it an illness? Most people would think so. My girlfriend thinks I need to go to Carholics Anonymous and start putting money toward a ring for her rather than the new motor in my 1951 Buick.

Well, this month I decided to show what my money is going toward rather than the ring. If you have read this column before you might have seen my 1966 Lincoln Continental (July issue) and know that I am a fan of 1960s automobiles. The cars of the '60s were defined by their sharp lines, low rooflines and big engines, especially after Detroit began to take notice of what these crazy Southern California kids were doing in their garages. Young guys like the Barris brothers, Gene Winfield, Bill Hines and Von Dutch (not the clothes designer) would cut apart perfectly running vehicles and apply their own vision of what Detroit should have done in the first place. So, while pre-'60s cars are some of the most beautiful customs you see in magazines and in person, 1960s steel can be just as great without all the work. So when I decided to build my 1960s custom, I chose a platform that is desired by many and looks good even as a rust bucket: the 1963 Buick Riviera.

To create a great-looking custom, the car needs to be utterly low. So low in fact that it looks undrivable, but in reality it does clear most things except speed bumps, road kill and freeway lane reflectors. I accomplished the stance of my car by installing air bags in all four corners, a five-gallon air tank mounted in the trunk, and 8-3/8-inch valves to control ride height. The car frame now lies on the ground when the air is let out and can also cruise at nine inches off the ground. I know how much air I have in the bags by an Air Ride Technologies digital gauge that reads out my pound pressure in each air bag. The motor is the stock 401-cubic-inch nail head that I had rebuilt along with the two-speed transmission. The rims are chrome smoothies with center caps that I purchased from Coker Tire. I may change them out for Astro



Supremes in the near future to closer identify with true '60s customs and low-riders.

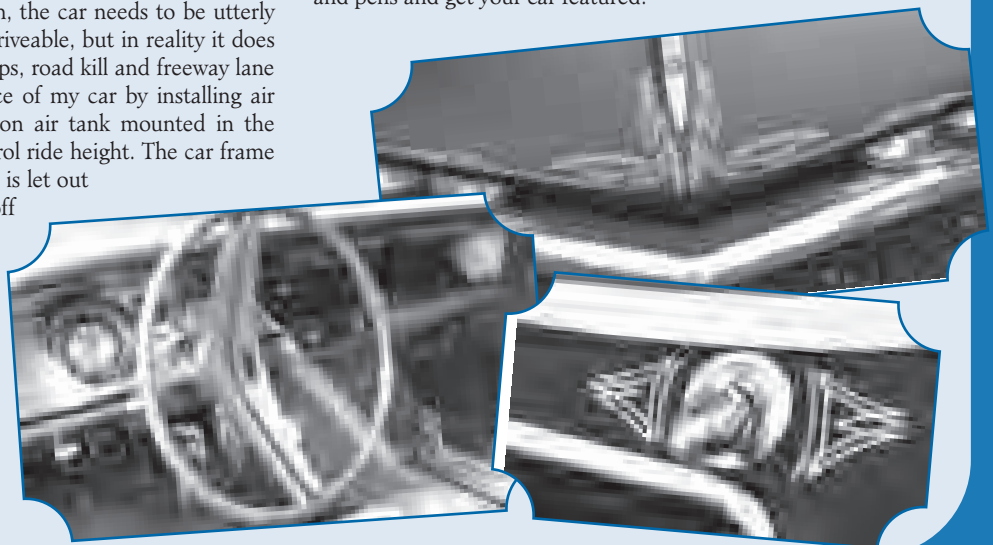
Now that my car was on the ground, it was time to do some bodywork. The car was straight to begin with, so bodywork was minimal. I decided to carry on the tradition of early customs by spraying just the basecoat color and not applying the clear coat. You can call this a suede or flat look and in fact this has become so popular that I have even seen Lamborghinis and Rolls Royces painted this way. To contrast the black basecoat color, I mixed a few different shades of gold paint I had in the garage and sprayed the roof. The last touch was driving the car over to a fellow by the name of Rick Grindle and having him work his magic with a pin-striping brush and some one-shot paint.

I bought the car with the current interior in it. It has light brown leather and tweed inserts and a tweed headliner. It isn't my personal favorite, but for the time being it works. It does beat using blankets and T-shirts as seat covers. In regard to the stereo, I have the stock speakers and installed an aftermarket Alpine CD player.

The car was not built to be a show car. It is a car that I drive three or four times a week and just enjoy putting miles on it. I may change some things in the future, but for now driving it down the road while listening to Johnny Cash suits me just fine.

Until next time, keep smokin' tires and burnin' fuel!

Your submissions are requested so pull out those cameras and pens and get your car featured!



Send in a photo of you and your car, and we might publish it!

Send us your information, too – name, title and City department, a phone number (we won't print it) and a paragraph or two about why you love your car, what kind of car and year it is, and maybe some fun details of how you got it, how you restored it, etc. Send it all to: talkback@cityemployeesclub.com

