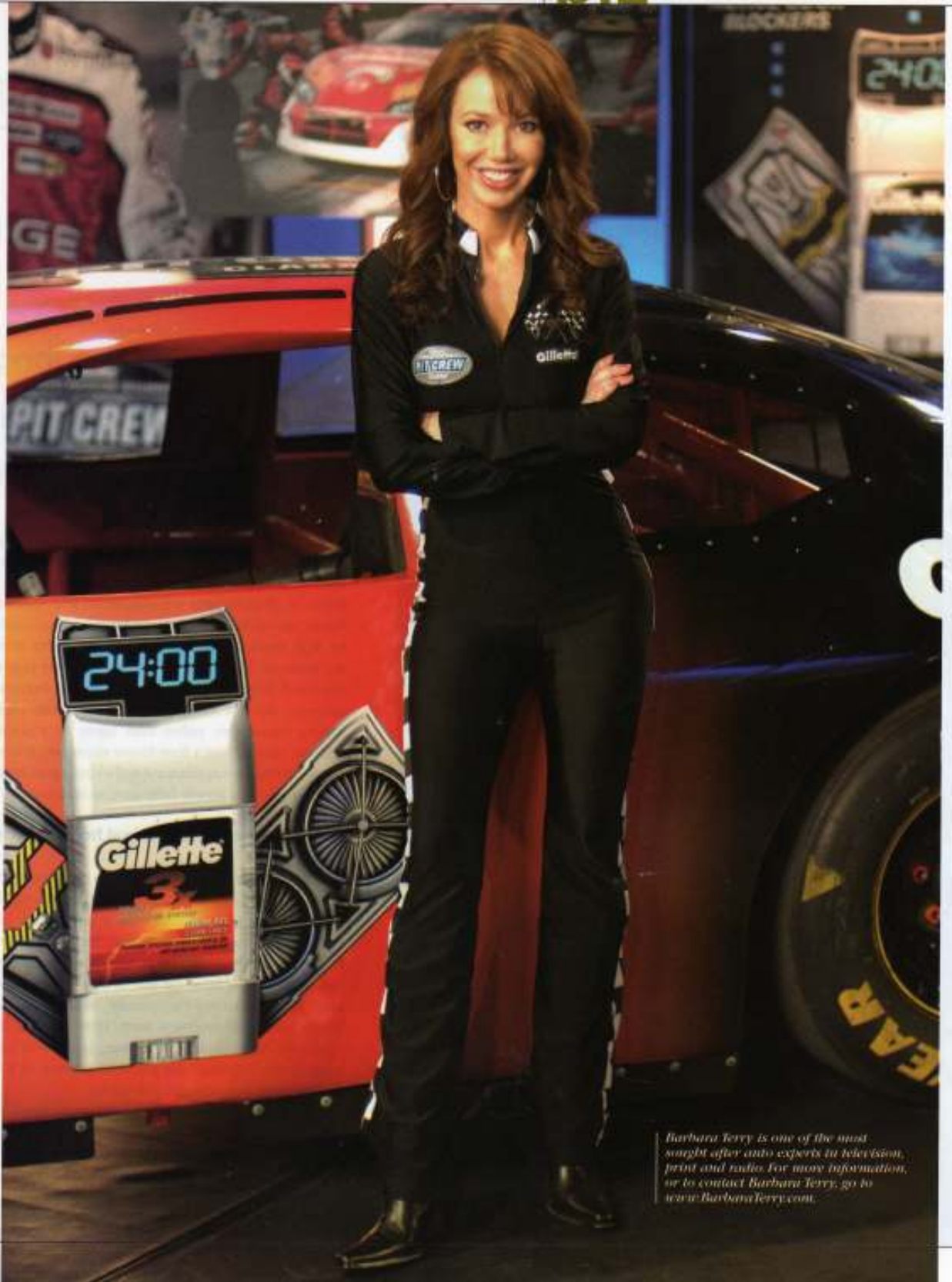


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Barbara Terry is one of the most sought after auto experts in television, print and radio. For more information, or to contact Barbara Terry, go to www.BarbaraTerry.com.

CarCare

Don't be afraid to get your hands dirty

By Kristine Hedlund

When was the last time you popped the hood to check the fluids in your car? How about those brakes? Do you wait to get a tune up until the entire I-17 can hear you slowing down? PW, along with Linda Herold and the West Valley Women, recently teamed up with auto expert Barbara Terry and Goodyear Tires to teach women in the Valley how to perform a few simple car care techniques. We threw some common car problems over to Barbara for her professional advice:

PW: What is your relationship with Goodyear?

Barbara Terry: Goodyear and I teamed up to put on a "Just for Women" Car Care Clinic in Phoenix. The Clinic provided area women a unique opportunity to get some great advice and hands-on experience from me and the Goodyear automotive experts in a friendly, supportive environment. I get such satisfaction from showing women that working on their cars is not an impossible task. By simplifying basic procedures, it really calms the fears that women typically have when it comes to tinkering with their cars.

A friend told me that I am wasting gasoline by not having the proper amount of air in my tires. Is this true? I am not sure what the air pressure should be.

Tires are your one and only connection to the road. All the performance attributes of your vehicle don't mean anything if the tires don't translate them to the road. That being said, the correct tire inflation pressure is critical for good fuel economy, maximum tire life, and proper vehicle handling performance. You should check your tire pressure at least once a month. The recommended pressure number for your vehicle is located on a sticker inside the driver side door or in the owner's manual. Do not go by the maximum inflation pressure stamped on the tire.

Tire pressure is critical for good fuel economy

My car has been overheating. I have added coolant, but it doesn't seem to help.

Not to be taken lightly, overheating can be caused by a variety of things, including a leak in your radiator, a blown or cracked radiator/coolant hose, or a bad thermostat. If your car gets too hot, the motor can lock up, meaning that you will face a serious and costly repair.

On several occasions, I have heard of friends talk about the importance of having a "car survival kit." What exactly should this include?

To ensure that you are well equipped if you experience a breakdown, I recommend that all drivers keep a survival kit in the car. The kit should contain a variety of items, including jumper cables, band-aids, water, a blanket, protein or breakfast bars, aspirin, a pen and paper, scissors, a towel, a flashlight with extra batteries, road flares, an all purpose tool, all fluids (quart of oil, transmission, brake, power steering, windshield wiper fluid, and clutch fluid if you are driving a standard transmission), a can of Fix-a-Flat, and some antifreeze.

My air conditioner is not cold when I am sitting at a stop sign, but it gets colder when I get on the freeway. Is this a mechanical problem?

This is a mechanical problem. Many times this means that there is an issue with an AC line or a pressure problem within your cooling system.

I just had my brakes replaced and they are now squealing. Did they really replace them or am I just being ripped off?

Squeaking brakes could be a result of brake dust collecting on your drums. Having them cleaned will ensure a quieter ride. Additionally, you should always ask to see the parts that were replaced.

I recently heard that there is special motor oil that will allow me to drive longer than the recommended 3,000 miles before getting an oil change.

Synthetic motor oils are becoming more popular because of their ability to provide longer periods between oil changes. I recommend discussing this option with your local service professional before making the switch. Additionally, there are motor oils on the market today that are specially formulated for high mileage vehicles.

I recommend that all drivers keep a survival kit in the car.



My car shakes and vibrates on the freeway. Does this mean my car needs an alignment?

Typically, if your car is shaking and/or vibrating, it means that one or more of your tires is out of balance. You can take your car directly into your local Goodyear retail location and they can quickly fix the problem by checking the balance and condition of your tires. If your car is shaking and/or vibrating when you apply your brakes, this could mean that your brake calipers are grabbing in the front end of your car. This is also something that your local Goodyear retail location can fix for you.

How often should I change my air filter?

You should change out your air filter every 12,000 miles. If you live in a dusty climate, I would recommend changing it every 6,000 miles. This can be done in less than five minutes.

What advice do you have for women who fear entering a service department for the first time?

I recommend asking your friends or family which mechanic they've had good luck with. You can also call your local Better Business Bureau to see which local trusted mechanic they recommend. To be safe, it is always a good idea to ask the service tech to explain to you exactly what repairs are being done; also, ask to see the old parts that were removed or replaced on your car. ■