

# Automobile Theft Costs

## Americans Billions Annually

Alfreda L. Madison  
Special To The Post

Automobile theft has become one of the United States' most spiraling crimes. Its cost is around \$5 billion annually. While the number of cars stolen has greatly increased over the past decade, the recovery of stolen cars has decreased to fewer than two out of ten.

Once automobile theft was just about entirely limited to cities, but in 1979 there was a 12 percent increase in the suburbs, with the sharpest increase

in the South of over 16 percent.

The Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigation, along with the FBI and local and state law enforcement officials, have identified increased organized crime involvement in these trends. They use systematic methods of stealing, retagging and selling popular late model vehicles. They also use the "chop shop" method of dismantling and selling automobile parts. These shops arrange for the stealing of automotive vehicles, which are taken to secret warehouses and stripped by dismantling experts. So within hours thieves are able to provide expensive parts to dishonest operators.

The Senate committee discovered that three factors foster the black market for car parts:

The high price placed on replacement parts by manufacturers, the long delay in obtaining legitimate replacements, and the high labor cost provide good business for these black marketeers.

Amid this astronomical car theft, there are an undetermined number of cases of fraud.

Owners sometimes decide that repair and maintenance costs are so excessive that it is more advantageous to dispose of the car, report it stolen and collect the insurance. Often cars are insured with more than one company, so the policyholder disposes of the car, calls it theft, and collects from each insurer.

Sometimes wrecked cars are salvaged and sold, while the owner uses the regular title certificate to insure this no longer existing car, but later reports it as stolen and collects the insurance.

In some cases owners strip their own cars of

valuable parts, hide the parts and abandon the car until it is located by the police as stolen and stripped of its parts. After the damage insurance claims are settled the owners replace the previously hidden parts. Then, of course, there is the arson fraud, where an owner burns his car and fabricates a claim for the book value.

Some insurance companies are cooperating with the public and law enforcement officials in the prevention of automobile theft. These insurance companies are educating the people through the distribution of information leaflets, community groups and advertisements in newspapers and magazines.

Seminars are conducted to inform patrol officers of current information on laws and court rulings and methods to determine if a car has actually been stolen. These officers are trained to detect cars that are likely to be used in fraudulent car theft.

Insurance companies have also introduced a program called "Operation Pickup." This program trains automobile insurance employees in warning signs of whether or not an automobile has really been stolen.

When owners engage in fraudulent practices to collect insurance claims, the cases become more complex. However, insurance companies have developed profiles of typical fraudulent characteristics, which make it very difficult for the claimant to collect the insurance.

Since automobile theft amounts to such a huge cost, through loss of money, cost of prosecution when caught and inconvenience, car owners should avail themselves of all preventive information.



C.D. Rippey, left, receives gift from Dr. Wilbert Greenfield looks on. Claude Bowman of S&H Company while

### From S&H Company

## JCSU Receives \$2,500 Grant

Johnson C. Smith University was recently awarded a \$2,500 grant from Sperry and Hutchinson (S&H) Company to develop a lecture series on "Black on Black Crime."

The check was presented to University President Wilbert Greenfield by Claude Bowman, area manager for S&H Promotional Services.

Lectures during the series will be held between January and May, 1981.

"Blacks committing crimes against Blacks is a very serious problem in this country today," said C. D. Rippey, director of the lecture series and chairperson of the social science division at Johnson C. Smith.

"We are becoming more aware of the deteriorating effect black on black crime is having on the community, but we should begin to implement specific strategies to minimize these crimes," he added.

Last year, EBONY magazine brought the problem of black crime to the attention of the nation by publishing an article that gave statistics on how black on black crime has skyrocketed in soaring numbers.

These were some of the statistics included within that article:

"More blacks were killed by other blacks in the year 1977 than died in the entire nine years of the Vietnam War."

"According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation, there were 1,639 murder victims in 1977 between the ages of 15 and 19, and 702 of these were black."

"In 1976, 131 of 1,000 black households were burglarized as compared with 84 of every 1,000 white households."

Bowman said that the program was designed to bring prominent and thoughtful speakers to campuses and to help strengthen college and community ties by opening the lectures to the public.

The S&H Company is a diversified corporation engaged in three principal businesses: promotional services (which include S&H Green Stamps); residential and commercial furnishings and insurance services.

Sister Mary Jerome said the grant will be used to help pay for Mercy's \$6.6 million construction project that began in September, 1980. The project includes a 505-space parking deck, a new emergency room, inpatient and outpatient surgery suites, a recovery room, an auditorium and a central stores area. Other departments will be expanded or renovated.

Since 1925, the Duke Endowment has given \$1,592,

## Mercy Hospital Receives

### Duke Endowment Grant

A \$750,000 grant to Mercy Hospital to help pay for new construction has been approved by the trustees of the Duke Endowment.

The grant was announced today by Sister Mary Jerome Spradley, R.S.M., president of Mercy Hospital, Inc.

The initial allotment of \$250,000 was given to the hospital November 28. The other two allotments of \$250,000 each will be made in 1981 and 1982, subject to the availability of funds in future years.

250 (including last month's \$250,000) to Mercy Hospital for capital improvements. The Duke Endowment has given the hospital another \$404,398 for operating expenses over the years.

Mercy Hospital, which will celebrate its 75th anniversary in February, 1981, is a general, acute-care hospital that draws patients from more than 50 counties in North and South Carolina.

A subscription to The Charlotte Post will keep you informed of community news. Call 376-0496

## Commissioners

### Plans New

#### Format

The Mecklenburg Board of County Commissioners has established a format for its regular business meetings that will provide time for the public to be heard on any subject and without being put on the agenda prior to the time of the meeting.

A 15-minute "Public Appearance" period will be reserved at the beginning of each Board meeting, and the public is invited to speak at that time. Each person will be asked to limit his or her remarks to five minutes.

The new format will be especially helpful to persons who wish to bring their concerns to the attention of the Commissioners, but do not choose to be put on the agenda prior to the meeting.

The Commissioners' agenda will continue to include a section for citizens who wish to appear before the Board concerning specific items. Anyone who wishes to be put on the agenda in advance must contact Clerk to the Board Hazel H. Hatley, 374-2472, no later than Thursday noon, six and a half working days before the regularly scheduled meetings.

The Board of County Commissioners holds two business meetings a month, on the first and third Monday of the month. The meetings are held in the Board Room of the Education Center and they begin at 9 a.m. They are televised by WTVI in their entirety and may be seen on Channel 42 the same evening, beginning at 9 p.m.

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## SBA, A&P Sign

### Pact To Help

#### Minority Firms

WASHINGTON, D.C. - A second major company has signed an agreement with the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) to consider awarding service and product supply contracts to certain minority-owned small businesses.

Under the agreement announced this week, the Great Atlantic and Pacific Tea Company, Inc., (A&P), in selecting its suppliers will give special consideration to those socially and economically disadvantaged small firms now involved in SBA's Business Development Program.

Under that program, commonly known as 8(a) after a section of the Small Business Act, SBA is authorized to act as prime contractor for federal work and then subcontract that work to small companies owned by persons who are economically and socially disadvantaged. In almost all such cases, the firms are owned by minorities.

SBA signed a similar agreement with Western Electric Company, Inc., last September.

SBA Administrator A. Vernon Weaver remarked that the agreement with A&P "further expands potential competitive primary markets to selected 8(a) companies. The agreement also is evidence that we have moved from ceremonial support for minority-owned companies to real progress in their behalf."

Deadline for receipt of copy for classified advertising is 5 p.m. Monday. Cancellations must be made before the deadline.

## Untold Facts Of Business Games

In Luanna C. Blagrove's book, "Untold Facts About The Small Business Game: How to Be Competent in Business," she says missing links can create a small business dilemma.

According to the author, the number one problem with small business is that most theory and academic training accents the corporation, whereas, the proprietor and partnership type business, which is the categories small businesses fall into, have been forgotten.

Many business people and their advisors are unaware that operating a business is like playing a game, she said. There are known opponents who are other bosses, business groups and governments; set rules, legal moral and social, and a definite strategy plan.

Business people must understand the functions, roles and duties that involve a particular type of business, be it a proprietor, partnership or corporation, she emphasized.

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## Holidays Depression

Holidays are often a time of depression, loneliness and feeling hurried. People sometimes expect too much of themselves and others.

Mecklenburg Mental Health Services invites you to attend a workshop that will focus on reassessing values, finding ways to live within our traditions and feel a greater sense of the

celebration.

Workshops will be held Thursday, December 11, from 9:30-11:30 a.m.; Tuesday, December 16, from 7-9 p.m.; Wednesday, December 17, from 9:30-11:30 a.m.

Reservations are required. The \$2. workshop fee is payable in advance.

For reservations call 375-3575, ext. 317, between 8 a.m.-12 noon or 1-5 p.m.

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Giant Size (38 Grams)	\$323.00	\$228.00
Extra Large (32 Grams)	\$272.00	\$192.00
Large Ring (26 Grams)	\$221.00	\$156.00
Medium Ring (20 Grams)	\$170.00	\$120.00
Small Ring (13 Grams)	\$110.00	\$78.00
Thin Ring (9 Grams)	\$76.50	\$54.00

**We Buy Wedding Bands**

White Or Yellow Gold	18K	14K
Giant Size (15 Grams)	\$165.00	\$127.50
Extra Large (12 Grams)	\$132.00	\$102.00
Large Ring (8 Grams)	\$88.00	\$68.00
Medium Ring (6 Grams)	\$66.00	\$51.00
Small Ring (5 Grams)	\$55.00	\$42.50
Thin Ring (4 Grams)	\$44.00	\$31.00

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