



The well-worn hood of an old Volkswagen adorns a wall at Community Car Care on the East Side.



“I’ve seen him take the bones out of them and put them back many times. Many people don’t believe me when I tell them he’s blind.”

BILL CALDWELL | friend of Ed Marko’s



Ed Marko works on a car outside the auto shop he owns, at Bryden Road and Holtzman Avenue.

ERIC ALBRECHT | DISPATCH PHOTOS

A feel for cars

By **Aaron Beck**
 THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Crouched behind a 1972 silver Beetle at mid-morning, Ed Marko tilts his head slightly toward the ceiling at Community Car Care. Penny the cat is sitting like a sentinel on the Volkswagen roof when a friend announces his arrival at the East Side auto shop.

“Hello, Craig Dransfield,” Marko greets his former apprentice, then quickly enlists his help.

“Here,” he says, meeting Dransfield with a charge tester. “You remember how this works.”

Marko slowly runs his fingers across the car’s alternator until he finds the generator.

“Right here is ground,” he says. “Negative goes to ground — you know that. When I start the engine, tell me if the generator is reading high.”

Marko cranks the engine.

“It’s way high, Ed!” shouts Dransfield, who still helps Marko occasionally.

Making his way to the back of the car again — right foot always first, the left following carefully — Marko brushes his right hand ever so lightly against the side until he feels the distinctive taillight.

“Bad generator,” Dransfield says.

“Well, dippity-dee,” Marko answers. “That’s all I need to know. I don’t need to know anything else today.”

Another day, another diagnosis for the blind owner of Community Car Care, a 15-year-old business that has yielded his share of loyal customers and the re-sounding admiration of folks familiar with his work.

“When I first met Edward, I thought he was pulling

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Sightless auto mechanic has uncanny sense for his work



While the boss takes care of business during lunchtime, employee Brad Liston feeds Penny the cat.

HURRICANE AFTERMATH

Dr. John performing with heavy heart

By **Aaron Beck**
 THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Dr. John was touring Minneapolis when Hurricane Katrina pounded his hometown of New Orleans.

The past five days have been surreal, “like something out of Salvador Dali,” said the singer, boogie-woogie pianist and Crescent City cultural ambassador.

Dr. John has lived most of his life in New Orleans, as has his extended family.

He has heard from some

relatives; a grandson in his early 20s remains missing.

“It’s the same thing with everybody I’ve talked to,” the 64-year-old said. “You can’t find anything out.”

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He has watched the devastation on hotel-room televisions during his tour, which will stop Sunday at the Hookahville festival near Kirkersville.

“I’ve probably had five hours’

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Dr. John onstage

FILE PHOTO

TELEVISION

Reality stars make the most of fame

By **Molly Willow**
 THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH

Four months ago, they were boozing and frolicking in an indoor pool in front of a national TV audience.

Last week, they were greeting freshmen at Hilliard Davidson High School.

Many reality-show “stars” — including the four cast members from two MTV editions of *The Real World* who visited central Ohio — find the real world far different from

small-screen depictions.

“MTV pretty much tells you, ‘We’ll make you famous, but we aren’t going to make you rich,’” said M.J. Garrett, who, like other participants, was known only by his first name on the series. “There is no doubt: Anywhere I go, I get recognized.”

For the moment, though, they aren’t struggling to make a living.

Garrett and his *Real World: Philadelphia* cast mate Landon Lueck visited Hilliard Davidson on Aug. 24. Two days later, *Real*

World: Austin stars Nehemiah and Johanna (who declined to give their last names, per MTV guidelines for still-running shows) made the trip.

The four were paid \$1,700 apiece for their half-days at the school — from a Smaller Learning Communities grant funded by the U.S. Department of Education, said Steve Estep, assistant principal.

The appearances were among many they have made at

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