

2. 3.  
"PROVIDED TO HARDEE  
CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION

ON 5/9/05 2M  
"PROVIDED TO HARDEE  
CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION  
FOR MAILING."

Bowling Green, FL

May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2005

--FORMAL NOTICE--

Re: Requesting Federal or State Investigation of EDR/SDM Accuracy

Mr. Alberto A. Jimenez, Chief  
Office of Defects Investigation  
N.H.T.S.A., Washington, DC

Forward copy to  
Mr. Michael J. Jordan, Asst.

Dear Mr. Jimenez,

I am in receipt of your letter dated April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2005, concerning safety-related defects/recalls that affect certain 2002 General Motors' vehicles.

On August 17, 2002, I was driving my 2002 Pontiac TransAM (modified to Firehawk) by Superlegal Performance (SLP) and I was involved in a collision that resulted in an airbag deployment event and two fatal victims in a tragic accident.

The information from the EDR/SDM using the Vetronix software was incorrect - inaccurate.<sup>1</sup>

I'm submitting a photocopy of Vetronix EDR/SDM "DATA Limitations" for your review to determine if this evidence can be reviewed immediately because this can affect over 30 million cars that are equipped with this technology.

In what appears to be used in a "criminal<sup>2</sup>" prosecution, the data from a car's black box (EDR/SDM), this data and this information is going to raise "privacy concerns." For example, "What can happen if any item is

<sup>1</sup> The information retrieved from my car was inaccurate and incorrect to such an extent that the speed level was recorded as 114 mph but the physical evidence from the collision was of 56 mph. My car was extremely altered/modified beyond factory specifications.

<sup>2</sup> The incorrect/inaccurate information was used against the owner of the vehicle in a criminal case in violation of the State and Federal laws because the EDR/SDM recorded faulty (flawed) information.

modified on the vehicle?", including even something as little as the size of the tires, rear-end ratio, and/or engine performance is altered, this can affect the accuracy and reading of the Black Box – EDR/SDM, because the PCM of the vehicle control all the sensors of the cars, "Speed, RPM, Percent Throttle & Engine."

This Powertrain Control Module<sup>3</sup> provided false information via the Class 2 data link to the SDM, recorded false – inaccurate – incorrect information from the factory build specifications after modifications are made to the car.

Mr. Jiminez, I respectfully request that the NHTSA<sup>4</sup> conduct a full investigation to determinate the accuracy of the EDR/SDM if modifications are made to the car after the factory build specifications are made.

This is going to prove that the EDR/SDM caused the recorded speed to be inaccurate and affects over 30 million customers/consumers.

This is also of a great public importance to the many pending criminal cases before the nation or which will be pending in the future using the EDR/SDM.

Thank you for your cooperation and attention in this matter, please reply to this letter as a "Formal Notice to Conduct a Full Investigation" concerning the EDR/SDM – accuracy if modifications are made to the car after the factory build specifications are made<sup>5</sup>

---

<sup>3</sup> The Computer (PCM) calculates the vehicle speed based on the stock tire size and rear-end gear, if it is changed (in my case it was) from 16 to 17 tires size and from 3.23 to 4.10 rear-end gears, the computer (PCM) doesn't know how fast the car is really going and that is why the PCM supplied false (flawed) information to the EDR/SDM recorded data and stored internally, because the modification doesn't match the factory specifications.

<sup>4</sup> Your office can contact my attorney, Mr Jack A. Fleischman, P.A. at (561) 585 – 3666 or myself at anytime, requesting the NHTSA, this investigation and interview concerning this new problem with the EDR/SDM, being inaccurate.

<sup>5</sup> This Investigation is needed for the great public importance, safety and limitations as this potential situation affects 30 million consumers.

- a) Modification made to the vehicle after it left the factory can affect the accuracy of the SDM.
- b) What is measured by the sensors of the cars used by the computer to collect and supply information?
- c) The SDM was still evolving and undergoing changes, need to be limited from use by criminal courts.
- d) The EDR/SDM under what federal or state law is applicable raised privacy concerns?
- e) The manufacture tested the EDR/SDM, after modifications being made to the vehicle to determine the accuracy of the EDR.
- f) Has the NHTSA tested a Pontiac TransAM – Firehawk 2002 in a collision at 55 mph?
- g) EDR/SDM – is not accurate after modification had been made, shouldn't be used against the owner of the vehicle in criminal cases.

Sincerely,

C/M 7002-2410-0002-6238-8650 I - May 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005,

cc: Jack A. Fleischman, P.A. Attorney at Law  
USA Today  
Washington Times  
New York Times  
Copy in File

C/M 7003-2260-0004-9696-7467 II  
Second letter requesting Federal or State Investigation  
concerning EDR/SDM, Accuracy, Safety, Limitations,  
Privacy concerns & for the great public importance.  
Dated on May 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2005, formal Notice.

Question:

I would like to find out: If I driving this vehicle  
at 114 MPH, Firebird Firehawk (2002), can the driver  
(I) survive the Accident without any injury in a  
frontal crash accident? Please answer to me at your  
earliest convenience or

## CDR File Information

|                                        |                                                                               |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Vehicle Identification Number          | 0G4K000000000000                                                              |
| Manufacturer                           | Viatronix Corp.                                                               |
| Case Number                            | Sample                                                                        |
| Investigation Date                     | February 18, 2000                                                             |
| Crash Date                             | None                                                                          |
| Filename                               | SAMPLE.CDR                                                                    |
| Saved on                               | 2/18/00 7:18:10 AM                                                            |
| Date check information                 | 2808363D                                                                      |
| Collected with CDR version             | Crash Data Retrieval Tool 1.00                                                |
| Collecting program verification number | 7BA00683                                                                      |
| Reported with CDR version              | Crash Data Retrieval Tool 2.00                                                |
| Reporting program verification number  | A31D1C78                                                                      |
| Interface information                  | Block number: 00<br>Interface version: 00<br>Date: 12-21-99<br>Checksum: 9500 |
| Event(s) recovered                     | Deployment<br>Non-Deployment                                                  |

## \* SDM Data Limitations

### SDM Recorded Crash Events:

There are two types of SDM recorded crash events. The first is the Non-Deployment Event. A Non-Deployment Event is an event severe enough to "wake up" the sensing algorithm but not severe enough to deploy the air bag(s). It contains Pre-Crash and Crash data. The SDM can store up to one Non-Deployment Event. This event can be overwritten by an event that has a greater SDM recorded vehicle forward velocity change. This event will be cleared by the SDM after the ignition has been cycled 260 times.

The second type of SDM recorded crash event is the Deployment Event. It also contains Pre-Crash and Crash data. Deployment events can not be overwritten or cleared from the SDM. Once the SDM has deployed the air bag, the SDM must be replaced.

The data in the non-deployment file will be locked after a deployment, if the non-deployment occurred within 5 seconds before the deployment or a deployment level event occurs within 5 seconds after the deployment.

### SDM Data Limitations:

-SDM Recorded Vehicle Forward Velocity Change is one of the measures used to make air bag deployment decisions. SDM Recorded Vehicle Forward Velocity Change reflects the change in forward velocity that the sensing system experienced during the recorded portion of the event. This data should be examined in conjunction with other available physical evidence from the vehicle and scene when assessing occupant or vehicle forward velocity change. The SDM records the first 300 milliseconds of Vehicle Forward Velocity Change after Algorithm Enable. The maximum value that can be recorded for Vehicle Forward Velocity Change is 50 MPH.

-SDM Recorded Vehicle Speed accuracy can be affected if the vehicle has had the tire size or the final drive axle ratio changed from the factory build specifications.

-Brake Switch Circuit Status indicates the status of the brake switch circuit.

-Pre-Crash Electronic Data Validity Check Status indicates "Data Invalid" if the SDM does not receive a valid message for any of the four Pre-Crash data parameters (Vehicle Speed, Engine Speed, Percent Throttle, and Brake Switch Circuit Status).

-Driver's Belt Switch Circuit Status indicates the status of the driver's seat belt switch circuit.

-The Time between Non-Deployment and Deployment Events is displayed in seconds. If the time between the two events is greater than five seconds, "N/A" is displayed in place of the time.

-If power to the SDM is lost during a crash event, all or part of the crash record may not be recorded.

### SDM Data Source:

All SDM recorded data is measured, calculated, and stored internally, except for the following:

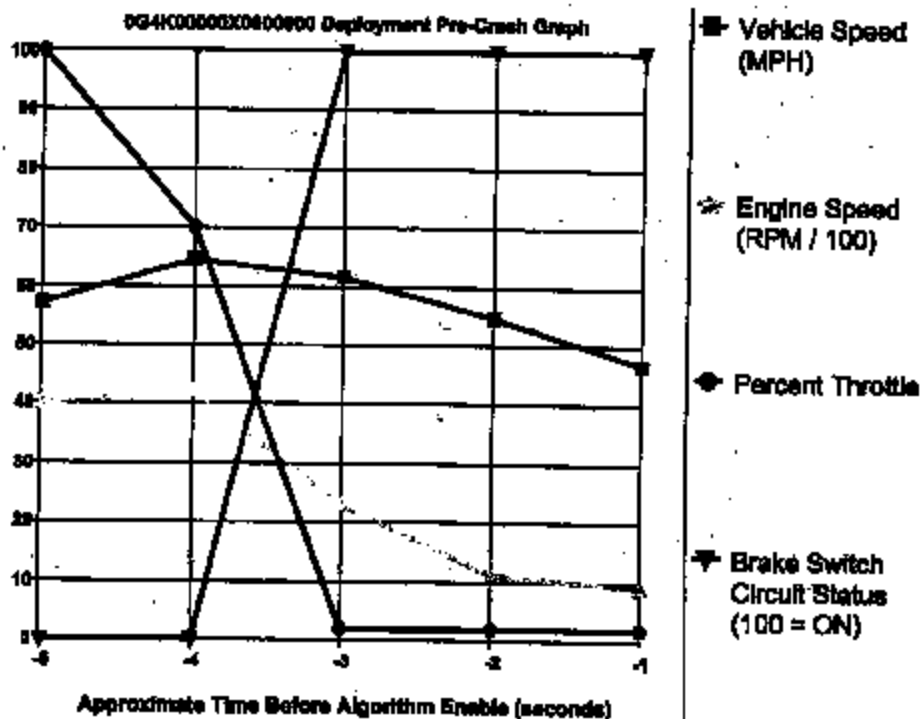
-Vehicle Speed, Engine Speed, and Percent Throttle data are transmitted once a second by the Powertrain Control Module (PCM), via the Class 2 data link, to the SDM.

-Brake Switch Circuit Status data is transmitted once a second by either the ABS module or the PCM, via the Class 2 data link, to the SDM. Depending on vehicle option content, the Brake Switch Circuit Status data may not be available.

-The Driver's Belt Switch Circuit is wired directly to the SDM.

# System Status At Deployment

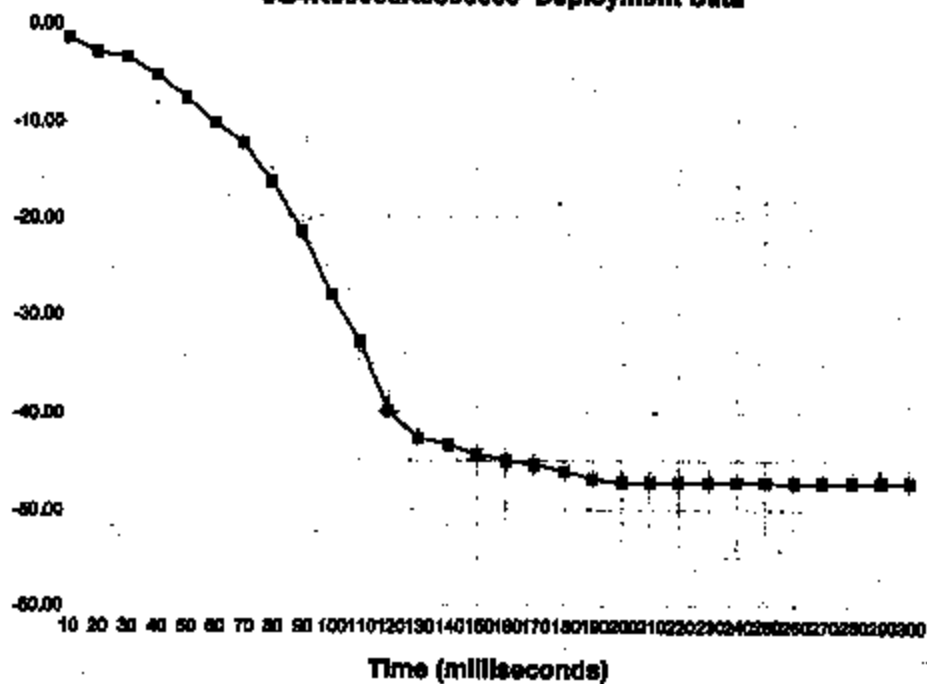
|                                                                      |           |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| SIR Warning Lamp Status                                              | OFF       |
| Driver's Belt Switch Circuit Status                                  | UNBUCKLED |
| Ignition Cycles At Deployment                                        | 187       |
| Ignition Cycles At Investigation                                     | 213       |
| Time From Algorithm Enable to Deployment Command Criteria Met (msec) | 18.78     |
| Time Between Non-Deployment And Deployment Events (sec)              | N/A       |



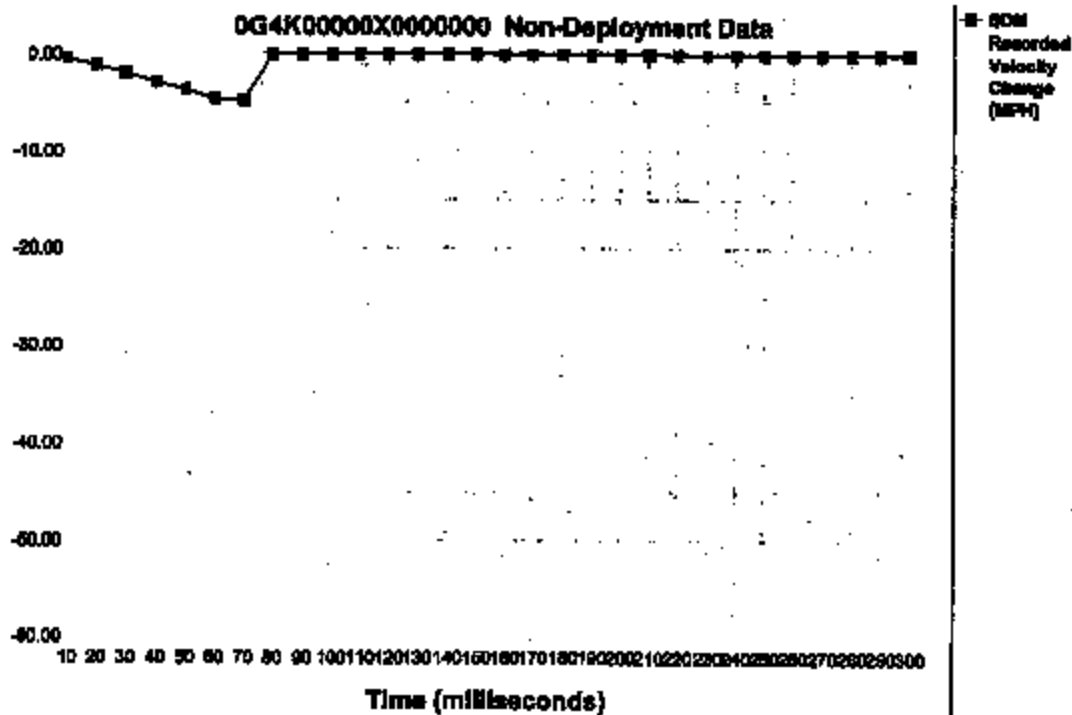
| Seconds Before AE | Vehicle Speed (MPH) | Engine Speed (RPM) | Percent Throttle | Brake Switch Circuit Status |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------------------|
| -5                | 67                  | 4032               | 100              | OFF                         |
| -4                | 65                  | 4160               | 70               | OFF                         |
| -3                | 62                  | 2304               | 2                | ON                          |
| -2                | 55                  | 1088               | 2                | ON                          |
| -1                | 47                  | 896                | 2                | ON                          |

Continua  
(2)

Recorded  
Velocity  
Change  
(MPH)

[illegible]





| Time (milliseconds)            | 10    | 20    | 30    | 40    | 50    | 60    | 70    | 80   | 90   | 100  | 110  | 120  | 130  | 140  | 150  |
|--------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Recorded Velocity Change (MPH) | -0.44 | -1.10 | -1.97 | -3.07 | -3.73 | -4.81 | -4.85 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| Time (milliseconds)            | 160   | 170   | 180   | 190   | 200   | 210   | 220   | 230  | 240  | 250  | 260  | 270  | 280  | 290  | 300  |
| Recorded Velocity Change (MPH) | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00  | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |



**This page displays all the data retrieved from the air bag module. It contains data that is not converted by this program.**

CG-400000000000

B7F8: 00 00 00 B0 11 7F AA FF

## Comments

This is a sample file.

Note: comments can be updated after a file has been saved.

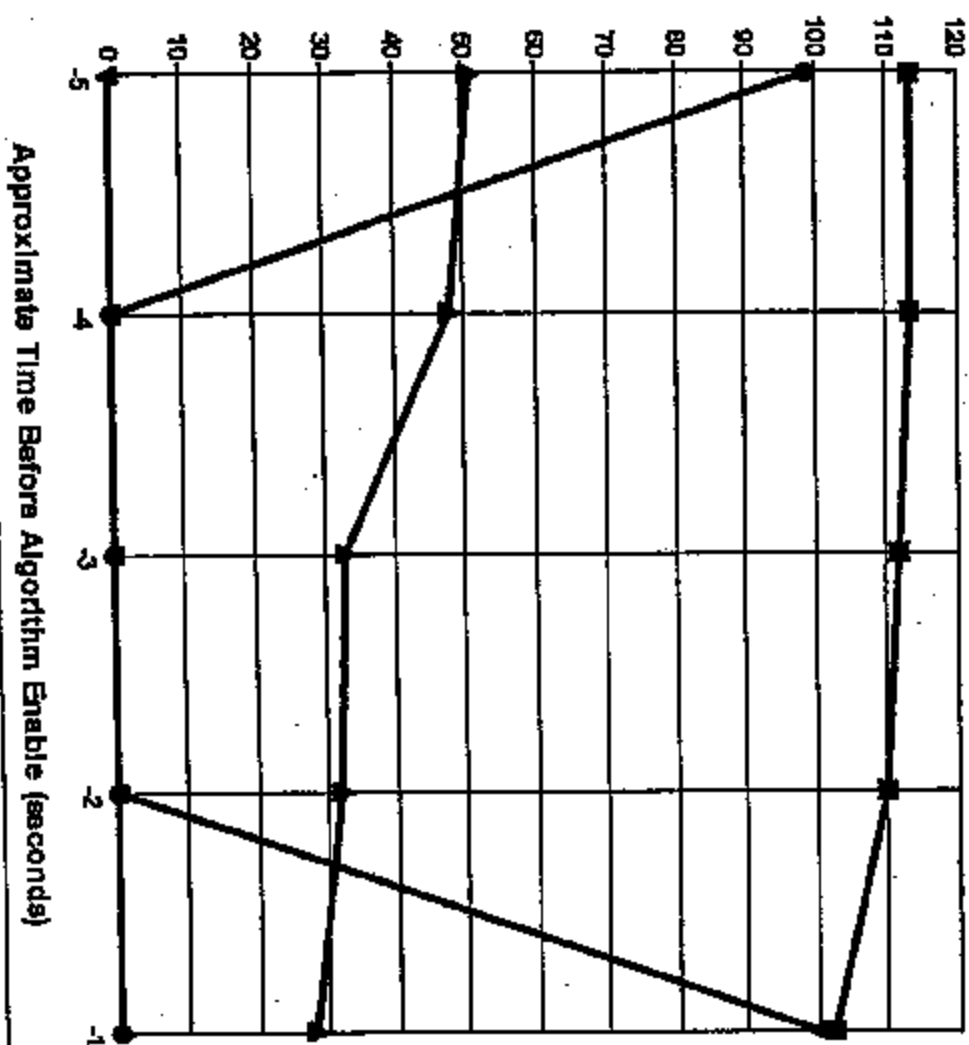
6710/22 672213605 8546m51bus11 Deployment

|                                                                      |                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| SIR Warning Lamp Status                                              | OFF                    |
| Driver's Belt Switch Circuit Status                                  | BUCKLED                |
| Passenger Front Air Bag Suppression Switch Circuit Status            | Air Bag Not Suppressed |
| Ignition Cycles At Deployment                                        | 587                    |
| Ignition Cycles At Investigation                                     | 588                    |
| Maximum SDM Recorded Velocity Change (MPH)                           | -39.02                 |
| Algorithm Enable to Maximum SDM Recorded Velocity Change (msec)      | 112.5                  |
| Time Between Near Deployment And Deployment Events (sec)             | 2                      |
| Time From Algorithm Enable to Deployment Command Criteria Met (msec) | 12.5                   |

|                              |       |       |       |       |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |        |     |     |     |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----|-----|-----|
| SDM Recorded Velocity Change | -0.44 | -2.83 | -5.14 | -9.55 | -14.92 | -21.08 | -28.33 | -28.40 | -32.03 | -33.79 | -36.42 | -37.74 | N/A | N/A | N/A |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|-----|-----|-----|

| Velocity Speed (MPH) | Endline Speed (MPH) | Delta | Delta (MPH) | Delta (MPH) | Delta (MPH) | Delta (MPH) | Delta (MPH) | Delta (MPH) | Delta (MPH) | Delta (MPH) | Delta (MPH) | Delta (MPH) | Delta (MPH) | Delta (MPH) | Delta (MPH) |
|----------------------|---------------------|-------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| -5                   | 114                 | 5056  | 99          | OFF         |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| -4                   | 114                 | 4800  | 0           | OFF         |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| -3                   | 112                 | 3328  | 0           | OFF         |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| -2                   | 110                 | 3200  | 0           | OFF         |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |
| -1                   | 103                 | 2816  | 0           | ON          |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |             |

2G2F/V22G222136685 Deployment Pre-Crash Graph



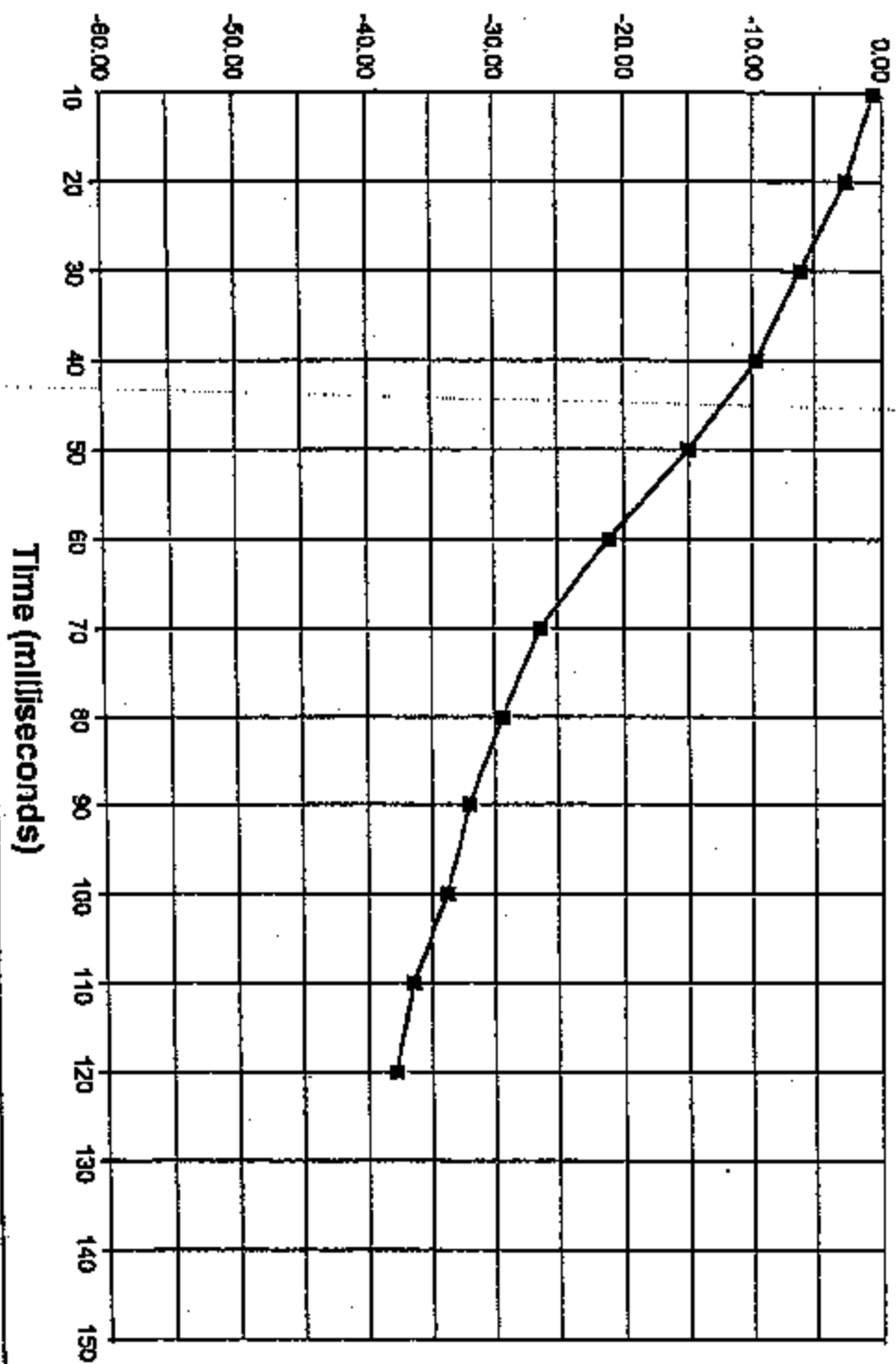
Vehicle Speed (MPH)

Engine Speed (RPM / 100)

Percent Throttle

Brake Switch Circuit Status (100 = ON)

# 2G2FV22G222136685 Deployment Data



SDM  
Recorded  
Velocity  
Change  
(MPH)



**15** A new development from Beltech was used in the Drop Shop's rig. This particular notch was already welded in and set up when our team of technicians arrived. The Beltech weld-in Monitor Notch provides the greatest clearance without cutting open your bed. Of course, for the non-welding, Beltech still offers its bolt-in C-notch that works just as well. In addition to the notch, the Drop Shop used Beltech's flip kit and removed all but one leaf from the springs.



**16** With the removal of all but one leaf out back, the bed would have very little carrying capacity. The idea is that the leaf will support the weight of the pickup, and the airbags will compensate for any load placed in the bed — a leveling system of sorts. This "bag kit" is also new from Beltech and complements its existing line of helper airbags.



**17** A necessity in changing tire and wheel combos is re-programming the stock computer. Since the Speedo is computer-controlled it will have to be adjusted for any difference in overall wheel diameter. In addition to the necessary Speedo adjustment, Hypertech's Power Programmer allows adjustments in shift points, thermostat, timing, and speed governor.

Special Advertising Section

## GET FASTER SHIFTS, QUICKER ACCELERATION

Improve Your Transmission At The Push Of A Button With  
Hypertech's Self-Contained Automotive Computer

You already know that Hypertech's Power Programmer II™ maximizes your vehicle's performance with exclusive dyno-developed and road-tested Power Tuning™ programs. But did you know that the same technology lets you adjust your electronically controlled automatic transmission — at the push of a button?

With the Power Programmer III, you can electronically adjust the shift firmness for faster acceleration while reducing the slippage during gear changes, which means longer transmission life! That's important for quicker acceleration, pulling heavy loads on the highway, or exploring off-road.

You can also adjust the transmission shift points to work properly with non-stock tire sizes and/or revised gear ratios. Here's how it works: The computer calculates your vehicle's speed based on the stock tire size and current gear. If you have changed the tire diameter or the revised gear ratio, the computer doesn't know how fast your truck is really going. It may signal the transmission to upshift too soon, or to hold a gear too long. With the Power Programmer III, you have the power to customize the shift points in every gear.

Just plug the Power Programmer III into your truck's underdash diagnostic port, answer a few simple "yes/no" questions, and the Power Programmer III does the rest. And, you can change your options or restore the stock tuning whenever you want.

Check out the other adjustable features of the Power Programmer III. With its tuning capabilities, Hypertech's Power Programmer III is like a complete speed shop that you can hold in your hand!



Power Tuning For More  
Horsepower And Torque For  
Both Regular And Premium  
Octane Gasoline\*\*



Raise Vehicle  
Top-Speed Limiter



Raise Engine  
RPM "Rev" Limiter



Recalibrate Speedometer/  
Odometer Readings

\* Adjustable features shown on engine, model and year in vehicle.

\*\* "Duo Tune" Power Tuning is for select GM and Ford vehicles.

Hypertech Power Tuning Products are available  
for 1991-2002 GM vehicles and 1986-2001 Fords.  
Call 800.382.8888 or visit us at [www.hypertech-inc.com](http://www.hypertech-inc.com)



17 hp @ 5600 RPM

20 ft./lbs. torque @ 1500 RPM

Only found in 11 states and a few territories

**HYPERTECH**

Lines and Fittings

One of 10 **Professionals**  
**Got Their Lines from**

Professional racers know that the right lines and fittings make the difference between cars that finish in the winners circle and ones that don't.

**CLASSIC  
TUBE**



**CLASSIC TUBE**  
800.882.3711

www.classictube.com

Best Quality Best Price

Tubing • Stainless Steel • Original Steel • Aluminum  
Fittings • Stainless Steel • OEM Color Coated Steel  
Spring Wires • Ground Guard • Stainless Steel & OEM Steel  
Bushing Buses • Fuel Injection • Power Steering • Brake  
Lines • Everything to complete the job & Conquester Rite

USA CAN MEX JPN

*Firehawk*

# Certificate of Birth

Province of Quebec



|                                                                                                                                                                                      |  |                                                                                                     |  |                                                         |  |                                            |  |                                     |  |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Vehicle Name<br>(Last) <b>Pontiac</b>                                                                                                                                             |  | (First) <b>SLP</b>                                                                                  |  | (Middle) <b>Firehawk</b>                                |  | 2. Date of Birth<br><b>02/26/2002</b>      |  | 3. Year of Birth<br><b>2002</b>     |  |
| 4. Base (exterior color)<br><b>Silver</b>                                                                                                                                            |  | 5. SLP Birth #<br><b>0761</b>                                                                       |  | 6. Place of Birth<br><b>SLP Assembly Plant</b>          |  | 6A. Location<br><b>Lasalle, Quebec</b>     |  | 6B. Country<br><b>Canada</b>        |  |
| 7. Gender<br><b>Firebird</b>                                                                                                                                                         |  | 8. Weight<br><b>3439 lbs.</b>                                                                       |  | 9. Length<br><b>193.5"</b>                              |  | 10. File Number, VIN<br><b>2G2FV22G222</b> |  |                                     |  |
| 11. Footprint<br>                                                                                  |  | 12. Delivered By<br><b>LaSalle Plant Employees</b>                                                  |  | 12A. Mother<br><b>SLP Engineering</b>                   |  | 12B. Father<br><b>Ed Hamburger</b>         |  | 12C. Model by<br><b>EDWIN MAFOS</b> |  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                      |  | 13. Birthmark<br> |  | 14. Adoption Agency<br><b>SHEEHAN PONTIAC-GMC, INC.</b> |  |                                            |  |                                     |  |
|                                                                                                                                                                                      |  |                                                                                                     |  | 14A. City, State<br><b>LIGHTHOUSE POINT, FL</b>         |  |                                            |  |                                     |  |
| 15. Original Installed Options:<br><b>Base 345 Alterations, Spoiler, 5-Spoke Chrome Wheels, Bilstein Suspension, Auburn Differential, Floor Mats, Deck Mat, Portfolio, Car Cover</b> |  |                                                                                                     |  |                                                         |  |                                            |  |                                     |  |

This Certifies that the above is a true and accurate copy of the facts recorded on the birth certificate of the vehicle named herein as filed with SLP Engineering, Inc.

In attendance or witness thereof:

*Ed Hamburger*

Ed Hamburger, President, SLP Engineering

*Terry C. Maxwell*

Terry Maxwell, President, SLP Canada



## 2002 Firehawk



## 2002 Firehawk STANDARD CONTENT

### WHAT SPECIFIC OPTIONS ARE REQUIRED TO ORDER A FIREHAWK?

- V87X Trans Am Coupe, V87X Trans Am Convertible, or V87X with W88 Formula Option
- WU6 (specifies Firehawk Package, also adds GM RPO V12: Power Steering Cooler)
- QLC Tires and 16" wheels
  - ▼ Firehawk is available in Arctic White, 10U; Pewter Metallic, 11U; Silver Metallic, 13U; Navy Blue Metallic, 28U; Black, 41U; Sunset Orange Metallic, 71U; and Bright Red, 81U exterior colors (Subject to availability).
  - ▼ Firehawk package cannot be ordered with any of the following GM RPO options: W86 Ram Air Package, P05 Chroma-Plated Aluminum Wheels or Goodyear Eagle F1 tires.

### STANDARD FIREHAWK CONTENT (Requires Option Code WU6)

Interim 2002 Introduction: SLP's High Flow Induction System adds 10 horsepower for 345 total hp and 350 ft./lbs. of torque\*

- 335 horsepower, 5.7L, LS1 V8 engine with 350 ft./lbs. of torque
- Firehawk exclusive, composite hood with functional air scoops
- Firehawk exclusive, hood-mounted heat extractors
- Firehawk exclusive, underhood forced-air induction system
- Firehawk front fascia badge
- Cat-Back, Stainless Steel, Performance Exhaust System with twin dual tips

- Upgraded suspension components
- 17"x9" lightweight aluminum painted wheels
- Firestone Firehawk 275/40ZR17 SZ50 EP 17" tires
- Firehawk exterior graphics on doors and rear fascia
- Dash plaque and two Firehawk key fobs
- Available on all Trans Am and Formula models

M.S.R.P. \$3,999.00--M.S.R.P.  
\$4,299.00\*

\*On approximately 09/01/01, Firehawk's RPO WL6 price will increase to \$ 4,299.00, reflecting the addition of SLP's new High Flow Induction System on all Firehawk models. The system will boost powertrain performance to 345 horsepower versus the 335 hp standard on all Firehawks built prior to 09/01/01.



## 2002 Firehawk OPTIONAL CONTENT

### OPTIONAL FIREHAWK CONTENT

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                            |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| <p>● <b>All-New Rear Decklid Spoiler</b><br/>SLP offer a rear decklid spoiler that includes an extra wide center high mounted stoplight. (n/a on TA convertible or Formula models)</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p><b>\$899.00</b> US</p>  |
| <p>● <b>Auburn, High Torque, Performance Differential w/AAM cast aluminum cooling cover</b><br/>Combination of leading edge Auburn Gear and American Axle Manufacturing technology enhances traction and helps reduce differential operating temperatures under certain driving conditions. System detects variance in the gripping force of each rear tire and redistributes the engine load as road conditions change, thereby enhancing vehicle performance and stability.</p> | <p><b>\$899.00</b> US</p>  |
| <p>● <b>Bilstein Ultra Performance Suspension System</b><br/>Offers handling that, according to Car and Driver magazine, "...works smarter, not harder...We're hard pressed to think of a car that rides better on 17-inch tires..." Motor Trend magazine added this assessment. "Handling? How about .91g on the skidpad?..." (n/a with 1LE Suspension Package)</p>                                                                                                              | <p><b>\$1099.00</b> US</p> |

- **17"x 9" Chrome-Plated, Five-Spoke Aluminum Wheels** **\$799.00** US  
SLP offers an improved chrome-plated wheel for 2000 that includes a three-year, 36,000-mile warranty coverage on finish.
- **1LE Suspension Package** **\$1899.00** US  
This performance suspension system, now being offered exclusively by SLP, includes double adjustable Koni Shocks. (n/a on convertible or with Bilstein Suspension Package)
- **Premium front floor mats with embroidered Firehawk logo** **\$99.00** US  
Heavy duty, custom fitted carpeting with aggressive nubs to hold mats firmly in place.
- **Custom car cover with silk-screened Firehawk graphics** **\$159.00** US  
Premium grade, breathable, water-resistant fabric. Provides protection from the elements for today's hottest collectible car. Includes: cable, lock, tote bag with silk-screened Firehawk graphics.



Still exhilarating after all these years, the Pontiac Firebird enters the 2002 model year as one of the most exciting cars in GM's division. Several once-optional features are now standard for 2002, adding even more value to the pulse-pounding package.

The 5.7L LS1 introduced leading-edge technologies to the grand tradition of the GM small-block V8, including all-aluminum construction, a thermoplastic intake manifold. Measured by mass, package size, performance or cost to the customer, the 5.7L LS1 matches the world's best overhead cam V8s. With this new small block, those who claimed cam-in-block engines could not meet the demands of a new decade were proven patently wrong. Formula and Trans Am drivers get 310 horsepower and 340 lb-ft of torque, while Trans Am drivers opting for Ram Air will enjoy 325 horsepower and 350 lb-ft. Available transmissions for the LS1 include a six-speed manual or four-speed automatic.

#### New For 2002:

- Power antenna now standard on all models
- Power remote mirrors now standard on all models
- Power automatic door locks now standard on all models
- Power windows with "express-down" driver's side window controls now standard on all models
- Power steering cooler standard on all V8 engines
- Removable hatch roof with sunshades now standard on Formula Coupes
- Remote keyless entry now standard on Formula Coupes
- Six-way power driver's seat now standard on Formula Coupes
- Audible theft deterrent system now standard on Formula Coupes

## Specifications

|                                  |                                     |                       |                                                                 |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Year                             | 2002                                | Origin                | Not Available                                                   |
| Make                             | Pontiac                             | Base Price            | \$27 490 USD                                                    |
| Model                            | Firebird Trans Am Coupe             | Production            | Not Available                                                   |
| <b>Engine &amp; Transmission</b> |                                     | <b>Body / Chassis</b> |                                                                 |
| Position                         | Front Longitudinal                  | Drive Wheels          | RWD                                                             |
| Configuration                    | LS1 V8                              | Curb Weight           | 1585 kg / 3494 lbs                                              |
| Valvetrain                       | OHV 2 Valves / Cyl                  | Length                | 4920 mm / 193.7 in                                              |
| Displacement                     | 5670 cc / 346.0 cu in               | Width                 | 1890 mm / 74.4 in                                               |
| Power                            | 231.2 kw / 310.0 hp @ 5200 rpm      | Height                | 1316 mm / 51.8 in                                               |
| Torque                           | 460.98 nm / 340.0 ft lbs @ 4000 rpm | Wheelbase             | 2568 mm / 101.1 in                                              |
| Bore                             | 99 mm / 3.9 in                      | Front Track           | F 1542 mm / 60.7 in                                             |
| Stroke                           | 92 mm / 3.62 in                     | Rear Track            | R 1539 mm / 60.6 in                                             |
| Redline                          | 6000                                | Steering              | Rack & Pinion w/Power Assist                                    |
| HP / Liter                       | 54.67 bhp per litre                 | Body / Frame          | Unit Steel w/Composite Front Fenders, Roof, Doors, Hatch, Front |
| HP / Curb Weight                 |                                     | Front Brakes          | Vented Discs w/Power Assist & ABS                               |
| Gear Type                        | 6-Speed Manual                      | Front Brake Size      | F 302 mm / 11.9 in                                              |
| 1st Gear Ratio                   | 2.86:1                              | Rear Brakes           | Vented Discs w/Power Assist & ABS                               |

|                   |               |                  |                                                                        |
|-------------------|---------------|------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 2nd Gear Ratio    | 1.78:1        | Rear Brake Size  | R 305 mm / 12.0 in                                                     |
| 3rd Gear Ratio    | 1.30:1        | Front Wheels     | Not Available                                                          |
| 4th Gear Ratio    | 1.00:1        | Rear Wheels      | Not Available                                                          |
| 5th Gear Ratio    | 0.74:1        | Front Tires      | P245/50ZR18                                                            |
| 6th Gear Ratio    | 0.50:1        | Rear Tires       | P245/50ZR18                                                            |
| 7th Gear Ratio    | Not Available | Front Suspension | SLA w/Coil Over Monotube<br>Gas-Charged Shocks, Tubular<br>Stabilizer  |
| Final Drive Ratio | 3.42:1        | Rear Suspension  | Salisbury Axle w/Torque Arm,<br>Trailing Arm, Track Bar, Coil<br>Sprin |

## Performance

|                      |               |              |               |
|----------------------|---------------|--------------|---------------|
| Top Speed            | Not Available | 0 - 60 mph   | Not Available |
| 0 - 1/4 mile         | Not Available | 0 - 100 mph  | Not Available |
| Lateral Acceleration | Not Available | EPA City/Hwy | 19 / 31 mpg   |

## User Comments

|                                                                                            |           |                                |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|--------------------------------|
| Good old piece of #%%&&!                                                                   | 9 replies | Started by Vroomm              |
| Which is faster, and better in your opinion, The A Pontiac Trans Am or a Pontiac Firehawk? | 2 replies | Started by IronMan38           |
| Which is faster, and better in your opinion, The A Pontiac Trans Am or a Pontiac Firehawk? | 0 replies | Started by IronMan38           |
| Which is faster, and better in your opinion, The A Pontiac Trans Am or a Pontiac Firehawk? | 0 replies | Started by IronMan38           |
| Why get a standard Trans-Am when you can get a standard Formula?                           | 5 replies | Started by 91FirebirdV8Formula |
| More...                                                                                    |           |                                |

SHESHAN PONTIAC-GMC, INC.  
2800 N. FEDERAL HWY  
LIGHTHOUSE POINT, FL 33064-6888  
GM BuyPower Manager: Scott Ahrens  
Phone: (864) 943-2250 Fax: (864) 247-2211



VIN: 2G2PV22G222136685

Division of General Motors Corporation

## 2002 FIREBIRD TRANS AM

5.7 LITER VPI V6 ENGINE  
AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION

EXTERIOR SILVER

INTERIOR BLACK

### STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Items Featured Below are included at NO EXTRA CHARGE  
in the Standard Vehicle Price Shown at Right

- |                                |                             |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>POWERTRAIN MECH:</b>        | ■ REMOVABLE HATCH ROOF      |
| ■ 5.7 LITER VPI V6 ENGINE      | <b>INTERIOR:</b>            |
| ■ 4-SPEED AUTO TRANSMISSION    | ■ AIR CONDITIONING          |
| ■ P245/32ZR16 BSW              | ■ DELCO HTE AM/FM STEREO    |
| ALL WEATHER TIRES              | RADIO                       |
| ■ REAR-WHEEL DRIVE W/LIMITED   | W/CD PLAYER, GRAPHIC EQUAL. |
| SLIP TORSEN DIFFERENTIAL       | &                           |
| ■ SHORT/LONG ARM (SLA) FRT     | MONSOON 10-SPEK PREMIUM     |
| SUSP                           | SOUND                       |
| ■ MONOTUBE DE CARBON SHOCKS    | ■ POWER WINDOWS AND DOOR    |
| ■ DUAL OUTLET EXHAUST          | LOCKS                       |
| <b>SAFETY SECURITY:</b>        | ■ CRUISE CONTROL            |
| ■ DUAL FRONTAL AIR BAGS        | ■ ELECTRIC REAR WINDOW      |
| ■ 4-WHEEL ANTILOCK BRAKES-     | DEFOGGER                    |
| W/4 WHEEL POWER DISC           | ■ REMOTE KEYLESS ENTRY      |
| <b>BRAKES</b>                  | ■ STEERING WHEEL RADIO      |
| ■ PASS-KEY II THEFT DETECT SYS | CONTROLS                    |
| ■ CONTENT THEFT ALARM          | ■ POWER 4-WAY DRIVER'S SEAT |
|                                | ■ LEATHER SEATING SURFACES  |
| <b>EXTERIOR:</b>               | LMT WARRANTY-SEE DLR FOR    |
| ■ AERO APPEARANCE PEG/POG      | DETAIL                      |
| LAMPS                          |                             |
| ■ 16" ALUMINUM WHEELS          |                             |
| ■ UPLEVEL REAR DECK SPOILER    |                             |
| ■ POWER ANTENNA/POWER          |                             |
| MIRRORS                        |                             |

MANUFACTURER'S SUGGESTED RETAIL PRICE  
**STANDARD VEHICLE \$28,025.00**  
**PRICE**

|                                   |           |
|-----------------------------------|-----------|
| Options Installed by Manufacturer |           |
| TIRES, P245/32ZR16 PERFORMANCE    | NO CHARGE |
| REAR PERFORM AXLE, 3.23 RATIO     | \$900.00  |
| OPTION GROUP - 1SA                | NO CHARGE |
| 50-STATE LOW EMISSION VEHICLE     | NO CHARGE |

TOTAL OPTIONS \$900.00

TOTAL VEHICLE & OPTIONS \$28,925.00

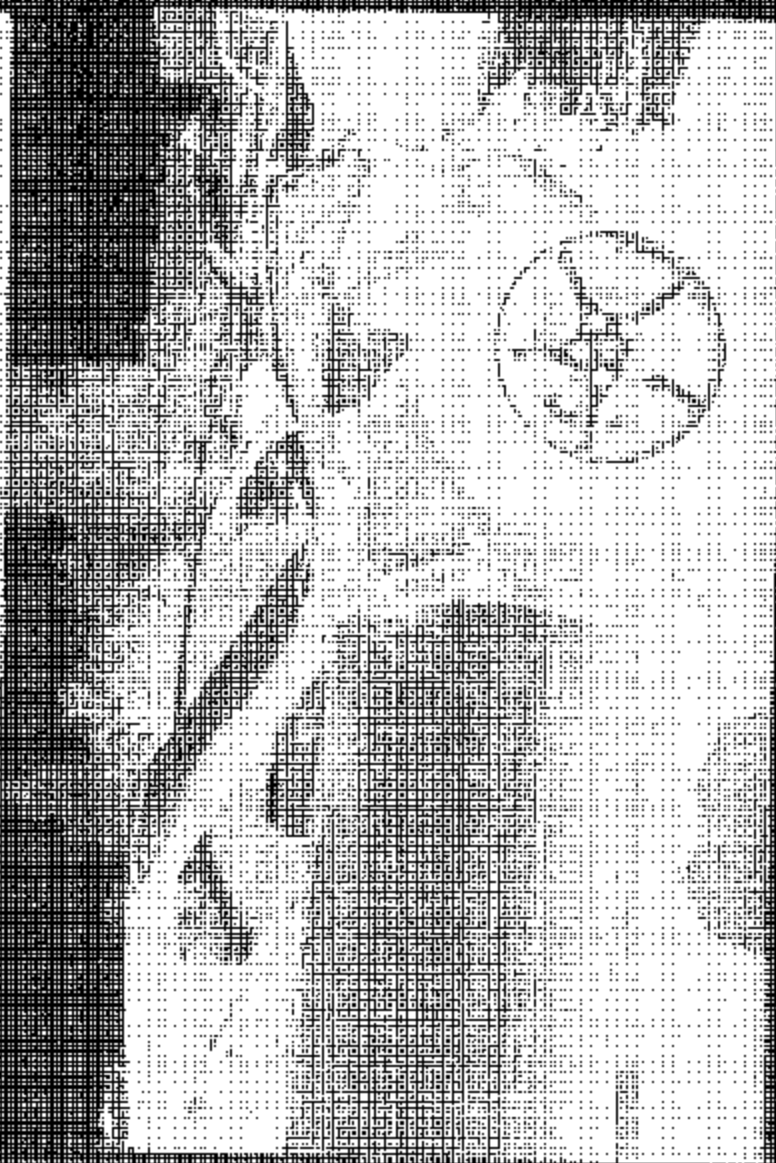
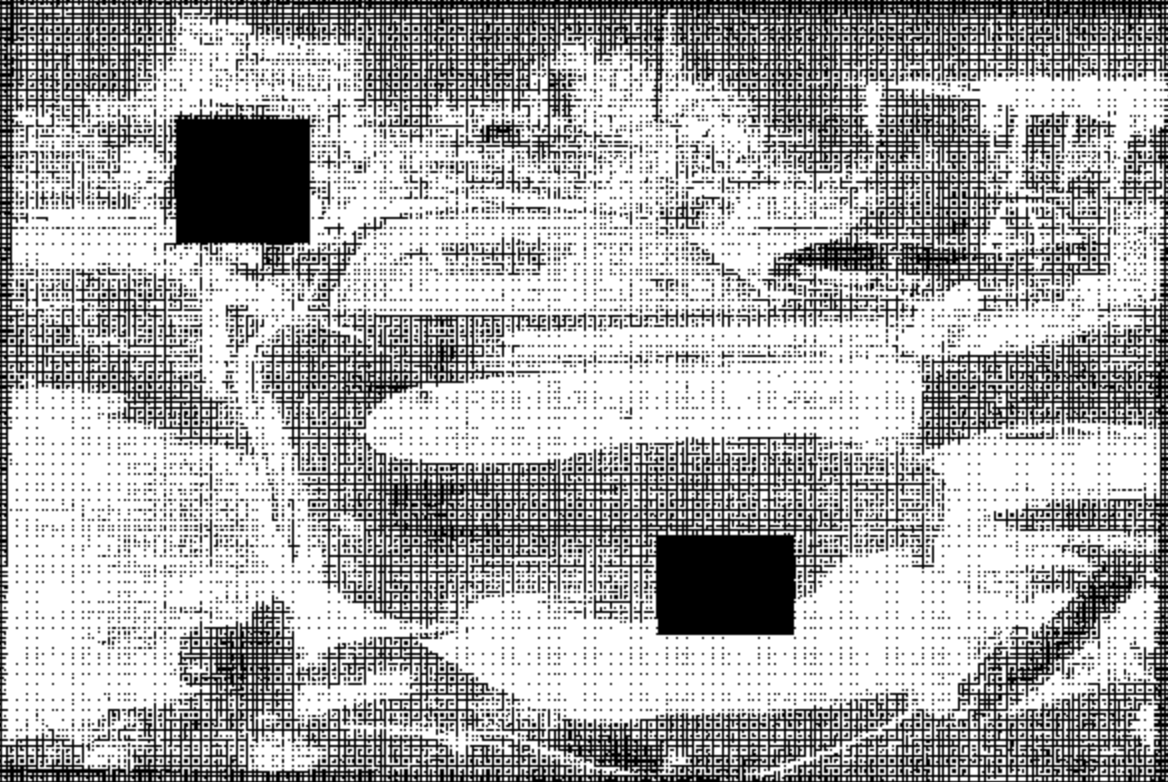
DESTINATION CHARGE \$375.00

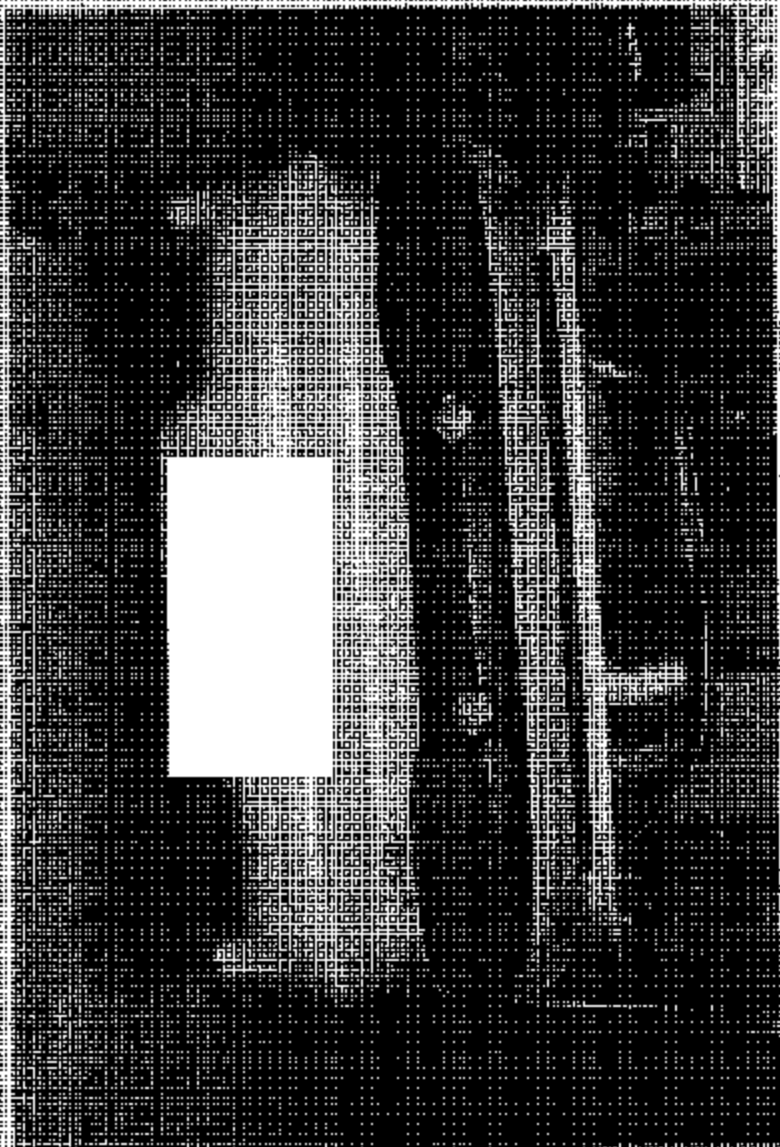
**TOTAL VEHICLE \$28,900.00**  
**PRICE\***

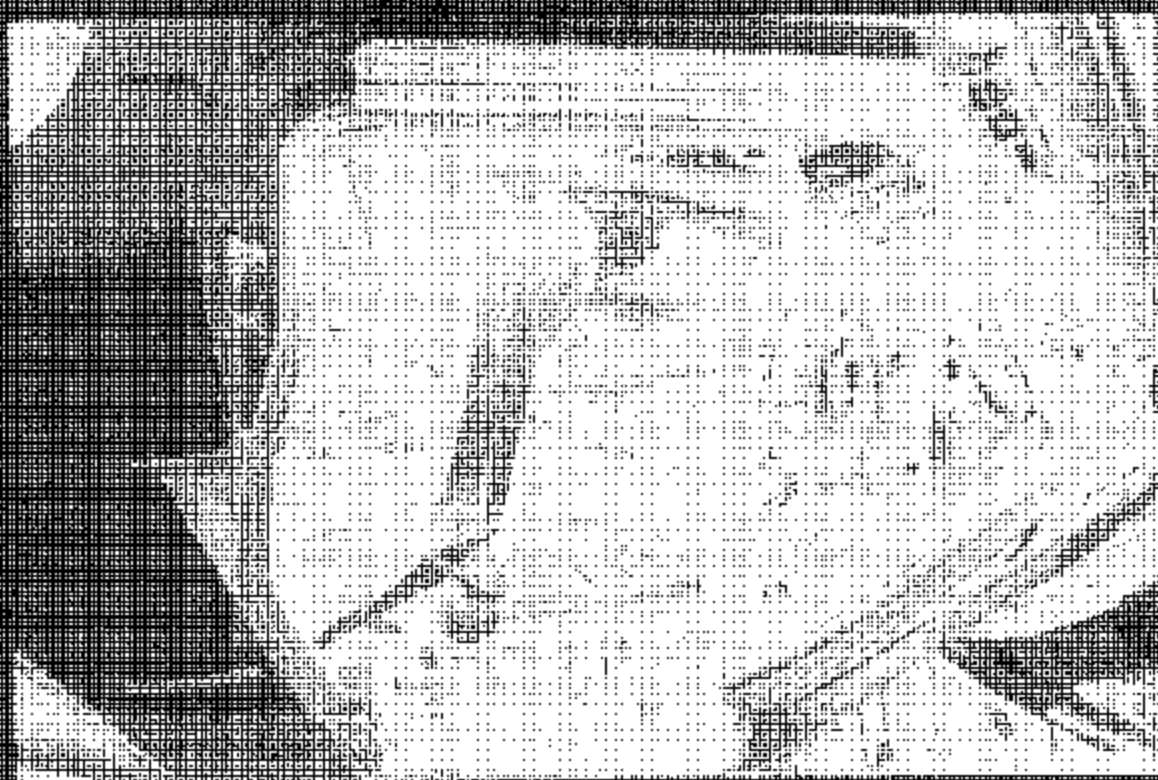
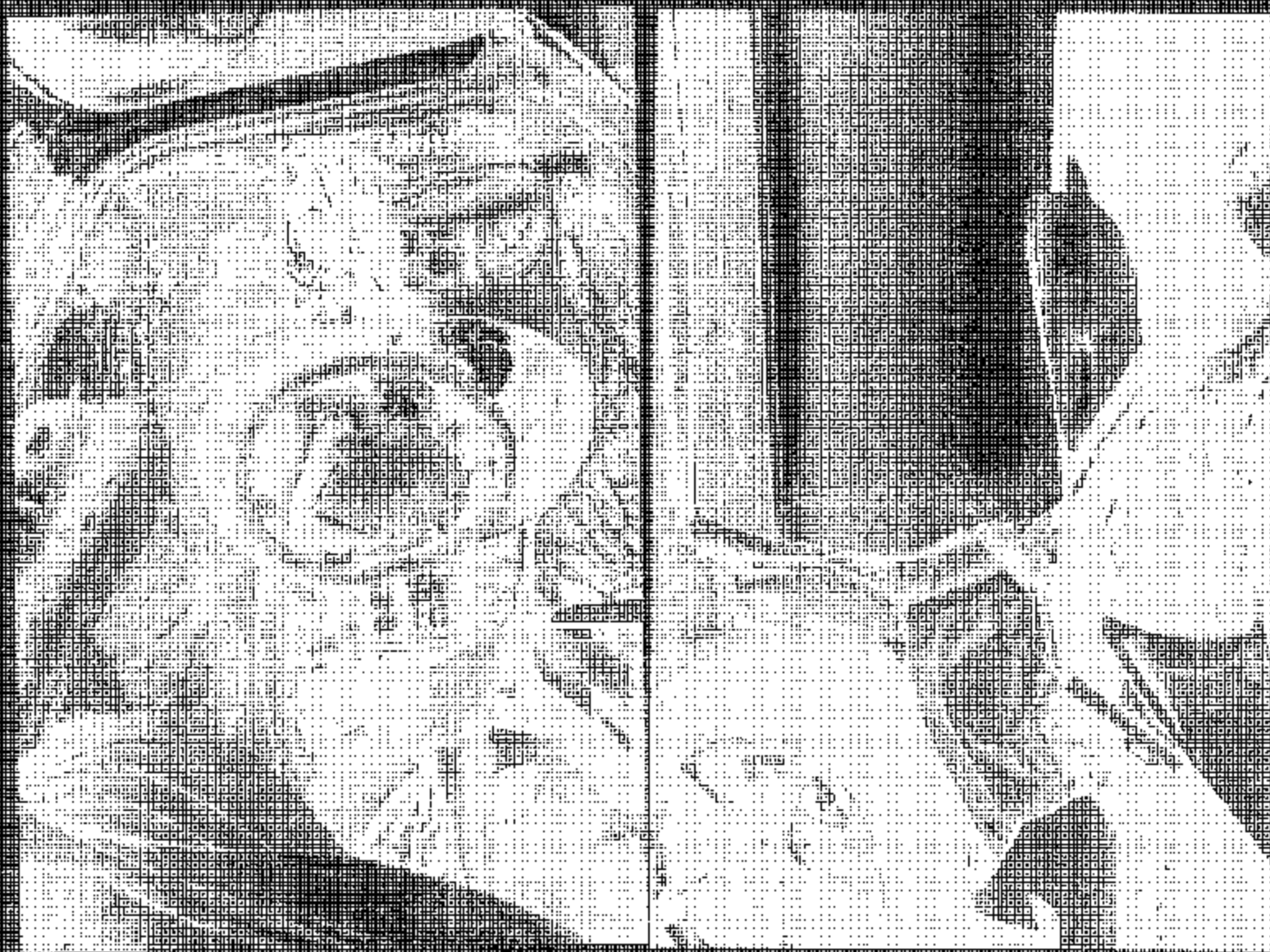
This window sticker may or may not match the actual window sticker on the vehicle itself.

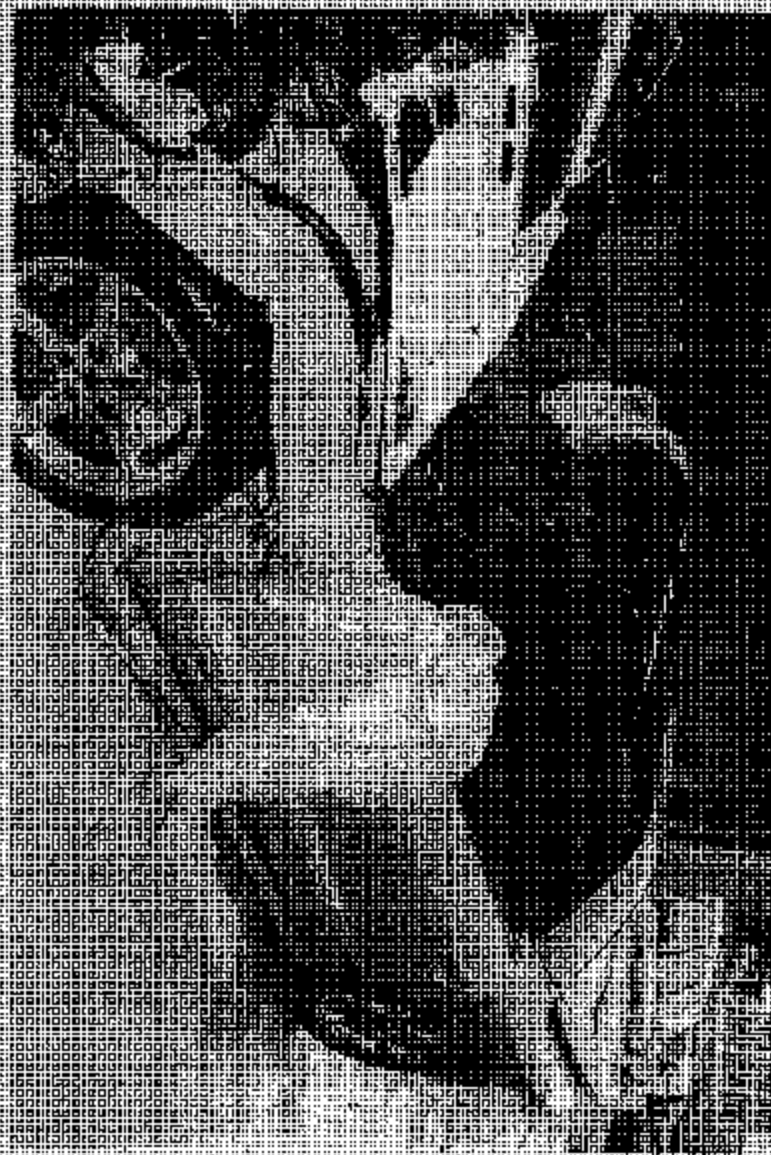
\*Includes Manufacturer's Recommended Pre-Delivery Service. Does not include dealer installed options and accessories, local taxes or license fees.

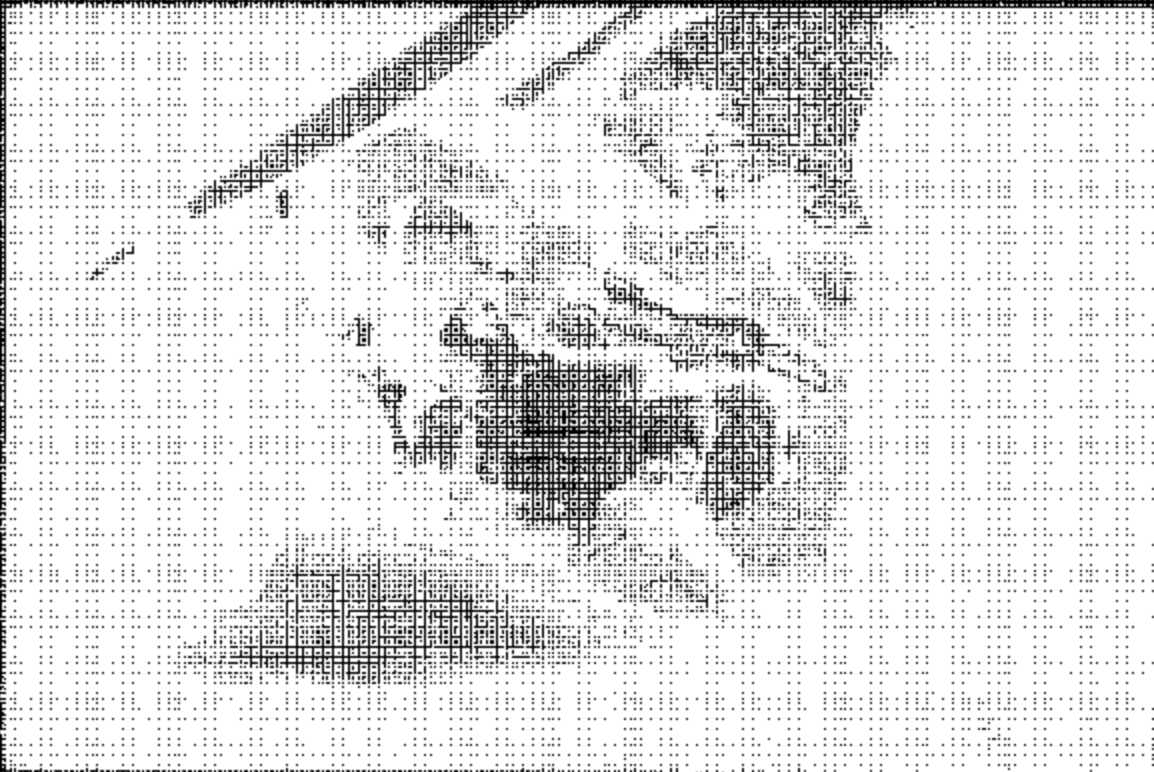
You've found the perfect vehicle on our lot. Now make it yours. Print out this Window Sticker and bring it with you to our dealership. Our GM BuyPower Manager, Scott Ahrens, will be here to help you. Just e-mail us and let us know you're on your way.



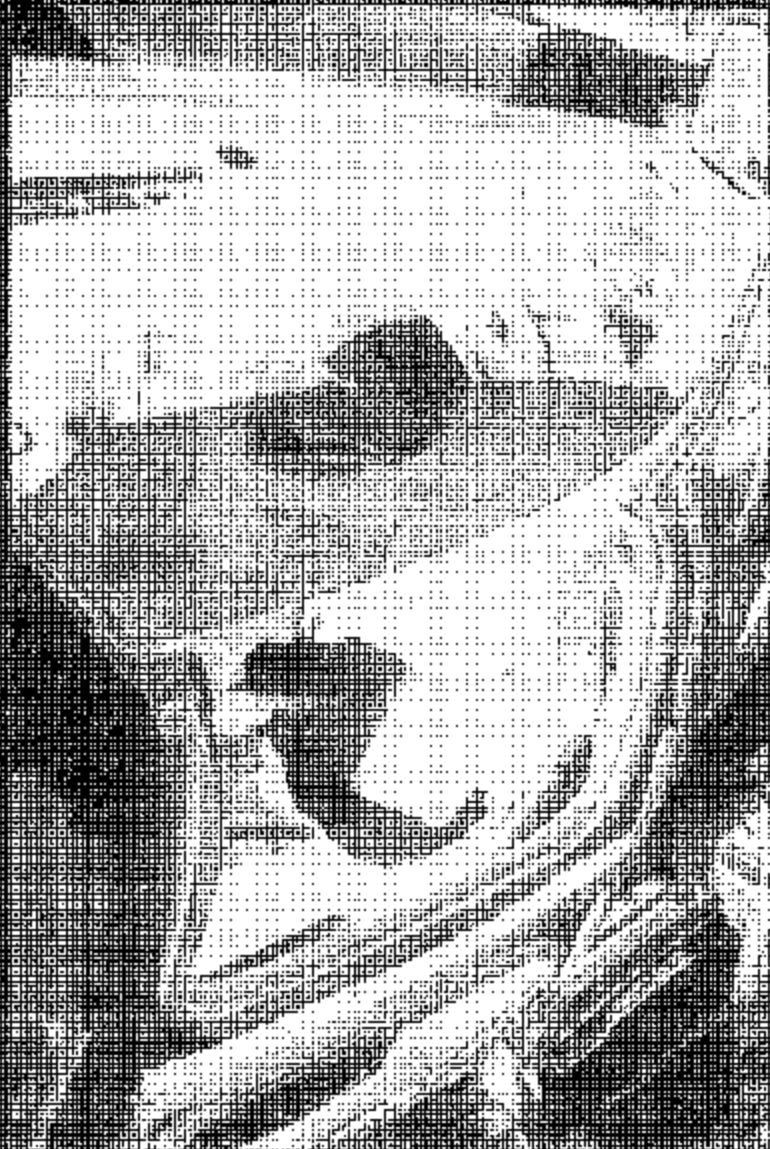
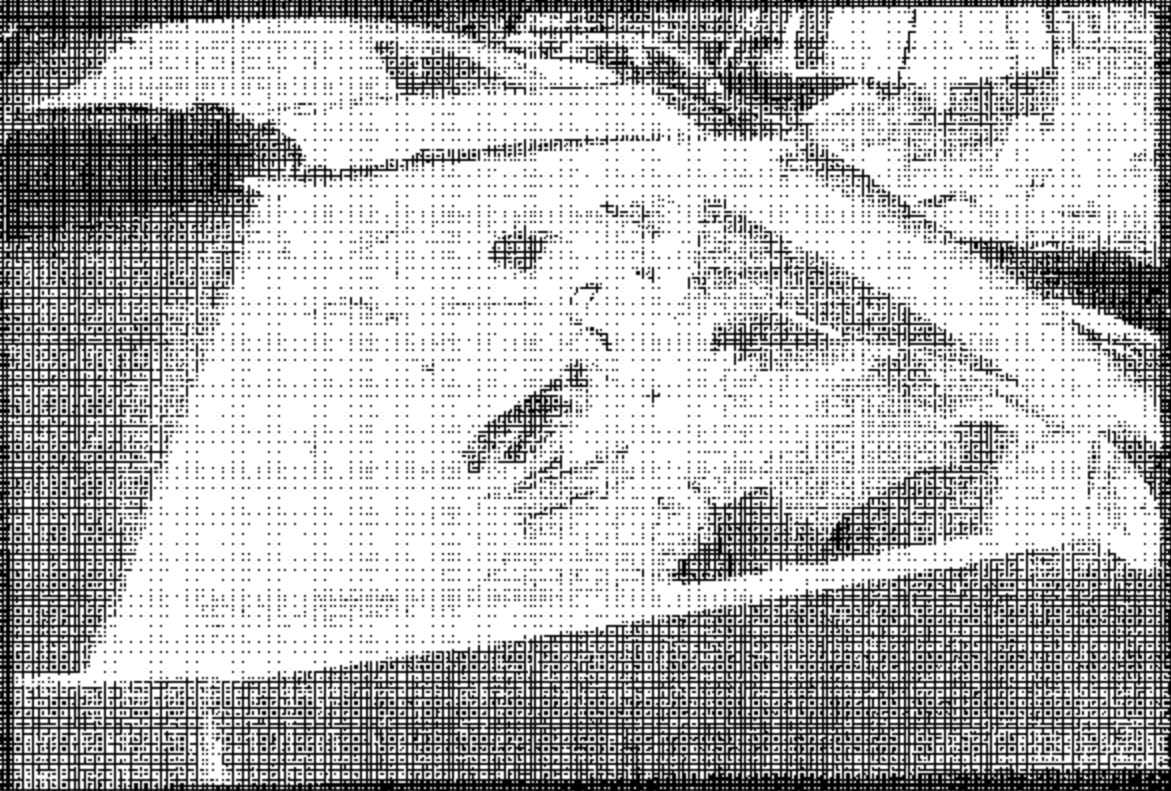


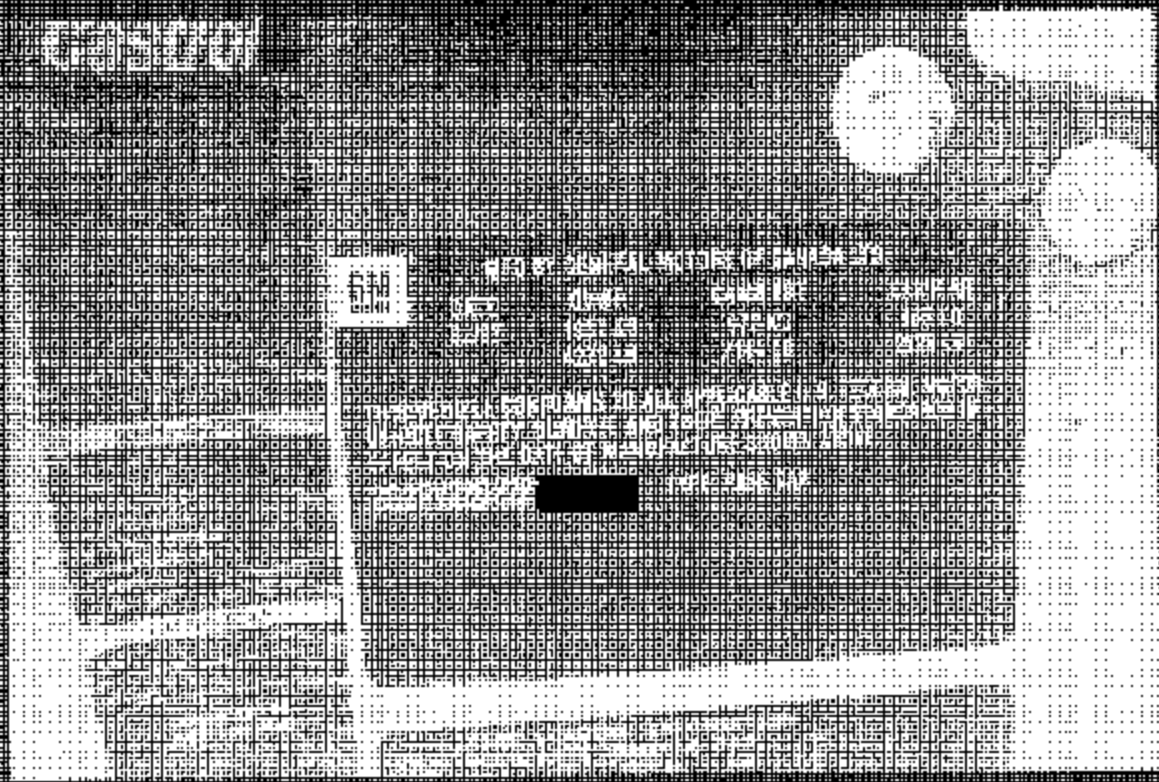




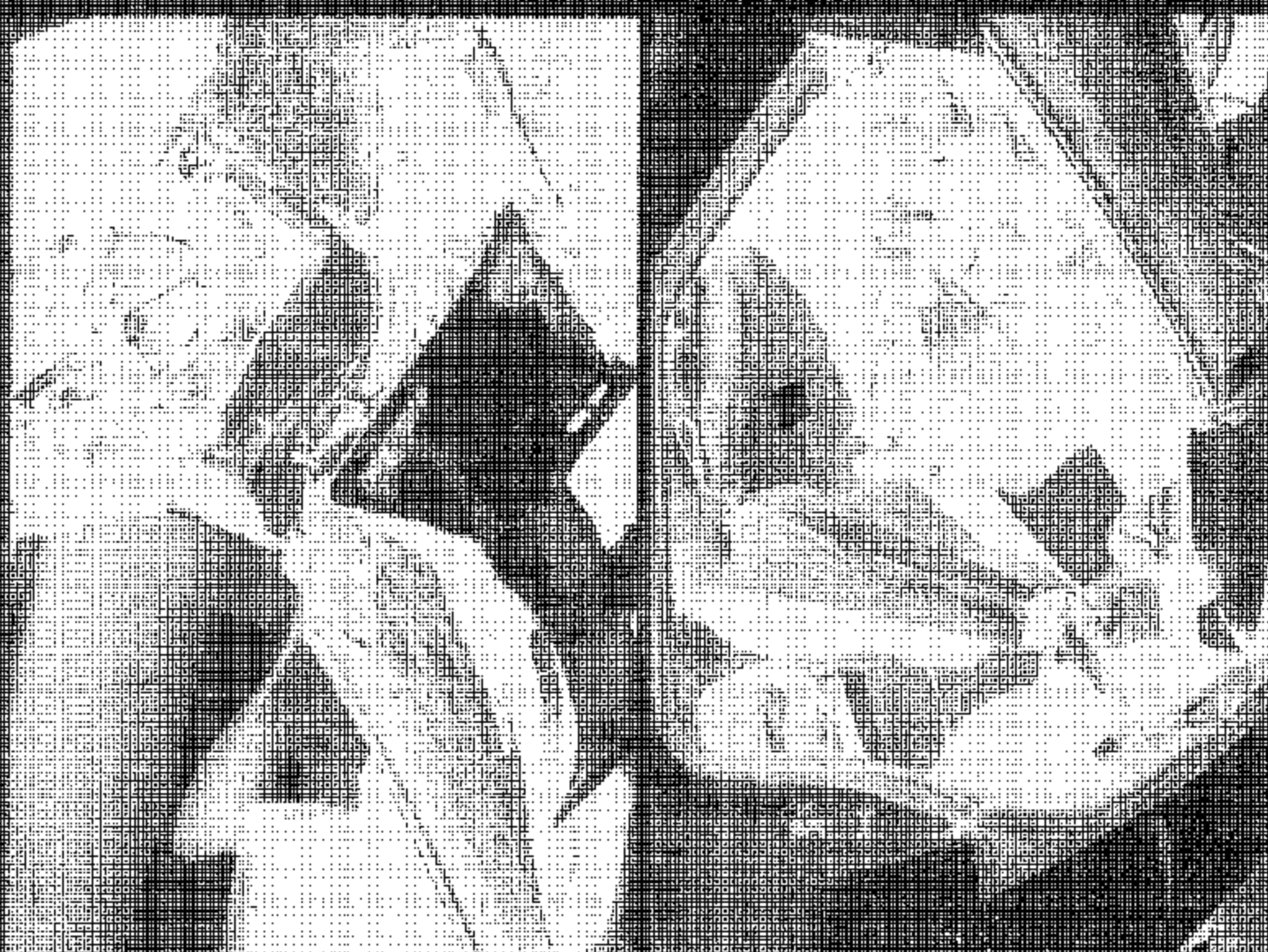
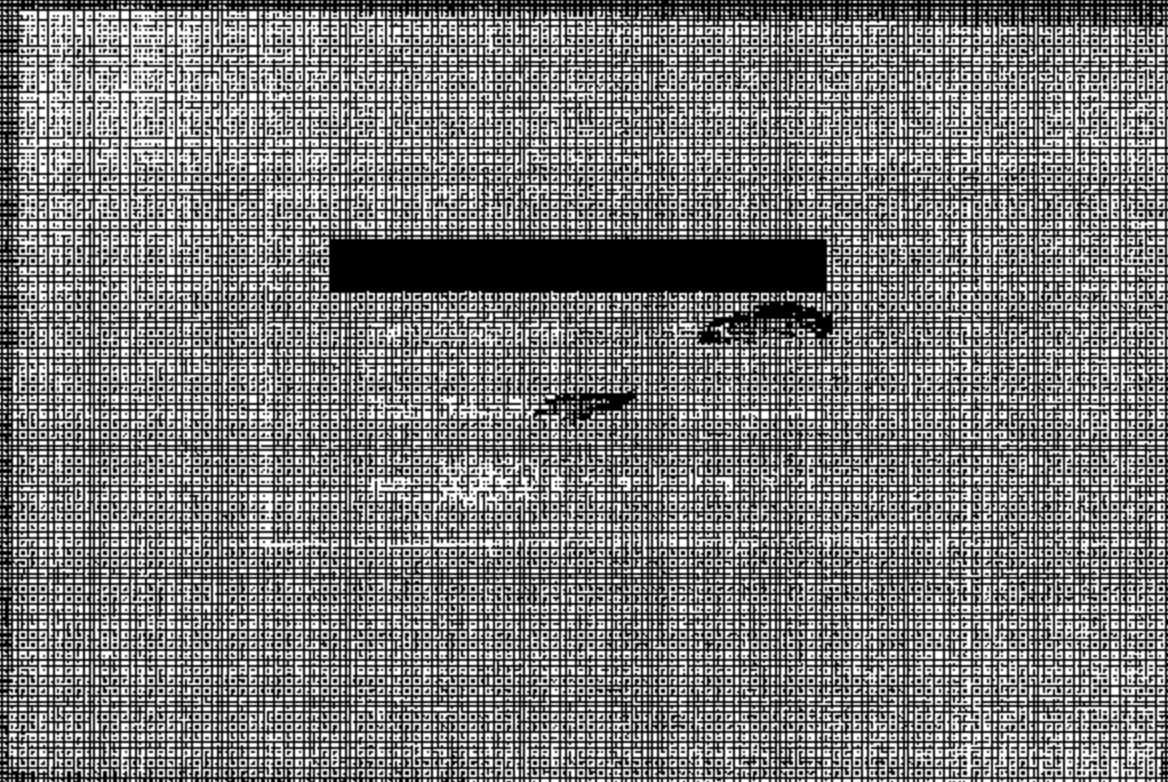




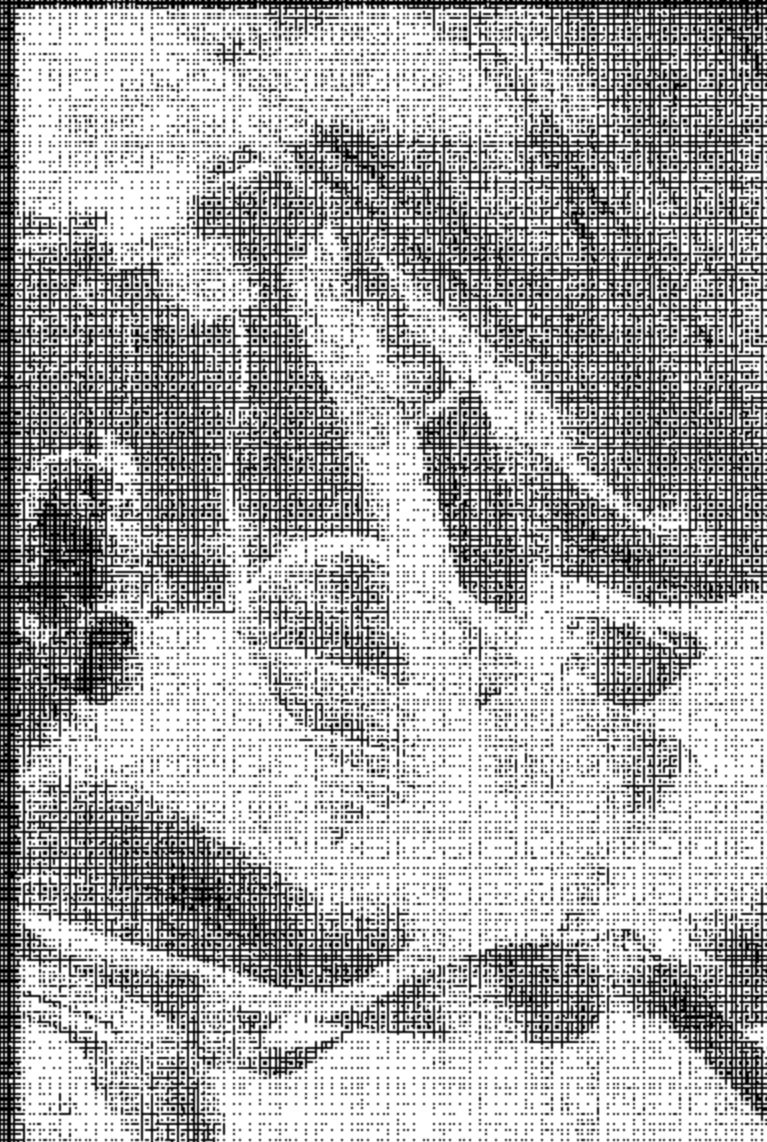
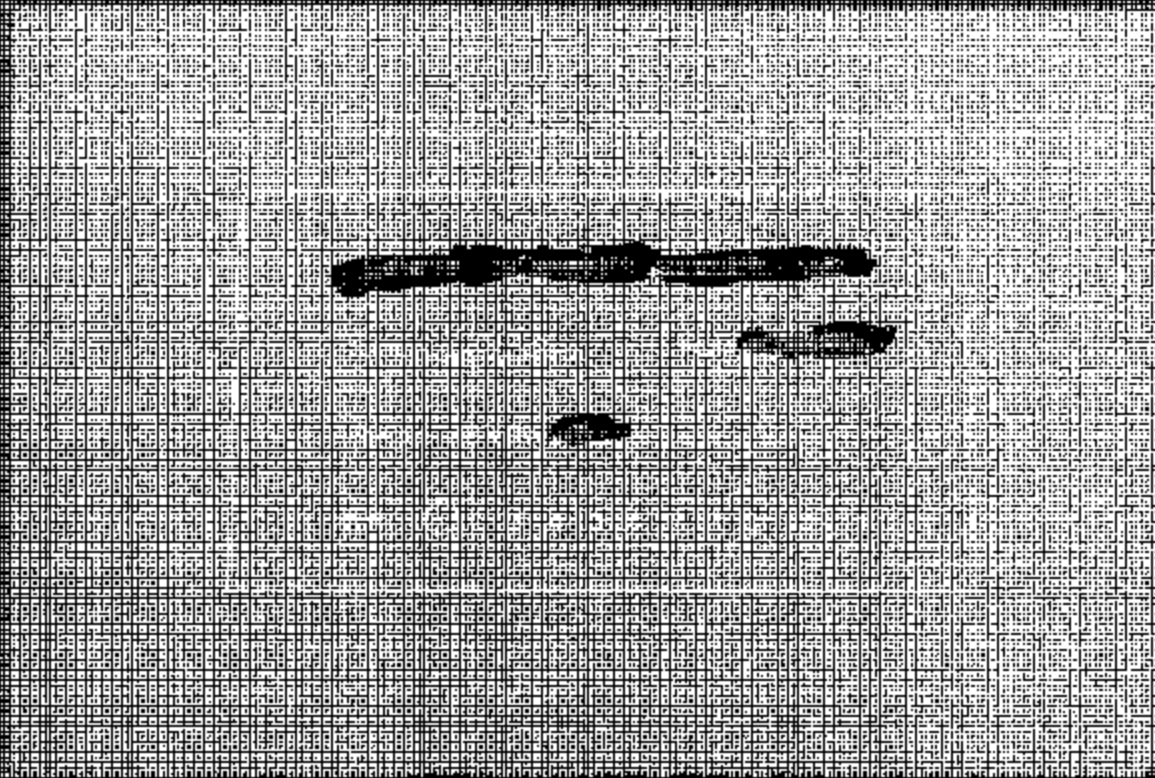




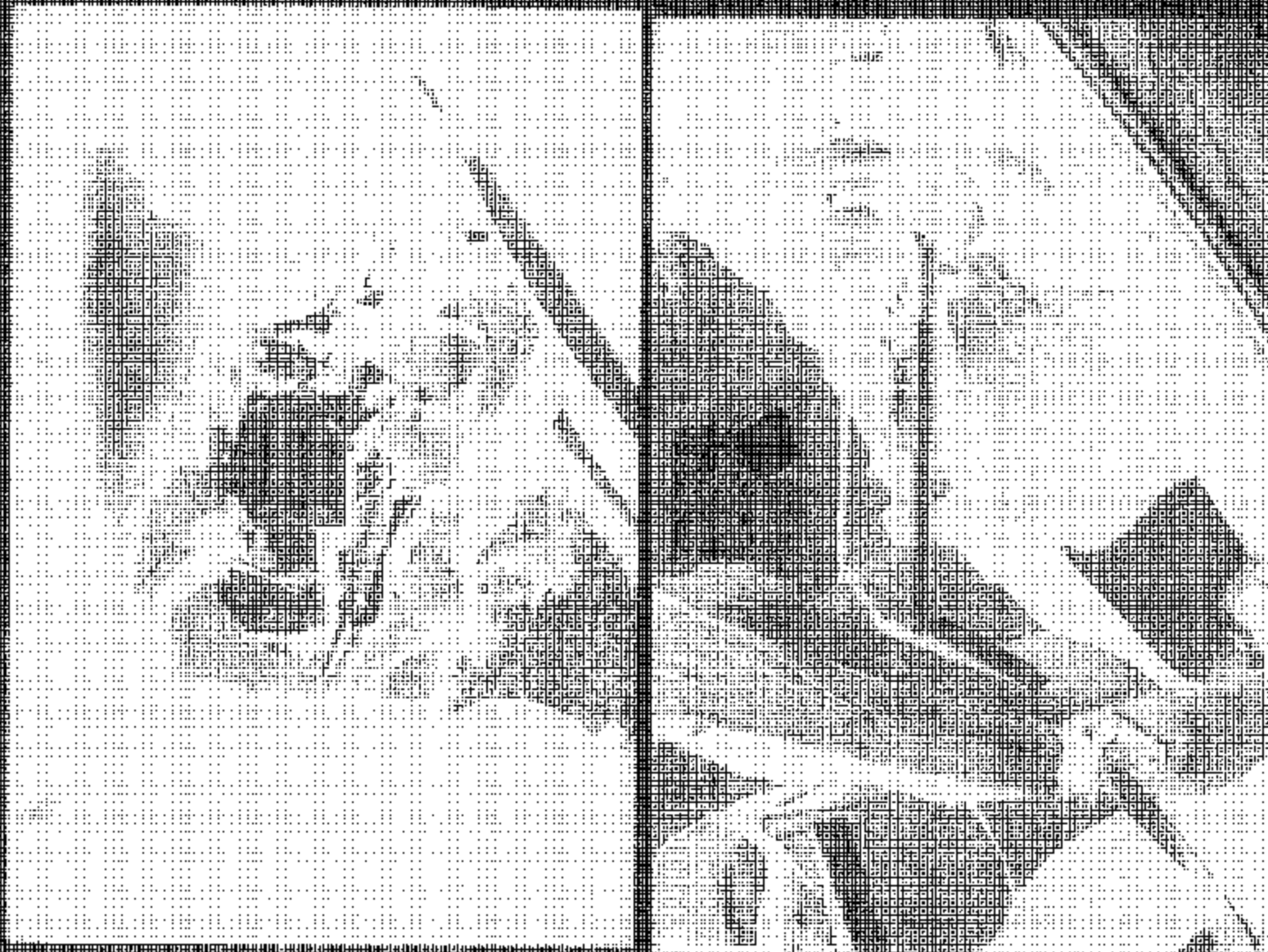
9



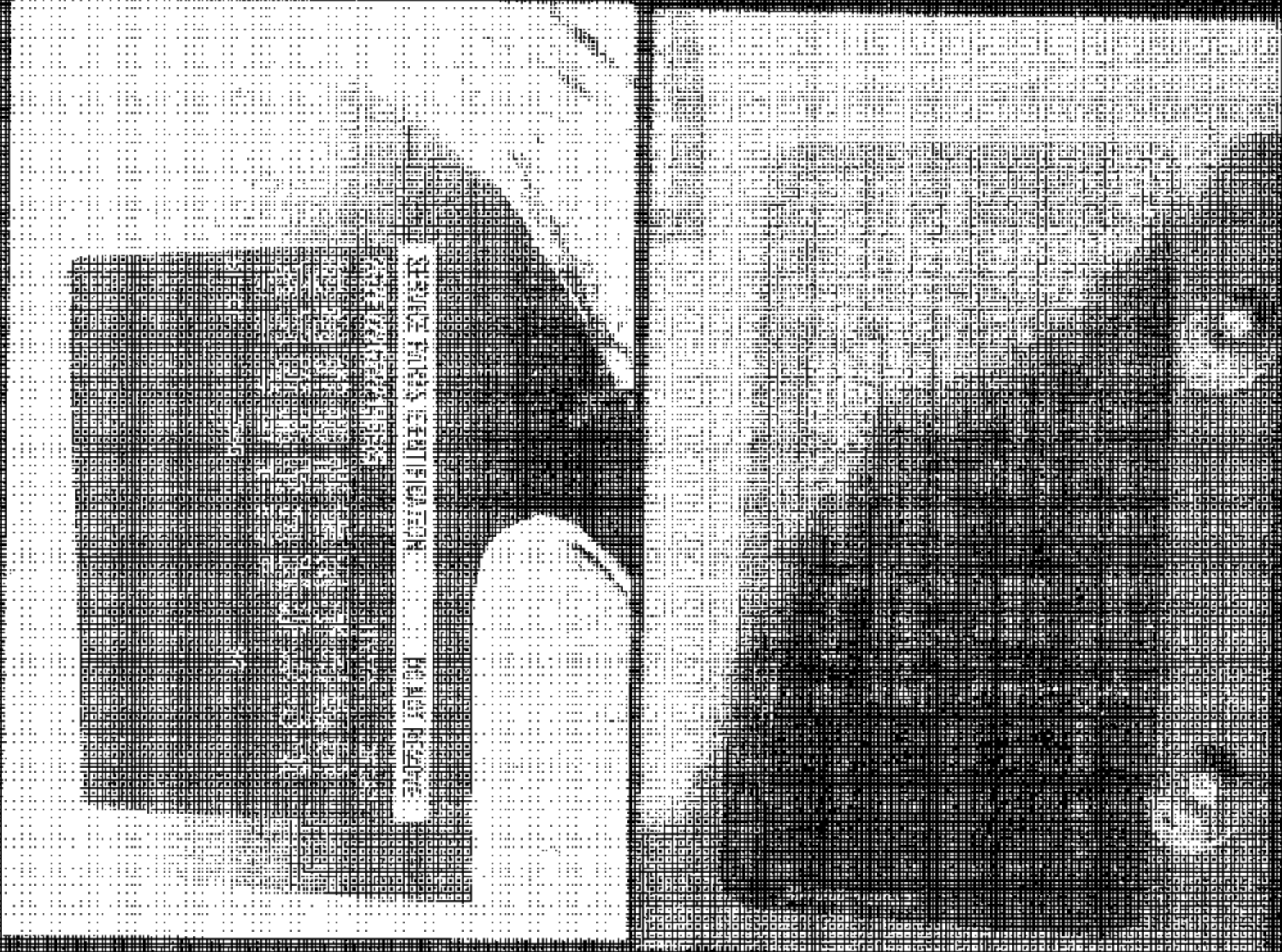
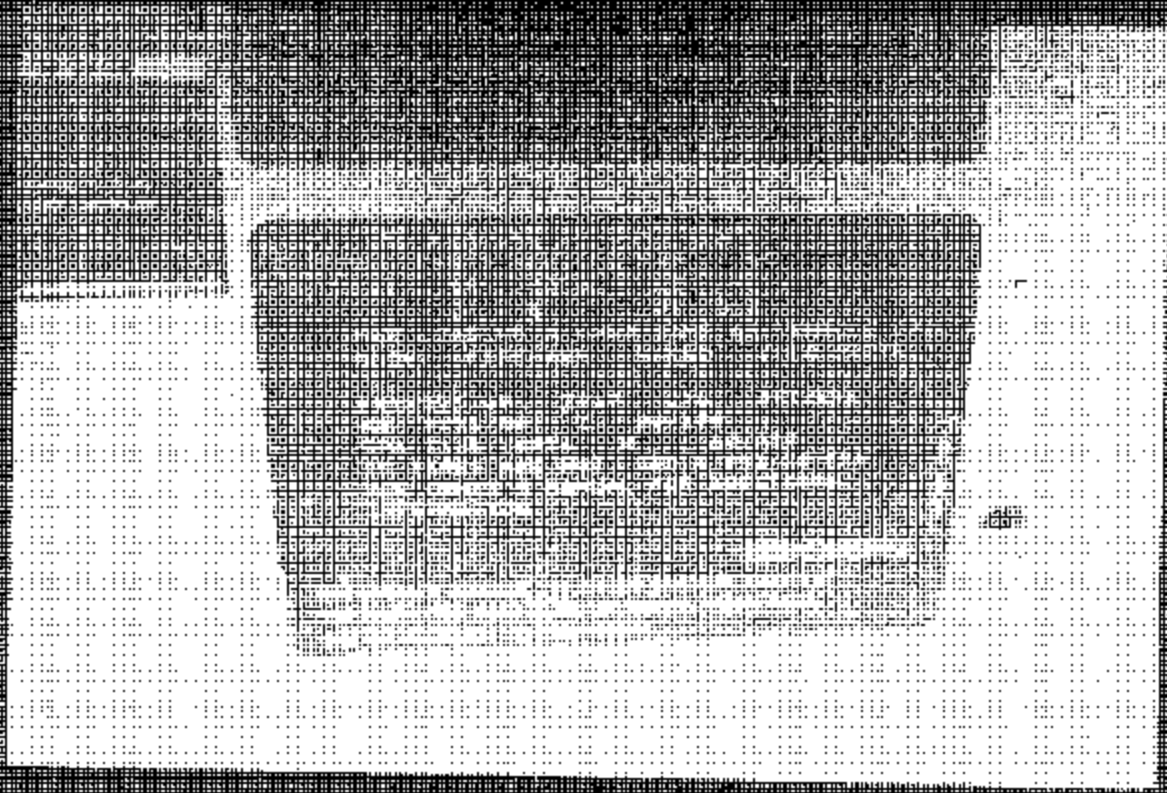
22  
59



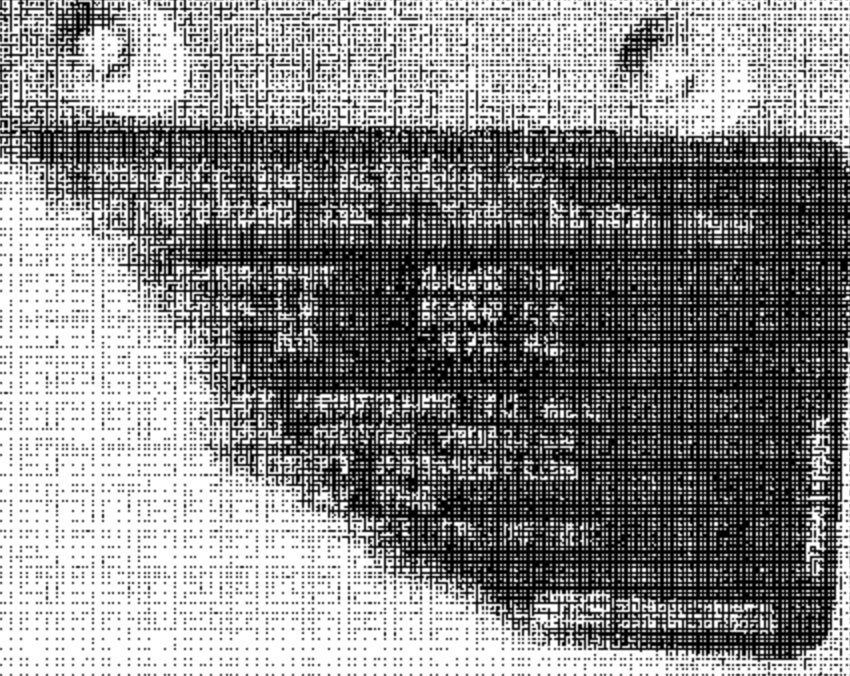
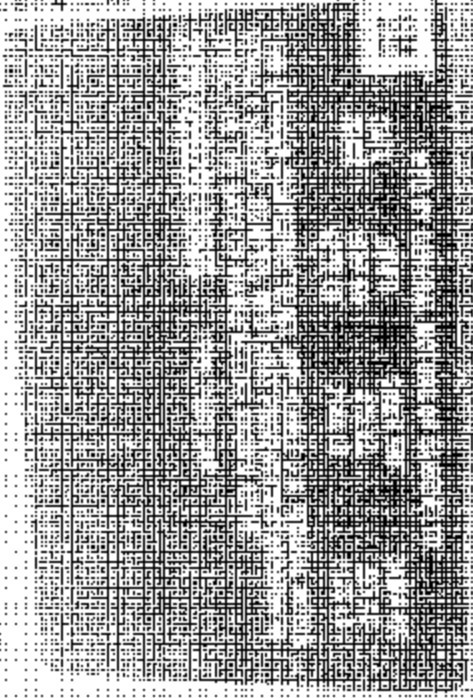
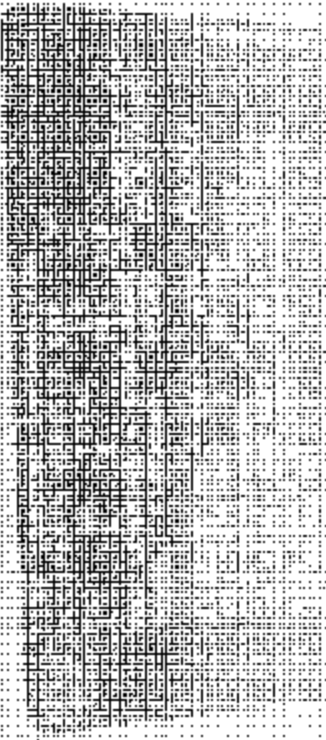
10

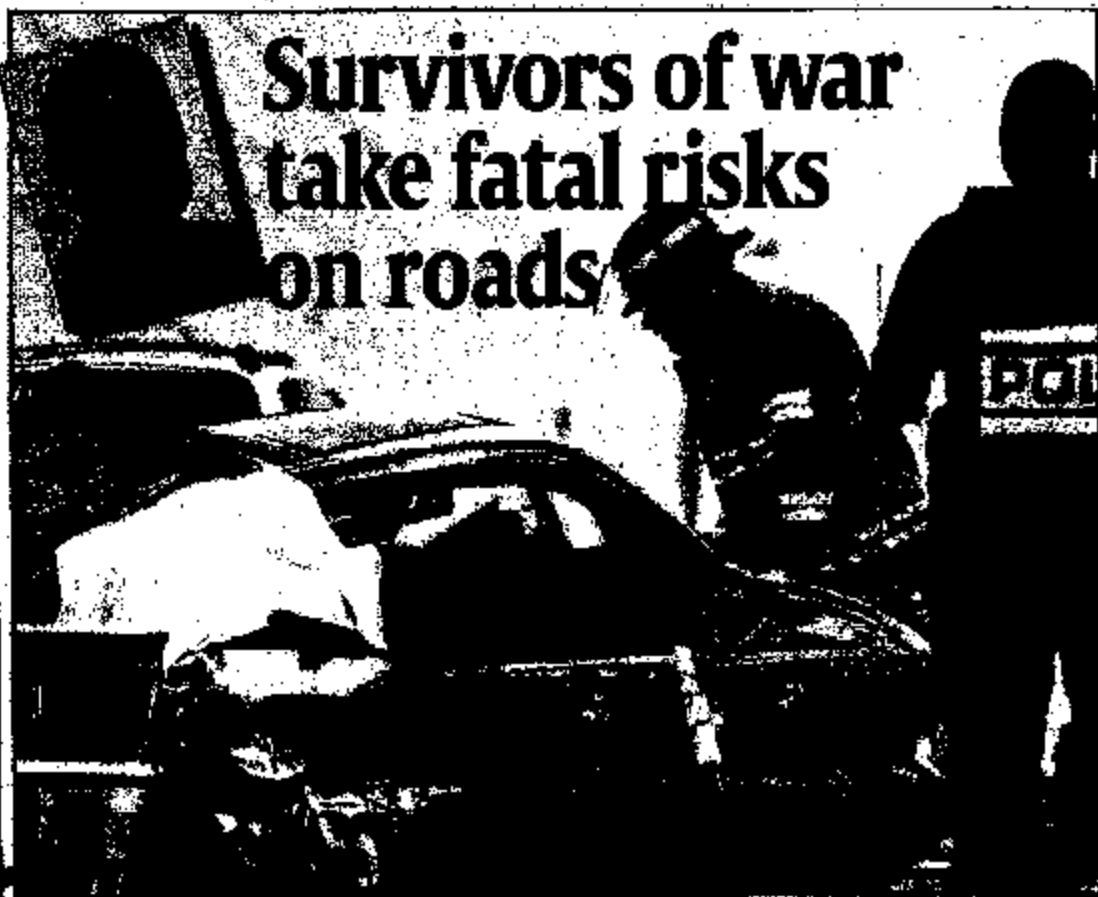


45



000000





By Steve Liebert, The Fayetteville Observer; inset, Randy Parker

**90 mph before impact:** Iraq war veteran Vincent Withers, top, crashed this Pontiac Trans Am into another car in Fayetteville, N.C., near the Army's Fort Bragg, in June 2004. The collision killed Withers and the other driver.

In the past seven months, 80 Army soldiers have died in vehicle accidents. Most of them had just returned to the USA from the combat zones of Iraq or Afghanistan.

■ After experiencing Iraq, one soldier explains, driving fast is like 'a drug — the newest crack out there.'

■ Now the surge in crash deaths has prompted the Army to take action.

By Gregg Zaroya  
USA TODAY

LAKE JACKSON, Texas — Just three days home from the war in Iraq, Army Spc. Robert Tipp Jr. couldn't wait to open the throttle on his knobby-tired ATV.

"It was like he was in prison for a year, and the bird's free," Gail Tipp says of her only son, who returned in late March. "He was riding that four-wheeler as hard as he could."

Tipp's father, Robert Sr., agrees: "He thought that nothing could hurt him now."

There were no roadside bombs along that winding stretch of lane in this Gulf Coast town. Just a freedom that Tipp hadn't tasted for more than a year — and a sharp curve that he and his speeding ATV couldn't handle.

When he smashed, without a helmet, into the pavement on the evening of March 26, Robert Jr. — the 20-year-old his mother still called "Scooter" — suffered massive head injuries. He died hours later, on Easter morning.

Soldiers, many just back from the war, are being killed.



Rode "as hard as he could": Days after returning from Iraq in March, Spc. Robert Tipp Jr. died when he crashed his ATV, above, in Lake Jackson, Texas.

Above, Paul S. Howell for USA TODAY; below, Randy

**Cover story**

Please see COVER STORY  
next page ►

# Army moving aggressive

Continued from 1A

in vehicle accidents at a pace that has the Army alarmed. The fear is that soldiers' safe return from combat has left many feeling just as Tipp did: invincible. As a consequence, they drive too fast, sometimes under the influence of alcohol, and lose control of their cars, their trucks, their motorcycles or ATVs.

"We absolutely have a problem," says J.L. Coleman, spokesman for the Army Combat Readiness Center at Fort Rucker in Alabama, which is tracking the trend. "The kids come back and they want to live life to its fullest, to its wildest. They get a li-

stood for the past few years — about 22 per 100,000.

"Having said that, this is where we lose most of our people" in non-combat deaths, says Brig. Gen. Joseph Smith, commander of the Readiness Center. "And we're putting our resources on that."

Army and law enforcement officials are particularly concerned about the months ahead. Summer has traditionally been the most lethal season. In Fayetteville, N.C., just outside Fort Bragg, police Lt. Richard Bryant warns, "When warmer weather comes, we're going to see a big increase."

Fort Bragg, home to the war-hardened 82nd Airborne Division and Special Forces troops, saw vehicle accident deaths among soldiers based there rise from four in 2002 to six in 2003 to 10 last year.

Among them was Vincent Withers, 27, and a veteran of Iraq. Behind the wheel of a borrowed Pontiac Trans Am last June, police say, he said a passenger at a stop light just outside Fort Bragg: "Let's see what this thing can do before we hit the top of the hill."

The Trans Am reached 90 mph before Withers swerved to avoid another car, hit the median and launched the Trans Am into an oncoming car, police say. Withers and the driver of the other car, a father of two, were killed.

## Noticing can touch me

Smith, the Readiness Center commander, says the Army is moving aggressively to cut the death rate and to better understand the reasons behind it.

During the past year, the center has created a computer program in which soldiers fill out forms detailing personal travel plans. The program identifies travel risks, such as late-night driving, and allows supervisors to review plans and advise GIs on how to travel more safely. Other programs include an advanced-drivers course for soldiers and a safe-driving ad campaign.

In recent weeks, Smith also has enlisted epidemiologists to investigate a link between the effects of war and stressful traffic fatalities. Jonathan Shay, a psychiatrist who works with the Army on ways to reduce psychological damage from war, says combat has altered the behavior of soldiers home from Iraq just as it did with Vietnam veterans.

Some return home, Shay says, with an air of invincibility. "I'm 20 years old. I've lived through fire-fights. Nothing can touch me," he says of their attitudes. "They feel like they have to live life on the edge, or it is too bland or colorless." Others "actively seek out danger." In the extreme, Shay says, that behavior becomes suicidal.

The life of Army Staff Sgt. David Rutledge Jr., 31, was in turmoil when he died Feb. 28 near Fort Drum, N.Y., where he was based. A veteran of Afghanistan, Rutledge was in the midst of a bitter divorce.

## Cover story

the bit of time to let their hair down, and they let their hair all the way down and do everything to excess. They drink to excess. They eat to excess. They party to excess.

And then, some drive."

The statistics underscore the problem. From October 2003 to September 2004, when troops first returned in large numbers from Iraq, 133 soldiers died in vehicle accidents — a 28% jump from the previous 12 months. Two-thirds of them were veterans of Iraq or Afghanistan.

The deaths continue. In the past seven months, 80 soldiers died in vehicle accidents — a 23% increase from the same period a year earlier. Four out of five were veterans of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars. The numbers could be higher, but the statistics, tracked by Army safety officials at the Readiness Center, don't include soldiers who recently left the service, or those with the Army Reserve or National Guard who have just been deactivated.

The Marine Corps faces a similar problem. Three years ago, its rate of fatal vehicle accidents was almost double what the Army's is today. The rate dropped after the Marines added an eight-hour driving course to boot camp, but that drop flattened out when the Iraq war began.

Today, the Marine rate remains somewhat higher than the Army's. But the Army's rate is surging, and because the Army is much larger than the Marine Corps, it loses almost three times as many people to vehicle accidents.

## Usually safer drivers

The Army's rate also is troubling because, before the war, soldiers appeared to be safer drivers than civilians. Compared with other young adults, soldiers have more disciplined and regulated lifestyles. All are employed, and many are married and have children — factors that encourage responsible behavior. In fact, despite the surge, the Army's rate of vehicle-accident deaths — almost 20 per 100,000 this year — remains just below where the overall U.S. rate has

**USA  
TODAY**

Subscriptions

1-800-USA-0001

Monday - Friday

9:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

7000 Jones Branch Dr., McLean, VA 22102, 703-261-5400

Published by Gannett, Washington, Va. 20001-20002

Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y., and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes in USA TODAY to USA TODAY, Attention: Fulfillment, P.O. Box 518, Hightstown, NJ 08520.

Copyright © 2005 USA TODAY, Inc. All rights reserved.

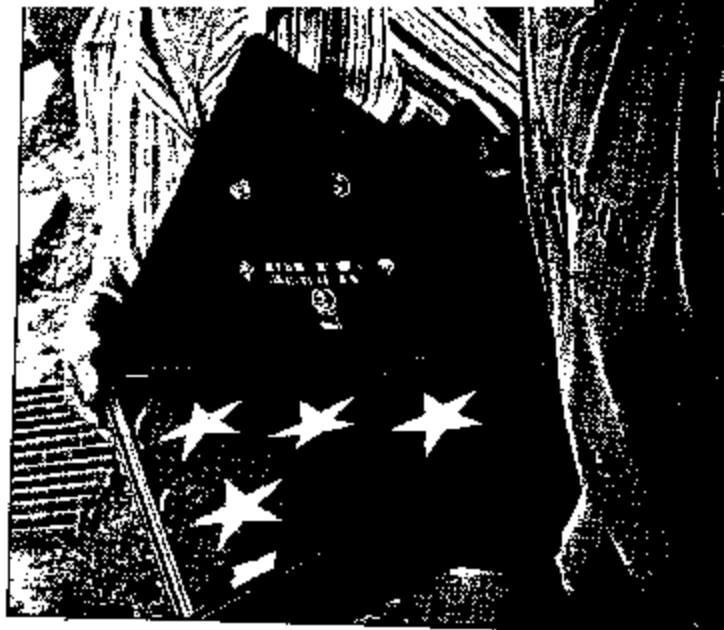
USA TODAY is published daily except on Sundays and public holidays.

Printed on recycled paper with 50% recycled content.

USA TODAY is a member of the Associated Press.

USA TODAY is a member of the Associated Press.

# rely to get its soldiers to slow down and survive



His girlfriend was pregnant, and he faced the prospect of missing the child's birth because he was being sent to Iraq.

At the time of his death, Rutledge also was having episodes of paranoia and was taking antidepressant medication, says Detective Steven Cote of the Jefferson County (N.Y.) Sheriff's Department.

The night that he died, Rutledge couldn't get cash from an ATM or at two convenience stores. He jumped into his girlfriend's SUV and sped out of town at nearly 90 mph, Cote says. Moments later, he plowed into a parking lot full of new cars. He died instantly.

"He didn't lose control," Cote says. "He just went right straight through."

## Grim details

On a recent Sunday morning in Killeen, Texas, near the Army post at Fort Hood, Greg Anderson, an investigator with the Killeen Police Department, recites details about the latest traffic death of a soldier.

Staff Sgt. Brian Foster, 24, an Iraq war veteran, had crashed his motorcycle into a cedar bush along Westcliff Road around 4:30 that morning. He wasn't wearing a helmet. Foster is one of 12 soldiers from Fort Hood killed in vehicle accidents this year — and the second to die during that second weekend of April.

On a city map, Anderson traces from memory the courses of other fatal motorcycle accidents. Each ended horrifically, with a soldier catapulting himself into a car or onto the pavement.

"Had one down here on this end of Westcliff," Anderson says. "He was going too fast to make this turn, hit the curb, was launched off the bike right into a car — head first, no helmet. Had another soldier coming north on WS Young (Drive) ... witnesses told us in excess of 130 mph when he hit the back end of a car."

Anderson grimly predicts a record year for traffic deaths in Killeen. To caution soldiers, the Army erected billboards outside each

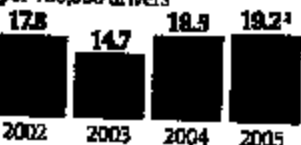
## Fatal highway accidents among soldiers

Traditionally, soldiers in their own vehicles have had better driving records than the public. However, the number of traffic fatalities among soldiers jumped 28% in fiscal 2004 and is currently up about 23% this fiscal year.

### Army driver fatalities



### Army fatal-accident rate per 100,000 drivers



<sup>1</sup> - projection  
Source: U.S. Army and National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

By Alejandro Gonzalez, USA TODAY

Fort Hood entrance and displays car wrecks to underscore the message. On the billboards, lights flash red or amber if a soldier has died in an accident, or green if there's been no death in 30 days. Green lights haven't flashed since January.

## Hooked on speed

Fort Hood, the Army's largest post, is home to the 4th Infantry and 1st Cavalry divisions. For the first time since the war in Iraq began, both divisions are back in town at the same time. Streets are clogged with gleaming new Ford Mustangs and Chevy Silverado pickups, and a profusion of high-speed racing bikes that soldiers call "crotch-rockets."

"We're selling out," says Mike Clark, sales manager for Texas Motor Sports in Killeen, where hot items are the Yamaha YZF-R1 and YZF-R6 racing bikes. With muscular fairings and tiny windshields, the bikes go from 0 to 60 mph in less than four seconds and top out at about 160 mph. "They want something that goes fast and keeps that high up they had during the war," Clark says of the soldiers.

Along congested Rancher Avenue, soldiers pop wheelies or weave through traffic. On outlying roadways, some race.

One Sunday afternoon, as bikers congregated at Longbranch Park, Staff Sgt. Anthony Stewart roars up on a racing bike. He wears no helmet, a violation of Army regulations. Just weeks home from Iraq, Stewart, 31, shrugs. Sometimes he wears it. Sometimes he doesn't, he

says. "You're not going to predict an accident," he reasons. "If it's going to happen, it's going to happen."

Nearby, members of a racing bike club, Chans Ridaz, gather around a picnic table. Most are soldiers who have served overseas. Many are older, non-commissioned officers who try to mentor young GIs about driving responsibly. But even these veterans concede that speed fills some indescribable urge for excitement that they've felt since returning from war.

"The war changes you," says Staff Sgt. Gregory Dickerson, 31, club president and a soldier with the 4th Infantry Division, which will return to Iraq later this year. "Every day I was in Iraq, I had a chance of dying — 365 days. Now, when I make it home ... you want to live."

Going fast, he says with a grin, is like "a drug — the newest crack out there."

## 'Casualty of war'

From the Combat Readiness Center at Fort Rucker, Smith worries that the Army may not be able to stem the tide in traffic deaths by itself. It needs families and spouses to curb the reckless behavior of returning soldiers.

That's why the center is producing commercials in which friends and families talk graphically about what they could have done to save their loved ones.

In Lake Jackson, Calif. and Robert Tipp do that every day. They are convinced that their son's time in Iraq contributed to his death — and that he died in service to his country, just like any of the more than 1,500 who have died in Iraq. Gail calls him a "casualty of war."

Gail Tipp, 49, a retired school bus driver, relives every moment of those last days with her son. "It was like he couldn't harness the energy he had," Gail says. "Everything was now. There was no waiting."

Robert Tipp, 51, a chemical plant operator, torments himself for not stopping his son from riding the ATV.

"Follow your instincts," he says. "If you've got a feeling that they're living too fast a lifestyle, even if it makes them mad, pisses them off, slow 'em down." The alternative — losing someone so quickly after a happy homecoming from war — is unbearable, he says.

Tipp remembers how he wept after seeing his son off to war. "He strapped that M-16 on his shoulder and he marched off. He looked like he was 10 years old."

"I thought, 'Nothing can be harder than this,'" the father recalls. "Boy, was I wrong."