

# AUTOS

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## MOTORLOG

### Scenery And Fun In Palm Springs

**LOCATED IN THE SHADOW** of towering Mount San Jacinto in historic San Geronimo Pass, the desert community of Palm Springs is often referred to as the "child of the mountain". For this mecca of sun worshippers owes its popularity to two main factors — abundance of water and sheltered climate. Both of these are a product of mighty San Jacinto, a peak of some 11,000 feet altitude.

A year around supply of water to fill the many pools and keep the fairways of the several golf courses green is supplied from the rock veins of San Jacinto. When storm clouds threaten the Los Angeles-Orange county basin, San Jacinto's craggy shoulders throw them back preventing them from dumping their contents on the army of sun bathers which collect at the springs from January to April each year.

Much of the credit for discovering Palm Springs goes to the late Dr. Coffman, who in 1912 opened a small roadside inn there. Today this inn has grown to become the world famous Desert Inn, where nearly every one who is famous has stayed at one time or another.

**AT THE INVITATION** of the new management of the Desert Inn the San Diego Union's Motorlog party decided to spend a weekend at Palm Springs. Driving a 1956 American Motors Rambler station wagon loaned to us by Broadway Hudson we departed early Saturday morning via the Cabrillo Freeway. Continuing on Highway 395 we soon passed through the towns of Escondido and Perris and started down the San Geronimo Pass into the Coachella Valley.

Our little Rambler, which though it is small in appearance, has ample room inside, ground out the miles with regularity. Twenty miles beyond Banning we turned right



**NO TIME OUT:** Thanks to air conditioning, Palm Springs is now a more versatile resort with several hotels now staying open all year around.

on State High Highway 111, and in a short while eased into the cool tree shaded grounds of the Desert Inn. Last April the Desert Inn was purchased from the Coffman family by Marion Davies. With the change in management the inn now operates on the European plan. Desert Inn has a swimming pool, of course, and in addition badminton courts, shuffle board, and the O'Donnell nine-hole golf course is adjacent to the hotel ground.

**BECAUSE OF ITS ABUNDANT WATER SUPPLY** Palm Springs has been a natural gathering place even before the coming of the white man. The Santa Rosa Mission band of Indians, part of the Shoshone linguistic group, inhabited the area where the town is built before Columbus discovered America. Today much of the town is built on Indian land. The Indians own alternate sections of property throughout Palm Springs, and developers have leased it from them to build this fabulous town.

Besides supplying water to the town of Palm Springs, the four canyons above the town make for interesting hiking. Taquihitz Canyon, which opens directly behind the main business district, contains a beautiful water fall. Palm, Andreas and Murray Canyon, located about five miles south of Palm Springs, boast the most beautiful native stands of Washingtonia palms in the western hemisphere.

Stepping into the dense groves of stately trees is like walking into another world. A tiny brook bubbles over the rocks beneath the palms and chatter of many birds breaks the otherwise stillness of the desert.

The palms, Washingtonia filifera, are the remains of a giant prehistoric forest which once covered this area. Only where there has been a constant source of water down through the ages have the trees been able to survive.

**THE PALM FORESTS ARE LOCATED** on Indian property and a 50 cents per person admission is charged. Picnic tables, campfire sites, and rest-rooms are provided.

Next to palm trees, the most numerous thing in Palm Springs is swimming pools. According to local boosters, Palm Springs is reputed to have more swimming pools per capita than any other town in the world. Every home, hotel or motel sports a pool in one of several varying shapes, and beside these pools the business and pleasure of Palm Springs is transacted. Sun tan oil, sun glasses and swim suits are the uniform of the day.

The pleasure-bent motorist need not worry about his evening's fun in Palm Springs either. There are enough night spots to last anyone all through the balmy evening until it's late enough for even the amazingly brilliant desert stars to start blinking their eyes.

Popular stopping places include the Doll House, L'Horizon Hotel, The Oasis, Howard Manor, the Biltmore, the Tennis Club and El Mirador.

**PALM SPRINGS IS RAPIDLY BECOMING** an all-year resort with the advent of air conditioning in the better hotels, many of which now stay open all year with attractive summer rates. Although only a mere shadow of the number who visit Palm Springs in the winter are there in summer, the charm of small village living is adding more converts to the Spring's summer population each year.

It's easy to see that the area has its advantages at any time. And as we drove away in the Rambler our group had the same reaction: If we can make this trip again, we'll do it soon.

—Nelson Roberts Jr.

# BY DEMAND: Dodge Introduces New Vehicle

By NELSON ROBERTS JR.  
The San Diego Union's  
Auto Writer

The load capacity of a panel truck, the comfort of a passenger car and the versatility of a station wagon have been combined in a new vehicle announced by Dodge.

The new dual-purpose vehicle has been given the name Dodge Town Wagon because of the hundreds of jobs it will perform.

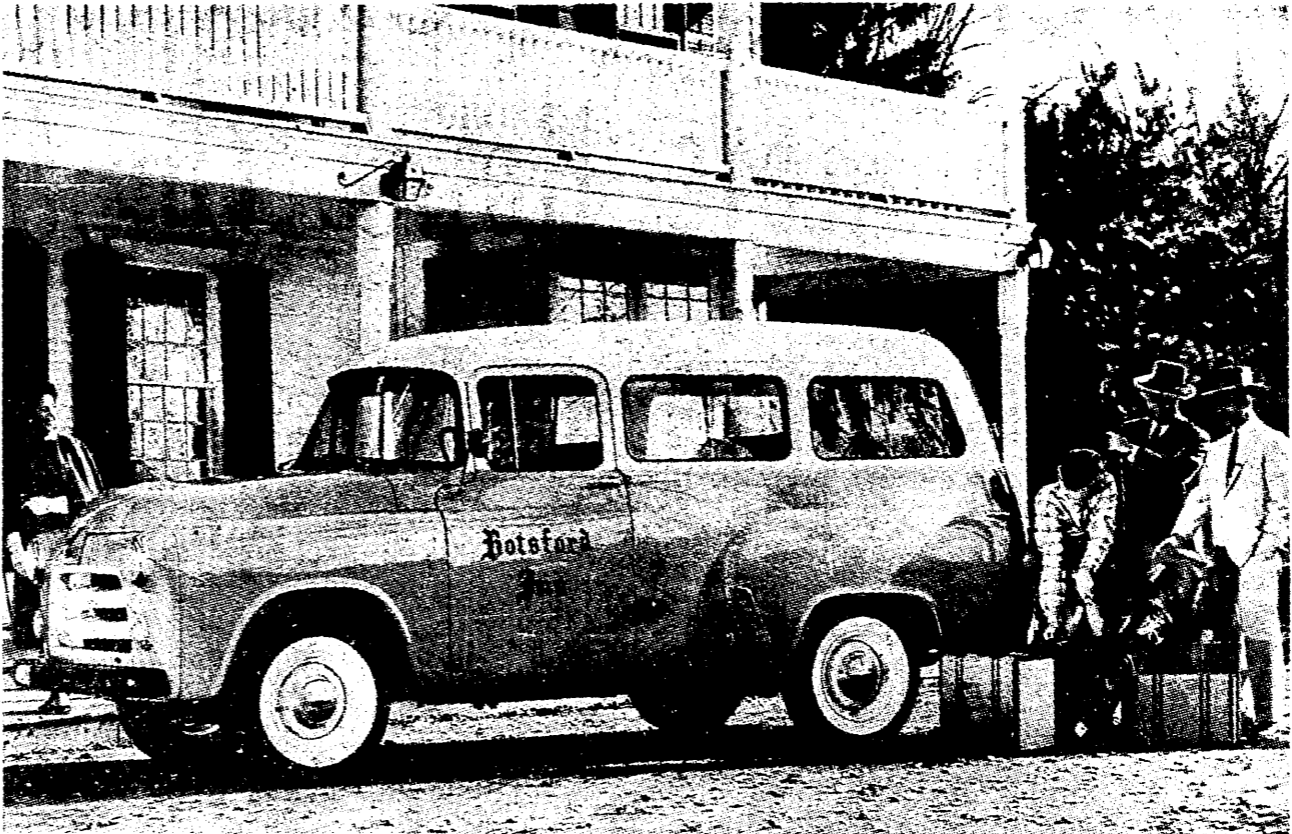
Announcement of the new vehicle, which will haul a payload of 1,650 pounds or carry eight persons in three seats or six passengers in two seats, was made by Byron J. Nichols, vice-president and general sales manager of Dodge.

Passenger car styling was designed into the rugged vehicle. It is expected to win many sales in the growing station wagon market which attracted a record number of 360,000 purchasers during the first half of 1955.

The Town Wagon is built on a Dodge half-ton truck chassis with the choice of a 119-horsepower six-cylinder or a 169-horsepower Power-Dome V-8 engine. Powerlite automatic transmission is available on all models.

Three sliding windows on each side and two in the wide rear door give it the appearance of a regular station wagon. However, it has more ground clearance than passenger cars or regular station wagons to permit its use on country roads and in off-the-highway operations.

A spacious load area at the rear provides cargo space for luggage, equipment or supplies. Floor loading height is only 23 inches and seats



**VERSATILITY:** Combining passenger car comfort with the hauling ability of the truck, Dodge will offer the Town Wagon which reportedly can handle off-the-highway assignments with ease.

may be easily removed for unobstructed cargo area.

Development of the Town Wagon resulted from the numerous inquiries for a vehicle with its versatility, Nichols added.

**MORE TRACTION:** Greater safety and adaptability to

varying driving conditions, and four times greater traction on icy or snow-covered streets, are some of the benefits that will be obtained by owners of 1956 Packard and Packard Clipper models.

A problem that has confronted drivers since the coming of the motor car is

the negotiation of driving surfaces covered with ice, snow, mud, gravel or sand. The driving wheels of a car require traction to make the car move, and if the wheels are on a slippery or loose surface, they may have very little traction or driving power.

The surprising this is that only one wheel must lose traction to make the car immobile. You may remember a case where a jokester at a wedding or some such affair jacked up one rear wheel of the bridegroom's car so that after hurried goodbyes the happy couple jumped into

the car and started the engine for a fast getaway. Much to the surprise of the newlyweds the car refused to move. While this is a much-played joke, it does serve to illustrate what happens when a car has one wheel on ice or mud.

The problem is to have a differential that can permit different speeds on a turn and act more or less like a solid axle under other conditions of driving. It should not be absolutely solid, however, because this would result in shock loads and occasional extra-heavy torque loads on one axle. Therefore a differential that tends to lock up, but not a full-locking type, is desirable.

The engineers at the Studebaker-Packard Corp. believe that they have come up with the "better mouse trap." Using what is technically known as cone clutches. The process and technical language needed to explain the operation is too lengthy for this column, so suffice it to say that it works.

### Ford To Introduce New Car For 1958

DETROIT (INS) — Ford Motor Co. will introduce a new line of middle-priced passenger cars sometime next year. They will be 1958 models. The contemplated name "Edsel" (for Edsel Ford, Henry Ford's only son) apparently has been discarded and company brains are working overtime to find a suitable substitute.

### Chrysler Expands Training Facilities

Special To The San Diego Union  
DETROIT—Chrysler Corp. will soon complete the construction of the automotive industry's most modern training center for dealer and company service personnel, it was announced by C. L. Jacobson, vice president in charge of sales.

The new training center will be housed in a two-story building in Centerline, Mich., and will be the first of a series of training centers, spanning the country. Completion of the unit is expected by June 1.

The new building in Centerline will have a floor area of 84,500 square feet and will be completely air conditioned. It will house the combined activities of the corporation's executive service staff and the Chrysler Corp. Conference of Sales Training. The Chrysler conference prepares young men for managerial positions in dealerships.

The ground floor of the structure will have seven classrooms equipped with hydraulic hoists and each room in this group will have a door leading to the outside of the building so that cars and trucks can be driven directly into the classroom for instructional purposes.

Separate training rooms, each provided with the most modern service equipment, will be maintained by the Plymouth, Dodge, DeSoto, Chrysler, Dodge Truck, and Automotive Body Divisions. The last named will have a paint spray booth with dryer and exhaust system.

### RIISING COSTS

DETROIT — Rising costs have hit the "little auto makers," too. The rules committee of the Chevrolet Soap Box Derby, famous amateur racing event, is now allowing boys to spend \$15 to build their coasters. The previous cost limit was \$10.

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