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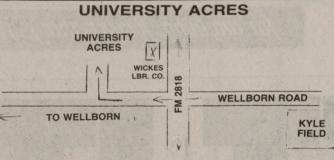
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Energy crisis inspires America's inventors

Louisiana businessman Willie

Klump dreams of the day when America's motorists will drive hundreds of thousands of miles without changing their motor oil because they bought Klump-manufactured oil filters stuffed with toilet paper.

In San Jose, Calif., Bill Posev envisions freeways jammed with people riding his motorized skateboards speeds up to 35 miles an hour, while in Southern Pines, N.C., Peter Greenspan sees compressed air powered cars on the horizon.

In a more conventional vein in New York City, scores of Stuart Pivar's gasoline-powered Microcars are already in use as he begins production of an electric-powered

They are among thousands of inventors across the country who have answered the call in the battle against rising gasoline prices and dwindling oil supplies. Annually they submit tens of thousands of ideas to government and private industry officials, and occasionally, as in Pivar's case, some of their inventions find their way to the production

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the best source of ideas available, said Dave Mello, a project engineer in the Department of Energy's ener-

headquartered in Washington. In the six years the program has been in existence, Mello said, the "The private inventor is probably the best source of ideas available," said Dave Mello, a project engineer in the Department of Energy's energy-related inventions program, headquartered in Washington.

gy-related inventions program,

Energy Department has received 60,000 proposals from small inventors whose suggestions range from impossible to the technically 'About half of them are good enough to warrant further evalua-

tion," Mello said. The Energy De

partment then submits the ideas to

the U.S. Bureau of Standards for evaluation. Mello said "the winners" are then sent back to the Department of Energy to be considered for a federal grant. So far, the Bureau of Standards has recommended 128 ideas to the Energy Department for grant

consideration Among those in the field of transportation that have been pursued are advanced carburetors, a new spark ignition system, and what Mello called an "optimizer," which would keep all of an automobile's systems running as efficiently as possible.

"Our goal is to give this little guy a chance at least to compete effective



Chapter Two Columbia





run an enterprise alone. What are needed are specialists in marketing, specialists in finance, and other areas. All of those go into making a successful product.

ton, Va., also speeds up action on energy and environmentally related

office's Heat and Power Engineering Examining Group, said there has been a boom in recent years in solarrelated patent requests, while patent fields have remained stable

Center at Warren, Mich., the new devices section receives about 4,000 proposals each year from private individuals.

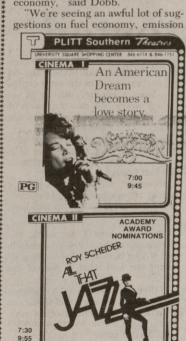
In the six years the program has been in existence, Mello said, the Energy Department has received 60,000 proposals from small inventors whose suggestions range from the impossible to the technically feasible.

don't you do something rather than saying how," said Jerry Rumbold,

devices section, said that in 1978, General Motors received 3,800 proposals from inventors.

economy," said Dobb.

gestions on fuel economy, emission



The U.S. Patent Office in Arling-

Don Stocking, of the patent

Private corporations also offer another avenue for the private inventor to get his idea into produc-At the General Motors Technical

Most of them are from your next

door neighbor or mine, saying why

assistant director of the new devices section. "Very, very few of these are way off the deep end, just enough to keep us lighthearted." John Dobb, director of the new

We purchased the rights to only two of them to investigate further

and pursue, and in both cases they related to engine design features or power train features relating to fuel



follow the media, what the concerned about. Dobb said there are a fe

reasons why suggestions a ly infeasible to costing to 'For example, somethi solve one pro others," said Dobb. "An ic

improve fuel economy, bu emissions or result in poo Among the more succ new breed of inventors is I says his American Microca Farmingdale, N.Y., has alr about 1,000 Microcars po moped engine. They are three-wheeled runabouts

le-cylinder, 11/2-horse gines. They get as much as A Manhattan resident, P. he designed his Microcar to own needs in the city. H model, which sells for und 300 pounds, seats two on to 20 miles per hour, is li New York under moped r

to automobile batteries. "You just plug it in an when you roll in the drivew n to the power recharges overnight." on and court d As an energy saver, Pivars costs a quarter of a cent an

and operates on two batter

to be used solely for short su and city trips, will become 'the first practical, low-pri

Stuart Pivar's electri which sells for under \$2,00 a 35-mile range, weighs 300 pounds, seats two, open up to 20 miles per hou licensed in New York moped regulations and open on two batteries similar to mobile batteries.

There are others who atter market their inventions of

In California, Posey has in Motoboard International to s motorized skateboards, Klump sells his toilet-pape oil filters for \$92.50.

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