

## Midnight Oil Trainer Series:

# A.S.T. Training

**J**ohn Forro operates an independent training company (A.S.T. Training) and teaches automotive technology mostly in the Cleveland, Ohio, area, venturing afield from time to time as people are interested. His training series includes a number of different courses covering various aspects of the automotive diagnosis and repair business, but the one I attended focused on 'tips and tricks,' several hundred of what he calls "silver bullets" to identify and repair pattern-failure problems quickly. While his focus for most classes is on domestic vehicles, the systems are fundamentally the same for all cars and trucks, so much of what he says is applicable to imported vehicles as well.

Accompanying the course is Forro's book, *Silver Bullets*, an organized case-study of typical automotive system problems, selected to illustrate not only the fix for a particular car but an aspect of the vehicle control system that allows the person who understands the whole to figure out the details of the parts.

Forro teaches different classes depending on what his students want at the time, and during my visit, people focused primarily on pattern-failures of certain engine management systems. While in inexperienced training hands such an approach could easily have descended into little more than a series of 'war-stories' about cars with weird problems, Forro consistently related whatever problems he considered to a vivid sense of workplace usefulness developed during the week in his family's repair business and to the understanding of systems he sets out to clarify in all his courses. Many people taking his course were clearly repeaters, and having learned other material from Forro earlier, they'd returned with both a deeper understanding and, naturally, even harder questions to ask.



*John Forro teaches advanced automotive diagnosis at his family's long established shop in Parma, Ohio. He changes the themes covered with some frequency to keep himself and his students up on developments in the field. The focus is on real-world problems and difficult solutions.*

The tenor of the training was relaxed but businesslike. Things were never frantic, but they never dragged, either. Instead, the course went along covering the material Forro had set out for the day's project plus other related subjects as people brought them up or asked questions connecting to other aspects of automotive diagnosis and repair. The theme was set somewhere between the most frequent but difficult problems and those people had the most trouble solving.

Forro normally does his training seminars in the shop that, for the rest of the time, functions as his family business. Spectacularly neat and clean for a busy, workaday commercial garage, it makes an ideal locality to learn the finer points of automotive technology.

If you're interested in taking one of John Forro's A.S.T. Training seminars or contacting him for more information on the subject, just **Circle Number 127** on our Reader Service Card. ■

— By Joe Woods