

## Spotlight on Laser Lube Auto Repair

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### Laser Lube Auto Repair ~California, MD 301-737-1102

When Val Spencer started her Quick Lube Change Center in 1989, Three Notch Road was a two-lane road. Since then, Southern Maryland has grown – and so has Val's auto repair shop, now known as Laser Lube Oil Change and Auto Repair. More than a standard oil change center, Laser Lube services a host of car care needs from diagnosis to factory-scheduled maintenance. With eight bays and three lifts, Laser Lube can offer full auto repair from brake service and tire replacement to custom exhaust work and, of course, oil changes and tune ups.

For Val, her shop is about more than just a quick oil change. It's about arming the customer with the knowledge they need to be comfortable with their car. "My father was not mechanical," Val said. "He drove older cars and something was always broken so I decided to learn how to fix cars."

After studying car repair manuals and repairing her own vehicles, Val decided she wanted to do more to keep customers aware of their needs and happy with the results. "I want you to know about your car – you've made quite an investment. You need to keep it in top notch shape – for safety and reliability," Val said.

As the owner of Laser Lube, Val works directly with her customers, explaining why and what needs to be done and what is being done with each car. When necessary, she calls a mechanic into the lobby or brings the customer to the garage. "I enjoy providing a good and healthy service – so they are aware of their car needs. Rather than a quick in and out, we go the extra mile." She explains that her shop is the home cooked meal experience, rather than the fast food experience, of car repair.

That one on one experience with the owner and operator sets Laser Lube apart from the competition. Val knows the ins and outs of car repair, but is also committed to avoiding jargon and sharing clear information. "I do a lot of show and tell," she says. "I bring them out to show them what's leaking and show them the parts they need."

In fact, consumer education is so important to Val that she frequently offers car care workshops at the shop or in the community. Mostly for women, these seminars teach customers how to check their cars' fluids, change tires, jump batteries, check tire pressure, check brake integrity, and other critical factors. "Being in a transient area, I want customers to feel comfortable knowing if they need things recommended by another mechanic, in other parts of the country."

In addition, Laser Lube has participated in a number of community fundraising and charity projects over the years. Recipients have included Toys for Tots, Muscular Dystrophy Association, and CareNet Pregnancy Center of Southern Maryland. In 2011, Laser Lube donated a van to a local Special Olympic athlete who wanted a vehicle to help fellow athletes get to practices and events. Local rugby teams, schools, churches, and community organizations have also benefited from the generosity of Val and Laser Lube.

Community involvement has always been important to Val, since the first days of her shop. Laser Lube grew up with the community and, as competition has crept into the area, it continues to thrive thanks to loyal community customers that return for all their needs and refer Laser Lube to friends. Laser Lube maintains customer satisfaction with a clean environment, including two lobbies and a kids' waiting area, and thorough work. They always return cars after a thorough vacuum and window washing. While most shops offer a 14-point inspection, Laser Lube conducts a 40-point inspection, with every oil change, which includes testing the battery, checking the antifreeze for pH consistency, checking brake fluid for moisture, and generally looking for leaks or worn parts.

While such thorough work takes longer than 15 minutes, Laser Lube prides itself on timely service. "We can actually do the repairs we see, as well as factory scheduled maintenance, in our shop," Val said. Laser Lube provides same day or next day service as often as possible. The shop keeps a mechanic on duty at all times to perform repairs and maintenance.

"We are operating in an environment where we are trying to do the right thing for each individual," Val said about Laser Lube. It's with that focus that Val is confident Laser Lube will continue to grow with Southern Maryland.

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