

## Master Technician Eric Bjorklund and his Money-saving Tips for Keeping your Volvo on the Road and Out of the Shop



*LET YOUR VOLVO SOAR LIKE AN ACROBATIC PLANE BUT KEEP YOUR COSTS AS FLAT AS A SWEDISH PANCAKE. ASE-Certified-Master Technician Eric Bjorklund tells us how.*

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# Featured Customer: Dorothy Manly

## A Woman on her Way with Volvo

Dorothy Manly is as happy with the direction of her life as she is with the performance of her Volvo, the car that won her heart as a teenager and helped define who she is as a woman.

She recalls the impression her brother's tan, turtleback Volvo made on her with the same affection one might recall a first kiss. "It was my first intimate exposure to a Volvo. It was love at first sight. A great looking car that wasn't trying to be anything it was not. It was reliable. It was what it was."

At the time, she was living with her family in Raleigh, North Carolina, and had just received her driver's license and her first car, a modern, American-made Mustang. "My mother gave me the car when I turned 15. It just sat there waiting for me to turn 16." Although driving this cutting-edge car was fashionable among peers, the Volvo's handsome, retro, design resonated with her as she searched for autonomy and struggled with the limitations of a conservative upbringing.

This encounter with the Volvo also coincided with Manly's entering southern society in traditional fashion. "By the time I was presented as a debutante the world had begun to change, but that part of the country was still pretty conservative, and in North Carolina every town had its yearly debutante balls. For the girls, it was one summer of solid partying complimented by teas with great aunts, being in the right place at the right time, and posing for photographers."

During this season of formal gowns and china tea cups, the androgynous-looking turtleback represented for Manly the possibility of a detour from stereotypical feminine roles and outdated southern traditions. "For me the Volvo said I could do what I needed to do in my life, and I could honor my upbringing in whatever way I needed to."

By college age, Manly was an accomplished musician who had studied voice, cello, and piano for a decade. She contemplated channeling her focus towards a career in medicine like her father a physician. "I would have loved to have gone to medical school but my father assured me that if anyone found out how smart I was, no one would marry me. I had been accepted at Wellesley College, but he told me that was too far to go geographically. On his instance, she attended Hollins University in Roanoke Virginia and left home with her father's admonitions about the dire consequences of participating in campus anti-war demonstrations.

At Hollins she earned a B.A. in art history and continued her music studies. Instead of taking a U-turn back to North Carolina after graduation, Manly took another cultural detour and moved to Midway, Kentucky, a thoroughbred race-horse breeding town between Frankfort and Lexington.

Here she worked as a secretary on a stud farm, where her duties involved handling paperwork confirming pre-arranged trysts between visiting mares and the stud. "There was only a wall between the stud's stall and my office and I could hear him snorting, stomping, and pawing the wall throughout the day," recalled Manly.

To pay the rent and to put money aside for a Volvo, she got a second job as a farm laborer on a 1000-acre farm. As she worked alongside the farm owner's son digging fence-post holes, mowing hay, planting tobacco, and building stacked-stone fences, they fell in love and married.

In search of the perfect farm car, she bought a navy blue station wagon for \$5,000, and dumped the Buick she had been driving and detested. "The Volvo was compact, chic in a solid way. It had comfortable leather seats and was extremely reliable—very important for living deep in the country. "It was there to do a job," said Manly who could have been speaking about herself.

That Volvo wagon was also ahead of its time mechanically. Once while driving back to Midway from Lexington in her new car, Manly heard an unfamiliar sound coming from under the hood and pulled into a gas station for help. Here she ended up giving the attendant a lesson in mechanics. When the mechanic proclaimed a carburetor problem before looking under the hood, she announced her car didn't have one. He scoffed condescendingly and said, "Oh honey, everyone's got a carburetor." When he stuck his head under the hood, Manly leaned out the window and could see that he looked shocked. "You're right, you don't have a carburetor" he sputtered, gazing wide-eyed at his first fuel-injected engine.

While the navy-blue Volvo earned its keep on the farm, Manly and the farmer's son tied the knot and then decided to have a family. "The day before I gave birth to my first son, I was running over the dark green, grassy hills herding cattle," recalls Manly. This new era ushered in a new cream-colored diesel Volvo which outlasted the marriage itself.

With it they hauled the wood and bricks used to refurbish a 200-year-old log cabin, complete with ash floor and walnut sills. "It had no running water or heat when I first moved in, and my parents thought I was out of my mind when they came to visit. My father observed sourly that he had no idea I was living in such abject poverty."

Switching gears as her marriage went downhill Manly pursued graduate work in Classical Greek and Latin language at the University of Chicago, which was 360 miles away. She commuted one way, spent the week in Chicago, and drove home on weekends. That faithful Volvo clocked up 275,000 miles before it died.

After the first marriage ended, Manly met her second husband Donald "Max" Ziff through their mutual love of music. They soon moved to Berkeley and decided to rely on public transportation instead of buying a car. When the time was right in 2001, Manly purchased her third Volvo station wagon.

The car she nicknamed "Blackie" led to Ackerman's when Manly sought out an independent mechanic to service the car. "I was astonished when I took my car in to the shop. Bruce was ever so nice, and I had never had a better service experience. I've since learned that Bruce always finds a way to take care of a problem. Once I desperately needed a tow and AAA couldn't help. I called Bruce in a panic, and he immediately found a towing company for me and let me leave my car with him until it was completely fixed. He went completely above and beyond the call of duty."

In addition to being impressed with Bruce's customer service and his mechanics' expertise, she likes Ackerman's no-surprise policy when it comes to okaying work in advance. "If work needs to be done, Bruce always checks in with me. I have never walked in not knowing what I needed to pay, and on the rare occasion that



*Dorothy Manly reveals the source of her affection for Volvos and explains her loyalty to Ackerman's.*

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something needed rechecking he was generous and gracious. There were no questions and no charges.”

Nowadays, she appreciates the car’s reliability as she serves as an administrative assistant with the San Francisco Early Music Society where she arranges concerts, handles fundraising, works with the board, answers calls from the public, and supports members.

In their free time she and her husband, who works at Google, are solo singers at an Anglican church in Palo Alto and also perform with a variety of choirs throughout the Bay Area. While she sings soprano, he sings bass, and they find harmony personally and vocally.

Much as a melody weaves itself into consciousness, Manly wove music and the Volvo into her life. She doesn’t miss a beat when describing it in musical terms. If the car were a piece of music it would be a string quartet with shifting themes and moods revolving around a central theme. If it were an instrument, her Volvo would certainly be a cello, the fundamental sound in a string quartet. And if it were a singer, its voice would have the deep, rich, solid voice of a mezzo soprano.

*Eric Bjorklund: from Page 1*

Here are his three tips for keeping your repair costs low:

Bring your car in for a service after every 5,000 miles. This is well worth the investment because during the service your Volvo receives not only an oil change, lubrication, and fluid top up, but also an in-depth inspection by a specialist with intimate knowledge of your particular car. The attention saves you money by nipping problems in the bud.

Ensure your Volvo runs as safely and reliably as possible by acting on any preventative maintenance suggested by your technician.

Stay Volvo smart by tuning in to your Volvo’s sounds, vibrations, and yes even smells, by responding to instrument panel warning lights displayed on your dash board, and by reporting anything unusual to Bruce.

When Eric’s not at the shop making sure your Volvo soars when you get behind the wheel, you’ll find him at the radio control club flying his scaled-down model of a Russian, acrobatic airplane. A former co-worker introduced him to this hobby, and six years later Eric bought a kit and assembled the 16-pound craft with a seven-foot wing span. When the wings are off, and stored in protective holders, the plane made of Balsa wood, plywood, and fiber glass, fits snugly in the trunk of his burgundy Volvo wagon.

In his personal life Bjorklund is also flying high. Just one year ago he married his high-school sweetheart Karen Jackson who has degrees in South-American art history. They reconnected in Livermore when they were both caring for their ailing, elderly mothers, ended up remodeling a house jointly, and then decided to settle down. Together they enjoy getting away for peaceful weekends in Jenner or Gualala, and visiting museums. Just recently they took a trip to Los Angeles to visit the King Tutankhamen exhibit.

As a caring father, he also makes time for his three grown children, and their Volvos. His 36-year-old son Jeff, a bio-geneticist who lives in San Carlos, drives an 850 Volvo turbo, his 23-year-old daughter Amelia, who works with a peer-mentoring program for San Francisco’s Y.M.C.A., drives a 940 Volvo, and his 21-year-old daughter Heather, who studies forensic accounting at Chico State University, drives a Volvo 240. When his offspring occasionally roll their wheels into the shop for repairs, the mechanic’s name is always “Dad,” the work is always a labor of love, and the cost of the repairs is always as flat as a Swedish pancake.

## **Ackerman will Donate 5% of your Car-repair Charges to Schools or Non-profits**

All you have to do is ask, and Bruce will write a check for your favorite cause next time you bring your car in for a service or repairs. 60+ checks totaling \$5,128.00 have been sent or delivered to the following organizations since January 1, 2008:

### **Schools on a Roll with Ackerman’s**

Bay View after-school Program

Bentley School

Berkeley High School Athletic Fund

Berkeley High School Development Group

Berkeley High School Mountain Biking Team

Berkeley Montessori School

Bishop O’Dowd High School

Black Pine Circle School

Castro Valley High School

Dandelion Cooperative Nursery School

Grant Elementary School

Kaiser Elementary School PTA

Le Conte Elementary School

Maybeck High School

McKinley Elementary School

Pacific Boychoir Academy

Park Day School

Piedmont Boy Scouts

Redwood Day School

San Francisco Girls’ Choir

St. Bernard’s School

St. John’s Elementary School

St. Paul’s Episcopal School

Tehiyah Day School

The College Preparatory School

The Creative Play Center

The Center for Vocational Alternatives

The Creating Opportunities for Youth Coalition

Thornhill Elementary School

Walden School

Willard School

Windrush School

### **Community on a Roll with Ackerman’s**

Berkeley Food and Housing

Berkeley Humane Society

City of Berkeley Pools

Friends of Golden Gate Library

New Century Chamber Orchestra

Project Open Hand

Sierra Club

The Family Link

The Multi-cultural Music Fellowship

The Traveling Jewish Theatre

Vital Life Services

Women’s Cancer Resource Center



*A Certified Green Business*

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Special thanks to Pat Russell.

**We Provide the Following Services for your Volvo:**

Brakes	Drive Line	Fuel Injection	Suspension
"Check Engine" Light	Electrical	Ignition Repairs	Transmission
Climate Control	Engine repairs	Interior Repairs	
Diagnostics	Exhaust	Steering	

**BERKELEY**

**Dial 549-9330 for your Chance to Win our Monthly  
\$150 Gift Certificate for Chez Panisse Restaurant**

**Add Ackerman's License Plate Frames to your Volvo for a chance to win.**

We'll place your name in the hat if you let us put our license frames on your Volvo. Customers with the frames in place need only phone and ask that their name be placed in the hat. The winners so far are: Cynthia Bonta, Angie Buama, Jeremy Giddings, Keasley Jones, Kathryn Kefauver, Dorothy Manly, Anne Parris, Lisette Ruane, Kaja Silverman, and Nancy Souza.

**ACKERMAN'S**

**Visit us online at: [www.AckermanServicingVolvo.com](http://www.AckermanServicingVolvo.com)**

## Master Technician Eric Bjorklund

### Plus his Money-Saving Tips for Keeping your Volvo On the Road and Out of the Shop



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#### Ackerman's Spells Year-round Customer Treats

- Avail of early-bird check in.
- Call 549.9330 to enter our monthly Chez Panisse dinner-for-two drawing.
- Keep stress at bay by listening to our in-shop classical music selection.
- Earmark 5% of your repair bill for a local school or non profit.
- Read the New York Times while our master technicians work on your Volvo.
- Meet the ASA-certified master technicians.
- Admire the orchids that brighten our waiting area.
- Nosh on a chocolate-covered, Semifreddi's biscotti from our cookie jar.
- Sip a complimentary cup of Peet's coffee next time you bring your car in.