



Handout 10/8/2024
Annual Session

The Reincarnation of Slick Willy & My First Car

It was the summer of 1964. At the age of 16 and after working very long hours all summer on the cherry farm with my dad and saving all the money I could, my dad and I went to Traverse City looking for my first car. At that time, where the current Holiday gas station is on M22, there was a used car lot. As we were driving by on our way into TC, I spotted this beautiful 1958 Chevrolet--one of every teenager's favorite cars back in the 60s. After driving around different car lots in Traverse City, we ended up back at the car lot where that beautiful 1958 Chevrolet was parked. It was love at first sight and after looking it over, knowing it needed a little work and taking it for a short test drive, we went back to the car lot and made a deal with slick Willy, who said that it is in great shape, knew the owner, and it was only driven to church on Sunday by some little old lady. You know the story.

Well, what would've been the best day of my life went south fast. As I was driving through Suttons Bay and made a turn onto 204, the engine started making noises. As I turned on Horn Road with lots of smoke, the motor quit. Well, dad had a chain in the farm truck, so we hooked it up, and he pulled me 2 miles down the road to the farm. Once there, my dad called slick Willy at the car lot and was told pretty much that it was, "buyer beware" and an "as is" deal, so it was not my problem". Well, after working all day on the farm, working nights on the car, and after many trips to Ted Grant's junkyard in Lake Leelanau, I and two of my buddies got the car in tiptop shape, but my life savings of about \$200 was gone. I learned a very valuable lesson at a young age.

Now the reason I am telling this story (if anybody is still reading) is when it came to the part of the commissioners' agenda last night about the renewable energy and electrification project, there sat slick Willy (President of Leelanau Energy) trying to sell the county and the commissioners this beautiful 1958 Chevrolet—sorry--I mean complete solar package with ugly panels. All it costs is a mere \$1 million which in his words would really be absolutely free not to mention the savings of \$40,000 a year for the governmental center.

Thank God for Melinda.   Maybe she didn't quite stop it yet, but she sure slammed the brakes on it for a while. The sad part is once slick Willy started losing his grasp of the sale, he not only became visibly irritated, but he was flat out angry at Melinda, which she certainly did not deserve and for which he should've been called out. If that would've happened in my house, I would've very quickly shown him the door headfirst! Melinda, thanks for your great work and keep it up. We and Leelanau County need you now more than ever.

David Kiessel
Suttons Bay
Precinct Delegate