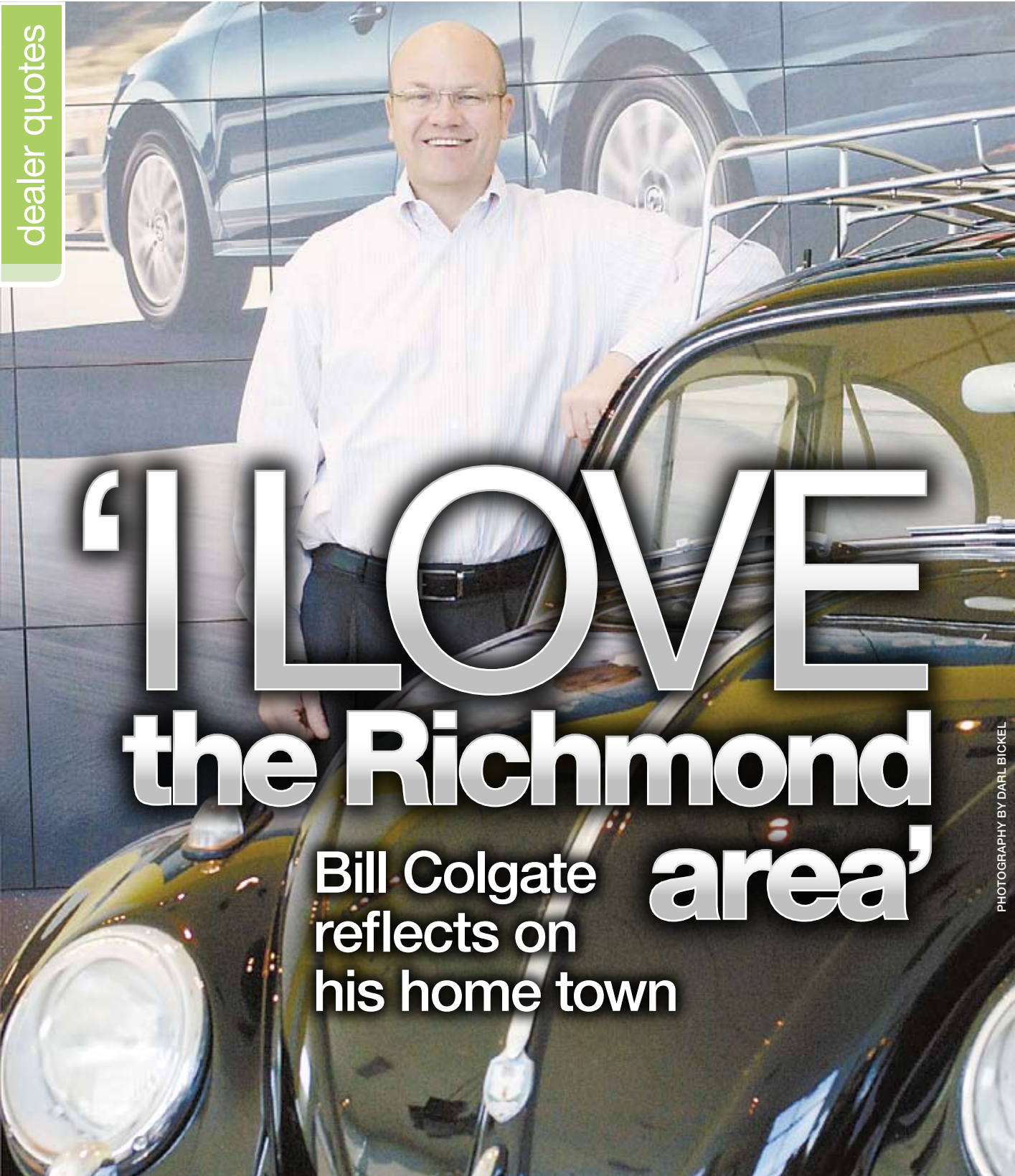


4 full throttle
BY RHONDA WHEELER



dealer quotes



'I LOVE the Richmond area'

Bill Colgate reflects on his home town

PHOTOGRAPHY BY DARL BICKEL

Richard Bland College in 1990, then started at VSU in 1993. Honestly, I love the Richmond area. I've had opportunities to go other places over the years, but I love the city, whether it's the West End or Southside or the Tri-Cities area. I enjoy the people here. I call it home and I'm happy that my three daughters are going to enjoy the area as much as I have over the past 40 years.

Q What are you most excited about for 2011? What's your hottest seller?

A For 2011 we're most excited at Volkswagen about the 2012 Passat. It's going to be built in America, in Chattanooga, Tenn. It's nice that a European company is going to build cars in the United States and create jobs and help our economy. We actually should have those cars soon, by the third quarter or a bit sooner. It's a completely new car. We also have a new Beetle coming this year, a complete redesign on that also. Volkswagen's goal at this point is to be one if not the leading brand in the United States. That's why the Passat is a strictly U.S. vehicle, being built specifically for the U.S. market and our U.S. citizens. And the new Beetle is going to be a little bit more mean; it's going to be a car that pushes the boundaries, and has a lot of characteristics of its Porsche brothers and sisters.

And Jaguar has received numerous accolades lately, both for vehicle reliability and customer service. As they say, this isn't your father's Jaguar. The new XJ is a phenomenal car. I've never driven a full-sized sedan of this nature. It offers the luxury you'd find in a Mercedes and the drivability of a BMW. ■

PROMOTIONAL FEATURE BY JON SEALY

Meet Bill Colgate of Brown's VW and Brown's Jaguar on the Midlothian Turnpike. Headquartered in Fairfax, the Brown's Automotive Group has been one of the mid-Atlantic's largest auto groups for 30 years. The company has been in the Richmond market since 1986, and the group currently is looking to expand. Colgate talked to me about how he got into the business and what's new with VW and Jaguar.

Q What was your first car?

A A 1974 Plymouth Duster with a slant-six, a three-speed on the floor and one blue fender. I paid 250 bucks for it. One interesting thing was that it had that old foamy hard material for the headliner. Everybody that ever rode in my car signed the roof. My dad didn't like that it happened, but I thought it was fun. As far as other memories — I don't

know if there's a statute of limitations, so I don't want to talk about it.

Q Fair enough. How did you get into the business?

A I was attending college at Virginia State University. I wanted a break from school and needed a way to make money. I was driving down Midlothian Turnpike one afternoon and I just stopped by Dick Strauss Ford and asked for a job. I was hired on the spot. I went through a two-week training course, then on my first three days on the job I sold two cars and never looked back.

A year later I had an opportunity to be a Business Manager at Brown's C-P-V-J. I worked my

way up the ladder from there to Finance Director at the VW store, where I am now. After a short stint in northern Virginia, I became the General Sales Manager of Brown's VW in 1998 and then General Manager in 2000. I also became a minority owner in the Jaguar store in 2010. I have been very fortunate to have outstanding employees and customers over the years to help me advance in this business I love so much. A little luck helps too.

Q I know you're local to Richmond, so tell me a bit about Richmond as your home town.

A I graduated from Meadowbrook in 1985 and joined the U.S. Army and served through 1989. I started at

"We also have a new Beetle coming this year, a complete redesign on that also."

AT A GLANCE:

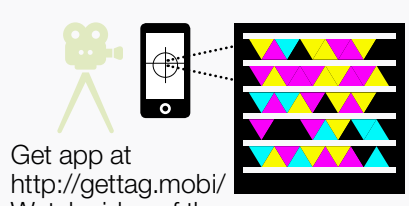
BROWN'S RICHMOND VOLKSWAGEN

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Richmond, VA 23235
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Sunday (Last Day of the Month) 12 noon - 6PM

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