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**SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION**  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20549

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**FORM 8-K**

**CURRENT REPORT**  
**PURSUANT TO SECTION 13 OR 15(d) OF THE**  
**SECURITIES EXCHANGE ACT OF 1934**

**Date of report (Date of earliest event reported): December 16, 2003**

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**SONIC AUTOMOTIVE, INC.**

(Exact Name of Registrant as Specified in Charter)

**Delaware**

(State or Other Jurisdiction of Incorporation)

**1-13395**

(Commission File Number)

**56-201079**

(I.R.S. Employer Identification No.)

**5401 E. Independence Boulevard, Charlotte, North Carolina**  
(Address of Principal Executive Offices)

**28212**  
(Zip Code)

Registrant's telephone number, including area code: **(704) 566-2400**

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**Item 5. Other Events and Regulation FD Disclosure**

On December 16, 2003, we issued a press release announcing an increase in our share repurchase authorization.

A copy of the press release is attached hereto as Exhibit 99.1.

**SIGNATURES**

Pursuant to the requirements of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, the Registrant has duly caused this current report on Form 8-K to be signed on its behalf by the undersigned hereunto duly authorized.

SONIC AUTOMOTIVE, INC.

By: \_\_\_\_\_ /s/ Stephen K. Coss

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Stephen K. Coss  
Vice President and General Counsel

Dated: December 16, 2003

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

***SONIC AUTOMOTIVE INCREASES SHARE REPURCHASE AUTHORIZATION***

**CHARLOTTE, NC (December 16, 2003)** – Sonic Automotive, Inc. (NYSE: SAH) today announced that its Board of Directors has increased the share repurchase authorization from \$145 million to \$165 million. This authorization permits the Company to repurchase outstanding shares of its Class A common stock or to redeem securities convertible into its Class A common stock. The Company now has approximately \$34 million of this increased authorization remaining.

**About Sonic Automotive, Inc.**

Sonic Automotive, Inc., a Fortune 300 Company, is one of the largest automotive retailers in the United States operating 189 franchises and 40 collision repair centers. Sonic can be reached on the Web at [www.sonicautomotive.com](http://www.sonicautomotive.com).

Included herein are forward-looking statements, including statements with respect to anticipated share repurchase activity. There are many factors that affect management's views about future events and trends of the Company's business. These factors involve risk and uncertainties that could cause actual results or trends to differ materially from management's view, including without limitation, economic conditions, risks associated with acquisitions and the risk factors described in the Company's Current Report on Form 8-K dated October 2, 2003. The Company does not undertake any obligation to update forward-looking information.

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