

# ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 8 NUMBER 5  
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2009

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# ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

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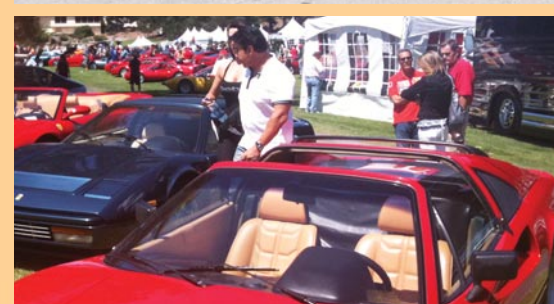
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**COVER:** The Toyota Tundra CrewMax pickup shows its stuff on dirt roads in the northeast fringe of the Valley . **Photo: Joe Sage**

While Arizona was cookin' hot in July and August, we briefly cooled our heels on the Monterey Peninsula—at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance, Monterey Historic Races, Concorso Italiano, La Dolce Vita Automobili, and auctions by Russo and Steele, RM, Mecum and Gooding & Company. We give you a taste of eight Monterey and Pebble Beach events we hit in one long weekend.

We bring you a bit of a Toyotathon this issue, starting with our cover truck, marking Toyota's ascendancy from big-pickup wanna-plays to top-tier contenders.

Each for its own reason, we also revisit three vehicles we've presented before. We attended the international launch of the Toyota Venza in southwestern Pennsylvania last fall, where we found much to admire, but wondered if we had a firm preference between the four- and six-cylinder alternatives (there are also front- and all-wheel-drive alternatives). We just spent a full week with each engine and ponder the question anew. We also drove the Lexus LX 570 SUV at its media launch in Las Vegas last year, but give it a full week on the freeways and back roads of Arizona. And whereas we wrote up the new-for-the-US Ford Transit Connect van as soon as we saw it announced—so compelling were its specifications—we had a chance to examine it in person, in a variety of commercial configurations, plus give it a spin on the test track at Firebird International Raceway.

Speaking of Firebird, Larry Edsall heads to the Bob Bondurant School of High Performance Driving to report on driver training aimed at teens, where he found insights that applied to anyone—including himself at age 61, the inverse of the typical 16 taking the course. Larry also traveled to Tucson to meet Colleen Crowninshield, a fascinating lady with an alternative fuels job during the day and an alternative fuels drag racing habit at night.

Enjoy the ride.



Joe Sage  
Publisher/ Executive Editor

# ARIZONA DRIVER

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**PUBLISHER / EXECUTIVE EDITOR:**

Joe Sage

**CONTRIBUTING WRITERS:**

Nick Calderone  
HR Driver  
Larry Edsall  
Gary Goldzweig  
Bob Kroener  
JP Molnar  
John Priddy  
Steve Purdy  
Barbara and Bill Schaffer  
Jan Wagner

**CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS:**

Randall Bohl  
Bob Chapman  
Luis DeBonoPaula  
Brenda Priddy  
Jan Wagner

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www.azdrivermag.com  
letters@azdrivermag.com

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**GOODGUYS AWARD  
"LANDSPEED" LOUISE ANN NOETH NAMED  
2009 GOODGUYS WOMAN OF THE YEAR**

Renowned author, historian and columnist "LandSpeed" Louise Ann Noeth was named 2009 Goodguys Woman of the Year at the 12th PPG Nationals in Columbus, Ohio. A veteran of motorsport and land speed racing journalism, she accepted the award in front of a packed house during the event awards ceremony.

After years of racing a 250mph jet dragster, Noeth joined Petersen Publishing Company in 1979. She was the first female editor-in-chief of any of the firm's automotive publications. While there, she produced *Hot Rod Industry News*, *SEMA Show Daily*, contributed to *Hot Rod*, *Car Craft*, *Motor Trend* and many specialty publications, and served on the development team for the Hot Rod Nationals and Car Craft Nationals. On the federal regulatory level, she has served on SEMA committees for tires, emissions and suspension, helping protect enthusiasts' rights across the nation.

In 1984, she founded LandSpeed Productions, offering a variety of creative disciplines including writing, photography, graphic design, PR and advertising. With her insatiable desire to write, photograph and talk about fast machines, she became active in the world of land speed racing in the 1990s, teaming with Craig Breedlove's "Spirit of America" streamliner. During his most recent land speed record run at Black Rock Desert in 1997, she covered the event for *Sports Illustrated*, *USA Today*, *Car and Driver*, *The Chicago Tribune*, *London Daily Telegraph* and *CAR Magazine*. In 2001 Noeth served as a crew member for Team Vesco's "Turbinator" streamliner which set the current world land speed record for wheel-driven vehicles at 458MPH at the Bonneville Salt Flats. Most recently, she was team member of Steve Fossett's world land speed record bid.

An accomplished author, Noeth wrote the definitive book on land speed racing, *Bonneville: The Fastest Place on Earth* (now in its seventh printing). In addition, she's been a columnist focused on land speed racing for the last 20 years for a variety of publications including the popular "Fuel for Thought" appearing monthly in the *Goodguys Goodtimes Gazette*. When she's not writing, she stays busy designing brochures, ads and logos, as well as completing photo assignments around the globe.

The annual Goodguys Woman of the Year award is in honor of the late Karen Bloechl (who was instrumental in the formative years of the Goodguys Association) and recognizes a female industry executive who serves the integrity and growth of the hot rodding industry. ■



**BONDURANT  
CHAMPIONSHIP RACE SERIES PRIZE  
PACKAGE VALUED OVER \$47,000.**

The Bob Bondurant School of High Performance Driving announces the first place winner of its Championship Race Series will receive a prize package valued at more than \$35,000 which includes a test day in a Pro Formula Mazda prepared by World Speed Motorsports; a double header race weekend in the Molecule Formula Mazda Challenge Series; a test day in the Daytona Prototype Sports Car, the top class of car in the Grand Am Rolex Sports Car Series; and services from Finlay Motorsports' Driver Management program.\*

The race series runner-up will win a prize package valued at \$9,000, including a free test day in a Pro Formula Mazda prepared by World Speed Motorsports, as well as a fan appreciation day at the School for 10 people, an action-packed two-hour event including Auto Cross, Lead & Follow on the race track and Hot Laps with Bondurant instructors.

The 3rd place winner will receive a two-day Advanced Formula Car Racing Course worth \$3,895.

Bondurant's Championship Race Series begins in September for the 2009-2010 race season and includes 18 races over nine weekends utilizing three different tracks at Firebird International Raceway. Drivers will compete in one of Bondurant's newly acquired, purpose-built Formula Mazda race cars each weekend, participating in Friday testing rounds followed by qualifying and racing on Saturday and Sunday. The race cars are powered by 13B Mazda rotary engines and equipped with proper Goodyear racing slicks and 4-speed Hewland gearboxes.

World Speed Motorsports' Pro Formula Mazda is the same car used in the Star Mazda Championship presented by Goodyear. Finlay Motorsports' Driver Management and Development program offers motorsports career planning, amateur driver race program planning, driver evaluation, contract negotiations and more.

The Bondurant Championship Race Series is open to anyone 15 years or older who is a driver of "good standing" with the Bob Bondurant School of High Performance Driving. Cost is \$3,495 per event, which includes car rental, instruction and maintenance of the vehicle. Participants bring their own safety equipment including suits, gloves, head and neck restraints.

For more information, visit [www.bondurant.com](http://www.bondurant.com) or call 800-842-RACE (7223).

\* All travel and crash damage liabilities are the responsibility of the competitor. ■



**BRIDGESTONE  
EXCLUSIVE TO BMW DRIVER TRAINING**

Bridgestone has signed a three-year contract to supply tires to BMW Driver Training, a business group in the BMW M GmbH division offering specialized programs to improve individual driver skills, reactions and awareness. More than 54,000 drivers have taken part in the training program in Europe during the last three years. The move further reinforces Bridgestone's partnership with BMW, as they already supply BMW Sauber Formula 1 Team and all teams in MotoGP.

**TOYO  
ENTRY-LEVEL HIGH PERFORMANCE TIRE**

The Toyo Extensa™ HP is the company's first entry-level, high performance tire for the US market and the second product in the new Extensa line, offering value-priced options for original equipment replacement and plus sizing. This all-season, unidirectional tire incorporates the Toyo Silent Wall™ for quietness and T-mode® technology for performance and comfort. Four wide circumferential grooves and full depth sipes give great wet traction, interlocking tread blocks boost stability and cornering, and a three-variable pitch design minimizes tread noise. Ten sizes, from 16 to 20 inches, fit key performance coupes and sedans from Acura, Audi, Chevrolet, Ford, Mazda, Nissan, Scion, Subaru, Volkswagen and others. Ten more sizes, including 15-inch, arrive this fall. The new value-focused Extensa line from Toyo Tires also includes the Toyo Extensa A/S for sedans and minivans.

**BRIDGESTONE  
WINNER OF TIRE RACK REAL WORLD TEST**

The new Potenza RE-11 earned first overall in Tire Rack's Real World Road Ride and Performance Test Track Drive of extreme performance summer tires. A 6.6-mile course of country roads, freeways and state highways in varying conditions showed how various tires compare in everyday ride quality, noise, comfort and handling. To test under more extreme conditions, Tire Rack's dedicated performance test track pushed each tire's limits in wet and dry conditions. The Potenza RE-11 received high marks for wet performance, posting the fastest average lap time, highest average cornering force (g-force) and shortest wet stopping distance. Available in V- and W-speed rated sizes, the Bridgestone Potenza RE-11 will be offered in 31 different sizes ranging from 15- to 19-inch. The tire is designed specifically for the sports car market, including the Honda S2000, Nissan 350Z, the Mini Cooper S and the BMW 3 Series. ■

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**ARIZONA INTERNATIONAL AUTO SHOW  
PHOENIX CONVENTION CENTER  
NOVEMBER 26-29, 2009**

With fluctuating gas prices, this exciting event is the perfect place for showgoers to check out the latest gas-sipping small cars, hybrids and all the latest green vehicles. The show will also showcase hundreds of hot new vehicles, exotics, pre-production models and more.

**WHAT:**

The hottest automotive trends take over Phoenix when the 2010-model Arizona International Auto Show rolls hundreds of new cars, crossovers, sport/utility vehicles, trucks and more into the all-new Phoenix Convention Center. The entire bottom level of the new center will be jam-packed with new cars—all on one level.

This automotive extravaganza will feature eye-popping exotics, pre-production models and the latest alternative fuel options for showgoers looking to go green. Attendees are invited to check out all the latest vehicles in this non-selling environment, sit behind the wheels, inspect engines and learn about new automotive technologies.

**WHEN:**

Thursday, November 26 (Thanksgiving Day) ...9am-7pm  
Friday, November 27 .....9am-9pm  
Saturday, November 28 .....9am-9pm  
Sunday, November 29 .....9am-7pm

**WHERE:**

Phoenix Convention Center  
100 N 3rd Street, Phoenix AZ 85004

**WHO:**

Representatives from leading automotive manufacturers will be on-site to answer questions and provide information on the latest vehicles. The Arizona International Auto Show is owned and presented by the Valley Auto Dealers Association and produced by Motor Trend Auto Shows, LLC, the nation's largest auto show producer.

**TICKETS:**

Admission is \$9 for adults and \$5 for seniors (62 and older), military with ID, students with ID and children (7-12). Children six and younger are admitted free.

On Family Day, Sunday, November 29, children 12 and younger are admitted free when accompanied by a paying adult.

More information and discount coupons are available at [www.AutoShowPhoenix.com](http://www.AutoShowPhoenix.com). Advance e-tickets may also be purchased online at a savings of \$1 off the regular adult admission price. ■



**MOTORIST CHOICE AWARDS VEHICLES  
PLEASE BOTH HEARTS AND MINDS**

Right brain, left brain: practical versus emotional—an age-old dilemma often at the center of decision making when buying a new car or truck. The fourth annual Motorist Choice Awards for 2009 recognize new cars and trucks that give their owners both economic and emotional satisfaction. The survey scores 196 cars, trucks, crossovers and SUVs. With top overall scores in both owner satisfaction and value, the Lexus LS placed highest of any 2009 model year vehicle.

Large and luxury vehicles dominated this year's results. The top 34 ranked cars, and 106 of the top 107, are large cars, luxury cars, sport utility vehicles, crossover SUVs or minivans. Only one small car, the BMW 1-Series, scored in the top 100, landing in the 35th slot. Toyota Prius is the next-highest-scoring small car, coming in 107th.

Awards are given in twenty-three segments, as well as for the top-scoring brand (Lexus). Nine manufacturers earned segment wins, led by Toyota with nine awards (including three for Lexus), followed by GM with six (Chevrolet 4, Cadillac 2), Honda with three, and Chrysler with two (Dodge, Jeep). Audi, Ford, Hyundai, Nissan and VW took top honors in one segment each.

The Motorist Choice Awards were co-developed by AutoPacific, known for its owner satisfaction rankings, and IntelliChoice.com, an online source for automotive ownership cost and value analysis.

**SAMPLE SEGMENT WINNERS**

Premium Luxury Car.....	Lexus LS
Aspirational Luxury Car.....	Audi A5
Mid-Size Luxury Car.....	Lexus ES
Premium Mid-Size Car.....	Toyota Camry
Mid-Size Car.....	Volkswagen Jetta
Image Compact Car.....	Toyota Prius
Economy Car.....	Honda Fit
Sports Car.....	Chevrolet Corvette
Sporty Car.....	Dodge Challenger
Large Pickup.....	Chevrolet Avalanche
Compact Pickup.....	Nissan Frontier
Large SUV.....	Chevrolet Tahoe
Luxury Crossover SUV.....	Lexus RX
Premium Mid-Size Crossover.....	Toyota Venza
Mid-Size SUV.....	Toyota FJ Cruiser
Mid-Size Crossover SUV.....	Honda CR-V
Compact Crossover SUV.....	(TIE) Hyundai Tucson
.....	(TIE) Jeep Patriot ■



**OWNERS RANK PORSCHE 911 "MOST  
SATISFYING" PREMIUM SPORTS CAR**

In a national survey conducted by the well-respected product-consulting firm AutoPacific, new car owners chose the Porsche 911 model line as the most satisfying Premium Sports Car, winning the Vehicle Satisfaction Award (VSA) in a competitive field that includes some of the world's most renowned nameplates.

Just as importantly, in the same survey, auto buyers overwhelmingly selected the entire Porsche brand as the one they would recommend most to their friends and family. This very coveted award demonstrates the passion and devotion owners have for their cars.

"The thing we really see is that if an owner is willing to recommend a vehicle, they are making a real commitment to it," said George Peterson, president of California-based AutoPacific.

Porsche had the highest most-recommended score, with 91 percent of owners saying they would "definitely" recommend a car from Porsche's full-line of offerings. In the same survey, which included more than 25,000 consumers from around the nation, owners handed the 911 top honors in the highly competitive Vehicle Satisfaction Award for Premium Sports Cars. The VSA is considered an industry benchmark for objectively measuring how satisfied an owner is with his or her car or light truck, and reflects the opinions of consumers nationwide.

"AutoPacific has conducted this industry research since 1997. Vehicles that score highest in AutoPacific's Vehicle Satisfaction Awards have hit the mark delivering value and satisfaction with their buyers by performing well in 48 separate categories that measure the ownership experience."

Porsche introduced a new generation 911 model series last year. All 2009 911s offer a higher level of performance with improved fuel efficiency thanks to higher displacement engines with direct fuel injection (DFI) and the new optional 7-speed double-clutch gearbox Porsche-Doppelkupplung (PDK), a racing-inspired technology and a Porsche first.

AutoPacific's Vehicle Satisfaction Awards establish numerical satisfaction ratings for virtually every passenger car and light truck in North America, measuring specific areas related to a car's operation, comfort, safety and overall purchase/lease experience. The 2009 ratings reflect input from buyers and lessees of new vehicles acquired September through December. ■

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**"OIL VULNERABILITY" STATE RANKINGS**

The third annual national study by the Natural Resources Defense Council has ranked states based on the vulnerability of drivers and consumers to rising oil prices, as well as implementation of clean-energy transportation programs. As families struggle to make ends meet in their household budgets, the report shows the increased risks people face due to changing oil prices. The report has important implications for energy and climate legislation currently moving through Congress.

"Especially with today's economic challenges, Americans face a growing threat from our nation's dangerous addiction to oil," said Deron Lovaas, NRDC's transportation policy director. "This report shows how important it is for states to promote clean energy policies that will reduce our dependence on oil, while also reducing global warming pollution."

The report, *Fighting Oil Addiction: Ranking States' Oil Vulnerability and Solutions for Change*, details how oil prices impact consumers and ways in which smart policies can help break states' addiction to oil.

**MOST VULNERABLE:** According to the report, the top 10 states most vulnerable to oil price increases are:

- |                  |              |
|------------------|--------------|
| 1 Mississippi    | 2 Montana    |
| 3 South Carolina | 4 Oklahoma   |
| 5 Louisiana      | 6 Kentucky   |
| 7 Texas          | 8 New Mexico |
| 9 Georgia        | 10 Arkansas  |

**MOST ACTIVE:** States doing the most to promote clean energy technologies and reduce dependence on oil are:

- |               |                 |
|---------------|-----------------|
| 1 California  | 2 Massachusetts |
| 3 Washington  | 4 New Mexico    |
| 5 Connecticut | 6 New York      |
| 7 New Jersey  | 8 Pennsylvania  |
| 9 Oregon      | 10 Florida      |

The report first calculates oil vulnerability—how heavily each state's drivers are affected by increases in oil prices. Second, it ranks states on their adoption of solutions to reduce their oil dependence—measures they are taking to lessen their vulnerability and to bolster America's security. The report also shows that by promoting clean vehicle and fuel technologies as well as transportation alternatives states can reduce oil dependence. These measures can, in turn, create clean energy jobs, reduce vulnerability to fuel price hikes, and lessen air pollution and greenhouse gas emissions.

Lovaas added, "The Federal government can step in to help states break their addiction to oil by implementing comprehensive clean energy and climate policies and by reforming our national transportation system through an overhauled, performance-driven transportation policy."

The Natural Resources Defense Council is a national nonprofit organization of scientists, lawyers and environmental specialists dedicated to protecting public health and the environment. Founded in 1970, NRDC has 1.2 million members and online activists, with offices in New York, Washington, Chicago, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Beijing.

The full report, with state-by-state rankings, can be accessed at: [www.nrdc.org/energy/states/](http://www.nrdc.org/energy/states/)



**ARIZONA COMPANY WINS GRANT FOR LARGEST TRANSPORTATION ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT IN US HISTORY**

Phoenix-based Electric Transportation Engineering Corporation (eTec), a subsidiary of ECOtality, Inc. (OTCBB: ETL), a leader in the research, development and testing of advanced transportation and energy systems, has been selected by the US Department of Energy to implement the largest transportation electrification project in US history through a \$99.8 million grant.

eTec, the lead applicant on the proposal submitted to the US Department of Energy, is partnering with Nissan North America on a Project to deploy up to 5,000 electric vehicles (EVs) and charging infrastructure in five markets and will develop, implement and study techniques for optimizing the effectiveness of charge infrastructure supporting widespread EV deployment. In Arizona, the Phoenix and Tucson regions have been selected as target markets for this Project.

"By studying lessons learned from electric vehicle operations and the infrastructure supporting these first 5,000 vehicles, the proposed Project will enable the streamlined deployment of the next 5,000,000 electric vehicles," stated Don Karner, president of eTec. "The US Department of Energy has shown great foresight in funding a Project that deploys the largest number of vehicles and infrastructure that will make America electrical vehicle ready."

"We're thrilled to enter our hometown market and sincerely thank Mayor Phil Gordon, the City of Phoenix, the Maricopa Association of Governments, the Pima Association of Governments, the Salt River Project, Tucson Mayor Bob Walkup, the City of Tucson and Tucson Electric Power for their support and partnership in the proposal submitted to the US Department of Energy."

The proposed Project will collect and analyze data characterizing vehicle use and charging patterns in diverse topographies and climate conditions, evaluate the effectiveness of charge infrastructure, and conduct trials of various revenue systems for public charge infrastructure.

By testing and analyzing electric vehicle usage and charging patterns in a simulated mature charging environment, this project will foster the expansion of EV infrastructure that will eventually be available for widespread EV use throughout the country. Federal funding for the Project will be matched by project participants.

By 2012 it is anticipated that more than 750 new jobs will be generated by this project. By supporting the market launch of the Nissan EV, it is expected that over 5,500 new positions will be in place by 2017 as a direct result of the proposed Project. Arizona will be home to more than 250 of those jobs.

**HANNOVER, GERMANY: POST EXPO AND COURIER & PARCEL LOGISTICS EXPO**

The Postal and Courier industries operate some of the biggest fleets of vehicles on the planet—millions of cars, vans and trucks—not to mention operating some of the world's largest airlines. As an industry, it therefore faces one of the most significant global environmental challenges of the age.

Post Expo and its sister show, Courier & Parcel Logistics Expo, will this year be held in Hannover, Germany, from September 29 through October 1.

Now in its 13th year, the EXPO and Conference is recognized as the world's leading event for the international postal, express and mailing industry and will host over 250 exhibitors and more technology than ever before. Post Expo is the only event totally focused on strategy, technology and service to the global postal sector.

The event is hosted in a different country every year, with 2009 seeing the EXPO make a long awaited return to Germany. Deutsche Post AG is the host sponsor this year, and alongside the continued involvement of the Universal Postal Union, Post Expo 2009 will offer an unparalleled opportunity to see and discuss the latest technologies and to participate in an outstanding conference program that spans the three days of the show.

This year, there is a special emphasis on the industry's impact on the environment, and a special feature of the show will be a panel discussion on zero-emissions transport solutions followed by an exclusive demonstration of some of the vehicles—with an opportunity for industry insiders to drive and experience the fleets of the future on the afternoon of Wednesday, September 30.

**ECO-FRIENDLY RACE TRACK UNVEILED BY ATLANTA MOTORSPORTS PARK**

Atlanta Motorsports Park plans to build a 2-mile-long motorsports driving course, a one-of-a-kind eco-friendly track sculpted by the world renowned Formula One design engineers at Tilke Architects. It is the only design of its kind in the United States, and the only sustainable motorsports track in the world.

The track contains 6 unique and challenging course configurations and will be open 365 days a year.

CEO Jeremy Porter says, "Some of the greatest minds in motorsports say they believe this track will become truly legendary—141 feet of elevation changes and two of the most famous turns in motorsports have been incorporated into the track: one is the famous Eau Rouge sector of the Spa-Francorchamps Circuit, and the other is the nostalgic Carousel banked corner found at the Nurburgring."

Atlanta Motorsports Park is a private country club for motorsports fans looking for executive level privileges with a country-club lifestyle. \$800,000 in founding memberships were signed on by the time of a gala unveiling this summer. Further information on the facility and memberships is available online at [www.AtlantaMotorsportsPark.net](http://www.AtlantaMotorsportsPark.net)

**RESOURCES: PERFORMANCE DRIVING SCHOOLS**

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2010 Nissan 370Z Roadster

**NISSAN 370Z ROADSTER**

As engineers and designers worked on the new generation 370Z sports car, they knew the next step would be a convertible, so the car was designed to handle the conversion. As a result, the new Nissan Roadster is not only more structurally sound, it is even more beautiful than the previous convertible. The roadster does gain about 200 pounds in structural reinforcements and top hydraulics. Designers retained a fabric top, rather than the trendy metal top. This allowed them to keep the car lighter and more affordable. The top operates automatically, taking 20 seconds to make the cycle. The standard cockpit is shod in black woven "carbon" cloth seats, while the touring version gets leather "net" seats with integrated heating and cooling. The new Roadster was scheduled to go on sale in late August at a price of about \$35,000. ▼



2010 Cadillac SRX

**CADILLAC LAUNCHES TWO WAGONS**

▲ Life goes on at Cadillac even during the General Motors financial crisis. Expansion of the Cadillac lineup brought two new wagon style vehicles by late summer—the SRX Crossover and CTS Sport Wagon.

After five years of lackluster sales, the original rear-drive-platform SRX has been replaced by a smaller, front-drive-platform model based on the same mechanicals as the Chevrolet Equinox and Saturn Vue. The new smaller SRX joins the competitive luxury crossover vehicle segment that now accounts for nearly one-fourth of all luxury vehicles sold in the US. Available in front- or all-wheel drive, the new SRX is powered by a standard 3.0-liter 265-hp direct injection V-6 or optional 300-hp, 2.8-liter turbocharged V-6—each with a six-speed automatic transmission. SRX pricing starts at \$34,155.

The new CTS Sport Wagon features the same outstanding design elements but twice the cargo capacity of the popular CTS sedan. The Sport Wagon is powered by the same 270-hp 3.0-liter direct injection engine as the sedan with an optional 304-hp, 3.6-liter V-6, both paired with six-speed automatic transmissions.

**FORD'S SYNC FUNCTIONS EXPANDED**

The Ford SYNC™ system has expanded its capabilities and convenience with a new 911 service that automatically places a call directly to a local 911 operator in the

event of an accident involving the activation of an airbag or an emergency fuel pump shut-off. In such a situation, if the vehicle occupant cannot respond, SYNC speaks to the 911 service and alerts the operator that the crash has occurred. A cellphone is needed for the system to work. The 911 call service is free with the SYNC system and requires no extra fees or subscriptions.

Another new feature of SYNC is a Vehicle Health Report (VHR) that gives customers the ability to monitor and manage their vehicle's health in a single, easy-to-read report and receive important notifications. Customers can go online and set up personal reference for the report content and notification methods. Both systems are included on all new SYNC systems, and previous versions can be upgraded to add the services.

**VALVOLINE 300,000-MILE GUARANTEE**

Valvoline® motor oil is putting its money where its mouth is by offering an industry-first 300,000-mile engine guarantee for owners using Valvoline oil in their vehicles. Drivers must register online before the vehicle reaches 75,000 miles, using a simple three-step process. Participants can opt into the Valvoline Engine Guarantee program at various levels: use Valvoline Premium Conventional motor oil for a guarantee up to 150,000 miles; MaxLife® or DuraBlend® motor oils

for a guarantee up to 225,000 miles; or, for maximum protection and a guarantee up to 300,000-miles, use SynPower® Full Synthetic or MaxLife® Full Synthetic motor oils. For details or to register go to [www.valvoline.com](http://www.valvoline.com).

**CHEVY & GMC MEDIUM TRUCKS DEAD**

After unsuccessfully trying to find a buyer for their medium-size truck unit that produces the Chevrolet Kodiak and GMC Topkick trucks, General Motors has decided to kill the models. GM put the unit up for sale in 2005 and had a tentative deal with Navistar International Corp. in 2007, but the deal fell apart last summer. CEO Fritz Henderson said the unit has not been successful for years and sold only 20,000 medium-duty trucks last year.

**TATA NANO PLANNED FOR US**

Indian billionaire Ratan Tata announced he plans to sell the no-frills Nano car in the US within two years. Tata gained international attention in the last couple of years, first by buying Jaguar and Land Rover, then announcing the production of a \$2,500 car called the Nano. The Nano went on sale last April in India and sales are now being expanded to other countries. It's not known how US distribution might occur, but a Jaguar Land Rover North America spokesman said it would

KEEP RIGHT >>

2010 BMW X6 M and X5 M



not be through those dealerships. Tata said the US version would cost more than \$2,500 because it will have to meet US emission and crash standards.

**BMW X5 AND X6 GET THE M**

▲ For years BMW said their high-performance M upgrades would be limited to more agile sedans, coupes and convertibles, but that has changed with the arrival of the X5 M and X6 M SUVs. On sale this fall, these two hot wagons also take the M in a new direction, away from the traditional high-revving engine, rear-wheel drive, manual transmission configuration, to that of a twin-turbo V-8, with all-wheel drive and six-speed automatic transmission. These two SUVs will have some very serious power with 550-hp, 500-lb.ft.-torque 4.4-liter twin-turbo V-8 engines. BMW says the two new Ms will be faster than Mercedes-Benz and Porsche Cayenne competitors. An engineer hinted that the X6 M is as quick around the famous Nürburgring Ring as the BMW M3. Prices are expected to be about \$87,000 for the X5 M and \$90,000 for the X6 M.

**BMW X1 STILL TWO YEARS AWAY**

BMW's smallest sports activity vehicle debuts this fall at the Frankfurt auto show but will not go on sale in North America until 2011. Smaller in length, width and height than the X3, the X1 is built from

the mechanicals of the 3 Series wagon and will be powered by both gas and diesel engines in Europe, though the US version will only get the 272-hp 3.0-liter in-line six-cylinder. The X1 will compete with vehicles like the Toyota RAV4, Honda CR-V and Volkswagen Tiguan, but with driving dynamics more like a BMW 3 Series with an elevated driving position.

**MITSUBISHI PUSHES EVO TO LIMITS**

Mitsubishi has upped the ante on the Lancer Evolution X in the European market, with a new lightweight aluminum 2.0-liter turbocharged MIVEC (Mitsubishi Innovative Valve timing Electronic Control) engine, rated at 403 hp and capable of near-bullet-like acceleration from 0 to 62 mph in just 3.8 seconds. Top speed is electronically limited to 155 mph. The new Evo is fitted with an advanced four-wheel drive system for maximum traction and handling. Plans for US distribution have not been announced.

**SUBARU TAKES LEGACY MAINSTREAM**

Subaru's new Legacy has moved up in size and interior room to compete directly with cars like the Mazda6, Nissan Altima and several other mid-size brands in the most competitive auto category. The new Legacy has a spacious new interior with four inches more legroom in the rear seat. Like all Subaru, the Legacy has standard all-wheel drive. Legacy has a

standard boxer-style horizontal 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine with an optional 3.6-liter six-cylinder engine in the same configuration. Options now include a rear backup camera, voice activated navigation and Bluetooth wireless. New lower prices start at \$20,640 for the base model—that is \$975 less than the equivalent Honda Accord, which doesn't even have AWD available as an add-on.

**MERCEDES-BENZ S-CLASS HYBRID**

Mercedes-Benz moves into the hybrid business with a version of the S-Class designed to compete with the big Lexus LS 600h hybrid. The S400 is based on the long-wheelbase S-Class, with power coming from the 3.5-liter V-6 engine used in the C- and E-Class sedans. Combined with the hybrid system, the gas engine and electric motor are rated at 295 hp. A small lithium-ion battery powers the small electric motor, and it becomes the first production car to use a lithium battery. EPA numbers are not determined, yet, but Mercedes estimates 23 mpg for city driving and 33 mpg on the highway. The car is super smooth and quiet while accelerating from 0 to 62 mph in 7.5 seconds, and it still has a top speed electronically limited to 130 mph. The S400 was scheduled to go on sale in August, with its price estimated at \$91,000.



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2010 Ford Taurus SHO



#### NEW TAURUS LOADED WITH HIGH TECH

▲ The all-new Ford Taurus is loaded with new technology, pushing the brand to a position of gadget leadership. Safety technology adds features like a Cross Traffic Alert that senses traffic behind the car when backing out of a parking place and Blind Spot Information System that uses radar to warn the driver when vehicles approach the blind spot on both sides of the car. Other features include adaptive cruise control, collision warning with brake assist, automatic high beams, rain sensing wipers and a plethora of additional features.

#### BMW SINGLE VOICE COMMAND

BMW drivers will only have to speak a single voice command to completely transmit the driver's destination into the navigation system or find an individual music title with the new voice control system. The cutting-edge technology eliminates the need to go through multiple voice controls or menus to give the navigation or audio system a command. The voice control works with navigation communication and entertainment systems, allowing the driver to concentrate on driving rather than making a series of choices. The BMW system monitors and interprets the user's voice commands regarding the type of music, the name of the artist, an album or an individual title, ensuring precise access to the audio pro-

gram desired. The voice recognition system works with BMW's iDrive, giving the driver the ability to switch smoothly from audio commands to using the iDrive controller without an interruption to the other input device. The system is available on all BMW models starting in September 2009.

#### P.J. O'ROURKE IS DRIVING LIKE CRAZY

With 13 books under his belt, humorist P.J. O'Rourke is taking on the "fun-suckers" in his latest book. In *Driving Like Crazy*, O'Rourke says the fun-suckers are killing the American automobile industry, as he assembles a collection of pieces that chronicle his more than thirty-year love affair with the American car. *Driving Like Crazy* is available in hardcover or paperback at your local bookstores now.

#### NEXT-GEN SEAT MAY BE FOAMLESS

By using two sheets of injection-molded thermoplastic polyurethane instead of foam, French auto seat supplier Faurecia SA believes next-generation vehicle seats will be lighter and thinner. The Sustainable Comfort Seat concept echoes the design of some athletic shoes and molded seats of office chairs. The seat structure also uses an injection-molded nylon and long-glass-fiber structural frame to replace steel and injection-molded head restraints. For other interiors, Faurecia is already using compression-molded sub-

strate with natural-material fillers like hemp, flax or wood to build instrument panels and door panels, which can then be left exposed or covered with a fabric or leather.

#### CADILLAC TO BUILD THE CONVERJ?

General Motors has given the go-ahead to the Cadillac Converj concept that wowed crowds at auto shows earlier this year, according to reports. The sleek coupe is based on the same extended-range electric power drivetrain used in the upcoming Chevrolet Volt. The Cadillac version would get all-new sheet metal and its own interior, but it would otherwise be the same as the Volt. Speculation suggests that because the gasoline engine is only used for charging the battery, the Converj battery is likely to be more powerful, to give the Cadillac a performance advantage over the Chevrolet.

#### A BUICK RENAISSANCE

GM keeping Buick over Pontiac has stirred some controversy, but Buick is making a real effort to justify its existence. A good example is the 2010 LaCrosse, which arrived at dealerships in July. The brand is attempting to go more upscale, to compete with a premium level of sedans like the highly rated Infiniti G37, Acura TL and Lexus ES. "Our vision for Buick is to get noticed and to prove to consumers that Buick has evolved into a modern luxury brand worthy of their consideration," said Susan Docherty, vice president of Buick-Pontiac-GMC, who spoke during a webcast. "We know that overcoming a certain level of apathy toward the brand takes compelling products, and we know how to do it." The front-drive V-6 LaCrosse has a starting price of \$27,835 including destination charge. Engine choices include a 182-hp, 2.4-liter four-cylinder for the first time since 1998, along with a 255-hp 3.0-liter V-6 and 280-hp, 3.6-liter V-6.

#### AT&T INTRODUCES IN-CAR TV SYSTEM

AT&T and RaySat Broadcasting Corporation have debuted the CruiseCastSM total in-car entertainment service to provide 22 satellite video channels and 20 satellite radio channels anywhere in the country including moving vehicles. The system has been designed using a break-



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Hyundai Blue-Will concept



through technology that allows the system to receive a signal even in tunnels and behind obstacles. AT&T CruiseCast will deliver TV programming that family members of all ages currently enjoy at home like the Disney Channel, Toon Disney, Discovery Kids, Animal Planet, Nickelodeon, Cartoon Network Mobile, USA, Comedy Central, MSNBC, CNN Mobile Live and CNBC. Twenty satellite radio music channels will also be available at the launch. The service is expandable to meet changing market demands. CruiseCast is available through auto dealerships and other automotive aftermarket stores.

#### HYUNDAI ADDING PLUG-IN BY 2012

▲ Auto manufacturers appear to be lining up to add electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles to their offerings like teenage girls to see the next *Twilight* movie. Hyundai is working on a sporty plug-in based on the Blue-Will concept shown originally in April at the Seoul Motor Show. According to Yang Woong-chul, Hyundai-Kia R&D president, the new hybrid-only vehicle is going after the Toyota Prius and Chevrolet Volt. Blue-Will is powered by a 1.6-liter gasoline engine and a 100-kilowatt electric motor, which combine to produce 152 hp. The aggressively styled four-door sports car is expected to get 50 to 55 mpg in the hybrid-electric mode and have a range of about 38 miles in the electric-only mode. Yang said the Blue-Will is

designed to show off Hyundai technology and improve the company image. It should be available by late 2012.

#### WORD OF A 4-DOOR AUDI CABRIO

Watch for Audi to add a four-door convertible version of the upcoming A7 Sportback. The four-seater is due in 2011, as part of Audi's expansion plan that calls for increasing the brand to 40 models by 2015. The A7 Cabrio engines will likely be a 300-to-340-hp supercharged V-6 and a 3.0-liter TDI (diesel), both with new eight-speed automatic transmissions. There is also rumor of a 5.2-liter V-10 option for the top model. Insiders say the top will be soft to save weight and space, but there is no definitive word on the door configuration (suicide or conventional).

#### DIESEL PLANS DROPPED

A group of American and Japanese automakers who had acknowledged working on diesel engines for a variety of vehicles have done a turnabout and scrapped plans for the alternate power source. Honda, Chrysler, Ford, General Motors, Nissan and Toyota have all halted diesel programs because of spiraling costs and various other issues. Toyota said it has dropped diesel plans to concentrate on hybrid systems. GM, Ford, Chrysler, Honda and Nissan were all working on lightweight diesel trucks and SUV engines. Only the German automakers—Audi, BMW, Mercedes-Benz and Volks-

wagen—have continued with diesel plans, and so far they are all selling well despite premium prices and higher diesel fuel costs. The new diesel engines have proven to be clean, quiet and able to deliver 20 to 30 percent better fuel economy than gasoline engines.

#### NISSAN BETS BIG ON ELECTRIC

Nissan plans to move into electric vehicles in a big way by 2013. Betting that a new lithium-ion battery is the way to go, Nissan plans to build an electric vehicle assembly line and battery plant at its Smyrna, Tennessee, manufacturing facilities. The plan calls for mass marketing electric cars—not just building a few thousand, but hundreds of thousands. Production starts late in 2012. The Nissan plants will have the capacity to build 150,000 vehicles and 200,000 battery packs annually. Production is planned for Japan and Europe, as well. Nissan CEO Carlos Ghosn's plan is to have cars priced similarly to current gasoline-powered vehicles, so that consumers will lease the battery at a price, including charging, that will be the same as the consumer would have paid for gasoline.

#### SPOT SATELLITE GPS MESSENGER™

A new aftermarket satellite GPS system is now available at 560 Pep Boy auto parts stores nationwide. The SPOT Satellite GPS Messenger provides GPS tracking and alert system for people outdoors or in a car. The system uses satellite technology to send location coordinates and status messages to personal contacts, roadside service providers or an emergency response center even if cell phone services is unavailable. The system can also allow web-based tracking on Google Map systems. SPOT is the only system that operates solely through satellite communications. The system has a suggested retail price of \$169.99, which includes five roadside tows per year, accident assistance, fuel delivery service, tire repair battery service and lock key and lockout service. It can be upgraded to unlimited check-in, help and 911 services for \$99.99 per year. For more information go to [www.findmespot.com](http://www.findmespot.com). ■

Auto News Update is compiled from a variety of industry sources for *Arizona Driver Magazine* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.



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for a type "A"

to mosey on down

the alphabet.

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**WHAT'S NEW IN TUCSON**

**Celebrate the Day of the Dead Tucson Style.** Altars festooned with photographs, sugar skulls, skeleton figurines, flowers, candles, and colored tissue-paper cut-works appear in museum displays and store windows in Tucson during late October and early November. These icons are part of the traditional Mexican celebration known as Dia de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead. Community altars and exhibits will be open at Arizona History Museum, La Pilita Museum, Tohono Chul Park, and Tucson Children's Museum. The annual All Souls Procession Weekend, November 6-8, includes a photo exhibit, a fundraising evening of fun and entertainment, a children's procession, and the All Souls Procession, an annual non-motorized parade through Downtown Tucson. New this year is the All Souls International Film Festival, a forum for people to actively explore the phenomena of death through cinema, sponsored by the Tucson Film Office and hosted at the Loft Cinema, October 29 at 7 pm. [www.allsoulsprocession.org](http://www.allsoulsprocession.org).

**Sample Global Cuisine, World Music.** A highlight of the free Tucson Meet Yourself festival, October 9-11, is the delicious, homemade food. Cooks from diverse ethnic clubs and organizations offer an array of food and drinks from around the world (including the American Southwest), which reflect each group's traditional cultural heritage. The food court and folk music and dance performances are staged among the trees, gardens, fountains, and public art at El Presidio Park, La Placita Village, and Tucson Convention Center Plaza. New this year is a market- place of folk artists who will demonstrate their crafts and offer handmade items for sale. Special events will include a fashion show, a low rider car show, and a corrido (Mexican folk ballad) contest. Learn more at [www.TucsonMeetYourself.org](http://www.TucsonMeetYourself.org).

**Spellbinding Cave Marks 10 Years.** Many of the extremely fragile, limestone cave formations inside Kartchner Caverns State Park have been continuously growing for tens of thousands of years. In the half-mile-long Throne Room, a 21-foot, wire-thin soda-straw stalactite is the second longest on record in the world. The massive 58-foot-tall Kubla Khan column resembles a giant redwood tree. These and other unusual formations can be experienced on a guided tour of this spellbinding underground landscape, located south of Tucson near Benson. Visit during the tenth anniversary celebration of its grand opening, November 7-8, and enjoy a weekend of insightful presentations, information booths and fun kids' activities. Reserve a tour at 520-586-2283 or [azstateparks.com/Parks/KACA](http://azstateparks.com/Parks/KACA).



**Two-for-One Tee Times.** Omni Tucson National Resort is offering two-for-one green fees after noon, September 1-30. The Omni Tucson National, located on Tucson's northwest side, recently completed a \$30 million renovation with improvements to the golf shop, the addition of national restaurant Bob's Steak and Chop House, and remodeled guest rooms along the Catalina Golf Course, home to countless PGA Tour and NCAA events, including the Chrysler Classic of Tucson; it boasts two distinctly different 18 hole courses and has been named one of Golf Digest's "75 Best Golf Resorts in North America" and is a Condé Nast Silver award winner. More information: [www.tucsonnational.com](http://www.tucsonnational.com).

**Tribute to Ansel Adams.** Ansel Adams, the famed American landscape photographer, co-founded a world-class photography museum at the University of Arizona, in Tucson, in 1975. This museum, the Center for Creative Photography, holds America's foremost collection of Adams' works as well as collections by nearly every other major, modern North American photographer. A survey of more than 100 photographs by Adams (1902-1984) will be presented at Tucson Museum of Art, October 10 -February 14. The Ansel Adams: A Legacy exhibit is a tribute to one of the 20th century's most admired artists featuring many of his most famous images, including works that were originally printed by the artist himself in his California darkroom and given to the Friends of Photography to represent his legacy. For details, visit [www.TucsonMuseumofArt.org](http://www.TucsonMuseumofArt.org).

**A Weekend in the Country.** Enjoy a weekend in the country, less than 100 miles east of Tucson. Pick produce at Apple Annie's or other area family farm, hike the trails in Chiricahua National Monument, or explore the vineyards and wineries in Southeastern Arizona. Don't miss the 2nd Annual Willcox Wine & Art Festival, October 17-18, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the historic Railroad Park in Willcox. Taste wines produced at eight Arizona wineries, meet winemakers and vineyard growers, and snack on appetizers while listening to live music. Browse a juried art and crafts show, and stock up on locally produced foods. For festival details, visit [www.AZWineFestival.com](http://www.AZWineFestival.com). Learn more about Southeastern Arizona cities and attractions at [www.DiscoverSEAZ.com](http://www.DiscoverSEAZ.com).

**These and more activities:** [www.visitTucson.org](http://www.visitTucson.org) ■



**WHAT'S NEW IN SEDONA**

**Wine Country Tours for Women Only**  
Sedona Wine Country Tours offers two new wine experiences for women only. Get some girlfriends together for the Wild Women Wine Tour. You will be picked up by van, limo or luxury mini coach (minimum of 10 and maximum of 24). The good times roll with Mardi Gras beads and stories en route to the wine country, where you'll learn about wine and food pairings.

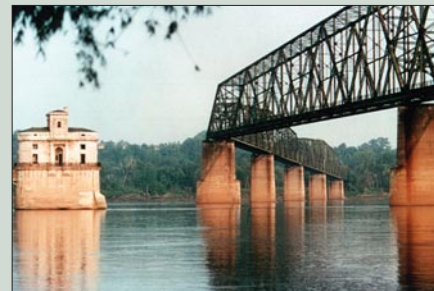
Wine, Weddings and More presents tours for wedding parties, bachelorette parties or a pre-wedding getaway. A Wining, Dining and Romance Tour is great as a wedding gift. Other tour offerings include art wine and walking tours in Jerome and Uptown Sedona. For information on discounts, call Sedona Wine Country Tours at 928-554-4072 or [www.SedonaWineCountryTours.com](http://www.SedonaWineCountryTours.com).

**The Fiesta del Tlaquepaque** on September 12 is a true celebration of Mexican Independence Day. Continuing a long tradition of fabulous food, music, dance and entertainment for young and old, this year's Fiesta promises to be extraordinary. The flower-strewn streets of Tlaquepaque will ring with the music of strolling mariachi and fiery flamenco dancers. Visit the variety of artists located throughout the Arts and Crafts Village representing their shops and galleries.

**1st Friday at the Galleries.** On the first Friday of each month, from 5-8pm, members of the Sedona Gallery Association offer a showcase highlighting artists, special exhibits and art events. These special art receptions give locals and Sedona visitors alike the opportunity to enjoy light refreshments while beginning their weekends with an exploration of Sedona's exciting art scene. The Sedona Trolley provides free transportation from gallery to gallery.

**19th Annual Sedona Arts Festival.** The red rocks of Sedona provide the backdrop for the award-winning Sedona Arts Festival on October 10-11. The Festival will showcase over 150 world-class artists and craft persons, continuous live musical entertainment, great food, an extraordinary raffle, the interactive KidZone and this year—the Tony Curtis Art Tent.

The Sedona Arts Festival is recognized as one of the best festivals of its size in the nation. Artists have been carefully chosen by an experienced jury to represent a wide variety of mediums and styles of the highest quality including excellence in ceramics, fiber art, jewelry, mixed media, photography, painting, sculpture and wood. Many new artists will be represented alongside the best and brightest from Sedona. ■



**ROUTE 66 ST. LOUIS FESTIVAL**

The place where historic Old Route 66 crossed the mighty Mississippi River will be the site of a festival dedicated to The Mother Road. The St. Louis Route 66 Festival will be held Saturday, October 3, at the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge. The event offers 7 hours of fun and activities on both the Missouri and Illinois sides of the historic bridge, which is now one of the world's longest pedestrian and biking spans. Highlights of the festival include a classic car display lining the bridge, Route 66 authors and speakers, and live musical entertainment. American road food—from barbecue to frozen custard—will be available for sale. Some of St. Louis' favorite musicians will perform throughout the day.

For many decades the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge was a key link in the beloved Route 66. Today, the Bridge is a significant connection in the Missouri-Illinois trail system and is part of The Confluence, a riverside conservation, heritage and recreation corridor being developed in the heart of the St. Louis region. Trailnet, a not-for-profit organization that promotes active living through bicycling and pedestrian activities and The Confluence, in partnership with the city of Madison, Illinois, renovated the Bridge as a bicycle/pedestrian bridge. In 2006 the Old Chain of Rocks Bridge was added to the National Register of Historic Places as part of a Route 66 application designating significant structures along the historic route from Chicago to Los Angeles.

**DIRECTIONS AND MORE INFORMATION**

From Lambert-St. Louis International Airport, I-270 is just to the north, running east-west. To reach the festival site on the Missouri side, head east on I-270 (reaching the Mississippi River some 7-8 miles north of downtown St. Louis), exit at Riverview Drive and go south just 100 yards. The bridge entrance will be on your left (east). Additional parking is available at North Riverfront Park, one mile south on Riverview past the waterworks. [www.confluencegreenway.org/route66festival.php](http://www.confluencegreenway.org/route66festival.php) ■



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With a green light indicating the far left lane is the safe outlet (above), a student maneuvers one of the Bondurant School Pontiac Solstice cars into that lane.

# 16 OR 61 - The timeless value of driver training

Story and photos by Larry Edsall

What's your teenaged son or daughter's life worth?

For about the cost of the deductible on your car insurance, you can equip him or her to be a much more aware and (hopefully) better and safer driver.

Yes, accidents happen, and especially, it seems, to young new drivers. But learning how to avoid, or at least mitigate, an accident not only saves your child the physical and emotional trauma of a crash, but it could save you the cost of your insurance deductible.

In the last couple of years, I've watched and written about several safe-driving programs for teenagers. Each has the same objective: to help new drivers become safer drivers. Many of the programs are sponsored by automakers or related companies and combine classroom-style instruction with varying amounts of behind-the-wheel experience. Unlike traditional driver's ed classes that used to be part of high school curriculum,

the point isn't passing the state driver's license test, but to equip the new driver with information and skills to avoid becoming another in the horrible statistics regarding teenagers and traffic.

It's one thing to watch and write, and another to participate, so when the folks at the Bob Bondurant School of High Performance Driving offered me entry into one of their racing-oriented driving courses, I asked if I could take their teen class. I figure that, at age 61, I'm just a transposed 16-year-old, and I was curious not only to see what a bunch of racers would teach teen drivers, but figured that, at age 61, I could use a refresher on how to react on the road.

One of the first things my eight classmates - seven boys, one girl, all high school sophomores - and I heard, however, is that it isn't about reacting. It's about anticipating. And several times throughout the day we were reminded about the importance of concentration and focus behind the wheel, and that

focus focused on keeping our eyes up and looking well ahead, aware of the cars around us and anticipating what each of them might do. Not only will you be aware of traffic, we were told, but you'll see those photo radar cameras that are popping up along so many roads.

The day started with what Bondurant calls "ground school," a classroom session that covered the importance of concentration, vision, smoothness, consistency, awareness and anticipation. We heard about "target fixation" and how a car tends to go where the driver's looking, so when you have to make an emergency maneuver, look for an opening, not at a tree. We also heard that what we were hearing was the same things Bondurant instructors tell professional racers when they come to school, and that includes drivers such as NASCAR stars Jimmy Johnson and Jeff Gordon.

"Vision" was an oft-repeated word, and we were told it's not just a matter of looking ahead, but of thinking ahead.



A Cadillac CTS (top right) is mounted on hydraulically controlled outriggers that lift the front or rear of the car to induce oversteer or understeer situations so the teen drivers can learn how such skids feel and start to develop the muscle memory to keep the car safely under control.

After they knocked down cones in the accident avoidance simulation, a Bondurant instructor reminds the teenagers that even with no distractions in their cars, they had trouble with the maneuvers and would need focused concentration when they move from the test track to the public pavement.

Bondurant instructor Jesse Dunham starts the afternoon session with a classroom lecture on the upcoming accident avoidance simulation that uses three traffic lanes to teach teenagers how to maneuver around a potential collision.

Cole McPherson stops for some personal instruction after one of her trips through the accident avoidance simulation course.



We learned how to hold the steering wheel to maintain control, about "contact patch" and how the weight transfer under acceleration, braking and turning affects your ability to maintain contact with the road and your control of the vehicle.

Then we headed out to the skid pad, basically a large, parking lot-sized patch of pavement where we went through a succession of exercises, starting with the throttle steering circle where we learned that even at less than 20 miles per hour you can easily lose control of a vehicle.





Each instructor had three students, and each student was assigned his or her own Pontiac Solstice for the day. To get started, we ran a slalom, steering between cones, first at 25 miles per hour, then at 30, 35 and 40. The point not only was to get us up to speed, but to demonstrate why you don't drive 40 mph in a 25-mph residential zone. Maneuvering between cones at 25 is one thing, but the task gets much tougher as speed increase.

Next, we parked our cars and got into one of the school's skid cars, Cadillac CTS sedans mounted on what look like the automotive version of training wheels. Actually, the outriggers allow the instructor to raise the front or rear wheels so they lose contact, inducing the car to skid so the student can start developing the muscle memory to anticipate and avoid or at least react and control a car in such a situation.

Then it was back into the Solstices for laps around the handling oval. We were particularly impressed when we were told that even Bob Bondurant, a former racing champion and founder of the school, before he takes a vehicle out onto one of the school's race tracks, drives it around this oval, laid out with plenty of runoff room, for several laps to get a feeling for how the car responds in acceleration, braking and turning.

Every so often, we were called over and were joined in the car by one of the instructors for personalized instruction. In my case, I needed to work on holding the brake a little longer and then releasing it more smoothly.

After a lot of laps – I was impressed throughout the day with how much time we were getting behind the wheel – we moved to a braking exercise, first stopping our cars from 65 miles per hour without using the anti-lock feature on the braking system, then learning how to slow and steering around something by employing the ABS.

Lunch followed – pizza (after all, we're teenagers!). The instructors gone, we talked among ourselves about what we'd learned. The skid car and oval were the most fun. The slalom and braking were the most eye-opening.

The parents would have been pleased with the tone of the conversation.

One dad had said he tried to instruct his son on driving, but realized "it's one thing coming from a parent," but that the same words from a professional instructor might carry more weight. "I want him to be a safer and more aware driver," dad said, adding that one thing he hoped his son would learn at the school was to gain the confidence needed so he wouldn't panic when facing threatening situations on the road.

This parent wasn't alone. Another dad said his teenager needed to develop assurance as a driver; he hoped the school would help his child overcome those fears.

Another parent had just the opposite problem: His son had done quite a bit of go-karting and was perhaps a little too comfortable behind the wheel. He hoped the Bondurant experience might bring his son's attitude back toward the realities of

driving in traffic.

And at least one parent noted that the enrollment fee was almost identical to the deductible on an auto insurance policy. "If he avoids one accident..." dad said, adding, "I only wish I'd have sent my daughters through this."

After lunch it was back to the classroom for a few minutes, then back to the skid pad for an accident-avoidance exercise in which we'd drive toward three green lights, each marking a different lane. Two of the lights would turn red and we'd have to maneuver safely into the indicated lane without using the brakes. Instead, we were told to lift off the gas pedal, steer toward the correct lane and then squeeze back on the gas. After working on that a few times, the need to brake would be included with full-on ABS maneuvering.

The exercise was intense, and lots of lane-marking cones were hit. Afterward, we were reminded of how much concentration it took to try to avoid the simulated accidents in a controlled environment. We were asked if it would be possible to be that focused if we were trying to manipulate a cell phone or iPod while listening to loud music or interacting with a bunch of friends in the car. It was a sobering discussion.

Finally, the students met their most daunting challenge. The last exercise of the day was done in Pontiac G8 sedans. It was a parking drill that involved various scenarios, including parallel parking. Once again, we were reminded that there

Students hone their driving skills on the short, flat oval track at the Bondurant school. Passing is not allowed on the track, but there is a shortcut through the infield drivers can take at any time so cars don't become bunched together.

are dangers at the slowest of speeds.

Driving done, it was back into the classroom for a debriefing. The students were encouraged to offer feedback. A couple mentioned how difficult parallel parking had been.

"Considering it was school, and on Saturday, it was fun," said another.

Yet another said he was impressed by how it's sometimes better to use the throttle than the brakes, and how important it is to keep your eyes up and well down the road.

"Getting out of a skid or 'drift' is harder than it looks," said another.

One said he was surprised at how responsive the cars were to driver input. Another said she felt much more comfortable driving, much more in control of the car than she had before the day began.

As we left the classroom and returned to the roadways, one of the instructors had this final reminder: "Use your new powers for good, not for evil." ■

After working as a sports editor for daily newspapers in Michigan, **LARRY EDSALL** was on staff for 12 years at *AutoWeek*, most of it as managing editor. He has driven more than half a million miles testing cars on four continents. He helped launch [www.izoom.com](http://www.izoom.com) and also helped found PAPA, the Phoenix Automotive Press Association. His books include *Masters of Car Design (Genius)*, *Miata 20 Years* and his eleventh, *Camaro: A Legend Reborn*, all available at [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

## SPECIALIZED TEEN DRIVING SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS

By Larry Edsall

Parents eagerly spend time and money (and miles of travel) to make sure their children learn to play a sport or dance or sing or create the next iPhone application or video game experience. And yet, when it comes to teaching a teenager to drive...

In his book *Traffic*, Tom Vanderbilt explains that driving "is an incredibly complex and demanding task."

In the extensive research for his book, Vanderbilt learned that a driver has to process "a bewildering amount of information," is constantly making "predictions and calculations and on-the-fly judgments of risk and reward," and is doing all that in a "spontaneous setting" of constant change while "engaging in a high amount of sensory and cognitive activity—the full scope of which scientists are just beginning to understand."

And yet, after almost no formal training, other than perhaps a course designed not to teach driving skills but to assure passage of a state driver's licensing exam, we send our teenagers out onto the road, where they are injured or killed by the thousands each year.

A case can be made that handing the keys to a teen without proper preparation is another form of child abuse. And the costs to the injured individuals, to shattered families and to society at large are huge.

However, those costs also are, at least to some extent, if not avoidable then certainly open to mitigation through better, through genuine, driver's education and training.

Sure, accidents will happen, but too often crashes are not really accidents but the result of mistakes in judgment, errors in attention and anticipation, or simply not knowing what to do.

Specialized teenage driving schools and other teen-oriented safe-driving programs are designed to teach and hopefully prepare new drivers not only for the physical skills they'll need to drive, but for the decision-making they must do amid all of the distractions they'll face on the road.

Here is a list of some of these schools and programs:

### BOB BONDURANT SCHOOL OF HIGH-PERFORMANCE DRIVING

The instructors at the famed Bondurant School just south of Phoenix enjoy teaching teens, they say, because the new drivers haven't had time to learn bad habits, so the instructors can get right to teaching instead of spending time with trying to get students to unlearn. In addition to standard General Motors vehicles, students spend time in a special skid car that can simulate a variety of low-traction situations. [www.bondurant.com](http://www.bondurant.com)

### BMW TEEN SCHOOL

The BMW Performance Driving School is in Spartanburg, South Carolina, near the automaker's US assembly plant. A special feature is a track imbedded with water jets that can be activated to simulate obstacles suddenly appearing in the roadway. [www.bwmusa.com/Standard/Content/Experience/Events/PDS/ProgramsandCourses/TeenSchool.aspx](http://www.bwmusa.com/Standard/Content/Experience/Events/PDS/ProgramsandCourses/TeenSchool.aspx)

### BRIDGESTONE WINTER DRIVING SCHOOL

Bridgestone's winter driving school at Steamboat Springs, Colorado, allows teenagers to participate if parents sign a waiver. Winter driving techniques and vehicle control maneuvers are not the same set of skills you use on warm and dry pavement. There are aspects of winter driving that go against the typical driver's instincts. [www.winterdrive.com](http://www.winterdrive.com)

### CHRYSLER ROAD READY TEENS

Road Ready Teens is a home-based (Internet) program for parents and the new drivers in their families. The program comprises an interactive instructional computer game for the teen driver and a 12-page manual for the parents. Road Ready Teens is available in English and Spanish. [www.roadreadyteens.org](http://www.roadreadyteens.org)

### DRIVER'S EDGE

Driver's Edge is a non-profit organization that goes around the country teaching safe-driving skills. Among its sponsors is tire maker Bridgestone, which stages its own Safety Scholars safe-driving video competition ([www.safetyscholars.com](http://www.safetyscholars.com)) and has launched a new global Think Before You Drive ([www.thinkbeforeyoudrive.org](http://www.thinkbeforeyoudrive.org)) teen safe-driving effort. [www.driversedge.org](http://www.driversedge.org)

### DRIVINGMBA

Arizona-based DrivingMBA offers a variety of driving programs, both at a driving simulator and on the road. Among the school's offerings are several designed for teenagers. [www.drivingMBA.com](http://www.drivingMBA.com)

### FORD DRIVING SKILLS FOR LIFE

Though primarily a web-based educational program for teenage drivers and their parents, Ford's Driving Skills for Life includes free behind-the-wheel sessions held at locations around the country. The web-based part of the program has instructions for parents and various learning activities for the teenaged driver. For example, in the Hazard Concentration game—a timed match game—we learn that if it takes you one second to divert your eyes from the road to change the radio station while driving 60 miles per hour, you've traveled 90 feet with knowing where you were. [www.drivingskillsforlife.com](http://www.drivingskillsforlife.com)

### HONDA TEEN DEFENSIVE DRIVING PROGRAM

Honda not only has a defensive driving school program for teenagers, but offers a 2-for-1 price discount. Honda's program is offered in conjunction with the Mid-Ohio School at the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course at Lexington, Ohio, though instruction takes place off the racing surface at a vehicle dynamics center. [www.mid-ohio.com/School/Courses/Defensive-Driving/1](http://www.mid-ohio.com/School/Courses/Defensive-Driving/1)

### N CONTROL DRIVING

Another Arizona-based driving program, N Control was launched by a former Bondurant instructor. [www.ncontroldriving.com](http://www.ncontroldriving.com)

### TOYOTA DRIVING EXPECTATIONS

What to expect from your car, the road and from yourself is the theme of Toyota Driving Expectations, a four-hour program held in various venues to offer classroom and at-the-wheel driving education for newly licensed teenagers and their parents. Not only are the new drivers taught proper techniques, but parents can learn how to break their own bad driving habits. [www.toyotadrivingexpectations.com](http://www.toyotadrivingexpectations.com)

# Small Ford van connects in a big way

by Joe Sage  
photos by Randall Bohl  
[www.randallbohl.com](http://www.randallbohl.com)



**W**e've been bullish on Ford's new little truck with the awkward name, the new 2010 Transit Connect (there is a bigger Transit van in the rest of the world), since we first heard it was coming to the US (see May/June 2009 issue). To revisit the fundamentals, this handy rig has 135 cubic feet of cargo volume, a 1600-pound payload capacity, 48.1" and 59.1" inside width and height, respectively, and just over six feet of closed-door cargo floor length, gets 22/25 mpg city/highway, and is yours for just \$21,475 (base including destination charges).

What does it compare to? This is Ford's first entry into the small-commercial category in the US. Purpose-built, they call it a no-compromise solution. As Ford points out, despite the popularity of this vehicle in international markets for years, most such needs have been met in the US market by "making do." Besides not efficiently meeting needs, this approach has generally added cost.

Folks needing a small panel van have made do with the Plymouth/Chrysler PT Cruiser, the Chevrolet HHR and such. Or they've used pickup trucks with shells, mini-vans or full-size vans. Ford points out that the interior volume of the Transit Connect is double that of the HHR. And its payload capacity is claimed to be more than that of

some full-size pickups (though their own example of an F-150 "half-ton" truck carries 3300 pounds). Be that as it may, if a 2-liter Duratec with 4-speed automatic (with overdrive) delivers the fuel economy, payload capacity and expected durability of the Transit Connect, it compares very favorably. This truck is engineered and tested to the same rugged standards as the full-size E-Series, and despite its lightweight efficiency, it bears a double-skinned body, great for insulation, structure and security.

### AWARD-WINNING

The Transit Connect has received over 22 awards in Europe since its launch: Van of the Year 2002, International Van of the Year 2003, Most Reliable Van 2007, Best Light Van 2002-2007, Fleet Light Van of the Year 2003-2008, Best Security Light Van 2003-2008 and Best Small Van 2009. It's no wonder more than 600,000 have been sold so far (in 55 countries on three continents).

For anyone using a small vehicle in their business, to carry just about anything, this is worth a serious look. We doubt you'll have much trouble looking, either, as the Ford Transit Connect will probably be filling the streets and freeways like hotcakes, to mix unmixable metaphors.

### TRACK TIME

Though we envision this hardworking little puppy tooling around the warehouse districts, ferrying loads of aircraft parts, or magazines, or flowers, or catering delights, Ford invited us to give it a try on a closed-course track at Firebird International Raceway. Okay.

First, we were presented with a full fleet of outfitted Fords, bearing bulkheads, racks, bins, drawers and shelves customized to a variety of businesses (and utilizing the large side panels well for identity graphics).

Next, we took to the track. As we sat down, we were still in conversation with someone outside, so we put our elbow on the windowsill and instinctively reached for the top of the window frame, as in most vehicles. Airball. The arms of someone over six feet tall do not reach the top of the frame. It was then that we realized something about this vehicle: although it looks quite tall, it actually has a low beltline, which exaggerates that appearance. The windows start low and are extra tall.

Although you are not likely to be using this vehicle for competition (although we haven't seen what will be done with them at SEMA yet), we can see why they took us to the track. The handling is superb. An intricate

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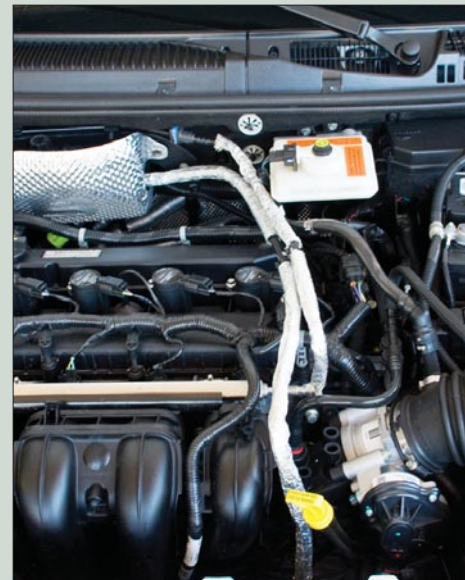


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course of coned loops and curves was easy to navigate, with a nice level feeling and solid handling throughout. We also took the opportunity to back into a corner by one of the track buildings, and the manageability of the whole package at this size is impressive.

#### TECH TIME

Yes, this is a work truck. While at Firebird, we also had a one-on-one review of the Transit Connect's communications and inventory technologies. The Ford Work Solutions electronic/data interface allows you to do conventional computing from your truck. Want one less thing to take up time each morning and evening? Ford Work Solutions helps you easily make sure you have the tools you need, loaded in the truck, with Tool Link™ (while also keeping track of each tool taken from and returned to the vehicle). You can track your entire fleet with Crew Chief™. And you can secure your valuables with a cable lock.

#### BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE

So what do you get for your twenty-one-some-odd grand? You get a frame with vibration-tested parts including high-strength steel front cross members, reinforced body shell and twin side cross members. You get a rolled steel rear bumper with energy absorber (not mandated

on trucks) and end caps, plus doors and hardware tested for 150,000-cycle functionality (that would equal ten times a day for over 40 years). You get a contemporary style, with character panels on the sides that add body rigidity. You get rack-and-pinion steering, front and rear anti-roll bars, available Roll Stability Control (RSC), lockable fuel door and hood, separate remote key unlocking features for passenger and cargo doors, first-row front and side air bags, and four-wheel anti-lock brakes. A simple rear left suspension carries the load.

The Duratec engine is a DOHC inline-4 with an aluminum block and head and sequential multiport electronic fuel injection, generating a decent around-town 136 hp and 128 lb-ft of torque. With its impressive fuel economy rating, a 15.4-gallon tank statistically should deliver over 350 miles of city driving without refueling. An engine oil cooler is standard.

#### EASY OPTIONS, ALTERNATIVES

Dual sliding side doors and split rear cargo doors which open to a full 180 degrees standard (or 225 degrees optional) provide plenty of access to the interior. The sliding doors on the Transit Connect Cargo Van are available with or without windows, while the rear doors have a window; a Panel Van version has no side or rear cargo area windows. Load height

is about two feet when the vehicle is empty.

If you've always needed a UPS van of your own, but one that's smaller and more maneuverable in tight spots (with a 39-foot curb-to-curb turning circle), this little truck is so compelling, you may already have one foot out the door, on your way to the Ford dealer. Or you may not need a service truck, but are thinking it might even be good just as a daily driver. Well, take heart: Ford is planning to bring a Wagon version to market before long, as well, with a folding second-row bench seat in either two- or three-passenger (four or five total) configurations.

In 2010, watch for a fully Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) model, and probably a hybrid shortly thereafter. The BEV is preliminarily slated to run via a single-speed gearbox on a 21- or 28-kWh liquid-cooled lithium-ion battery, with a driving range of up to 100 miles (at up to 70mph with zero emissions) and a recharge time of 6-8 hours. Ford notes that output power may be less above 105° F.

Initially the Transit Connect is coming from a plant in Turkey, but by 2012, moves to Wayne, Michigan, and Louisville, Kentucky. The reinforced platform shares underpinning with the European Focus, but will move to the next generation Focus platform by 2013. The truck is available in XL and XLT trim levels. ■

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# Venza revisited

## FOUR COMPELLING DRIVETRAINS

By Barbara and Bill Schaffer



Toyota Venza V6

Toyota planners threw out all notions of categorization when they created the Venza, which combines elements of sport sedan, hatchback, wagon and SUV into one amazing package. It looks great, is fun to drive and is loaded with functional space. Tim Morrison, corporate manager of marketing for cars and vans, described the Venza like this: "We see Venza as a new direction in Toyota passenger car design. Its styling, dimensions and features are more car than SUV. In fact, I like to refer to it as a car optimized, or 70 percent car and 30 percent SUV."

Venza takes Toyota in a new direction, with bolder and more cutting-edge styling than on previous cars. It has the same wheelbase and length as the Camry, with a few more inches of body width and height. Those, combined with the standard 19-inch wheels (20-inch on the V6), give it a sporty, contemporary look. We've never been big fans of Toyota styling. It's not bad, it's just that it's so safe and conservative. The Venza is starting to push this a little bit. The raked body, sharp edges, more aggressive wheel arches and fastback roofline combine to create one of the best-looking Toyotas we have seen.

Venza has a strong appeal from the second you slide into the interior. The door cutout allows an easier step-in position so you don't

have to step over a wide sill. It's also a perfect height, so it's not necessary to climb up or drop down onto the seat. Once in, the comfortable seats provide a higher ride than a sedan in front and slightly higher, theater-like rise in the rear for better forward visibility.

The five-passenger interior is a twin cockpit design with high-quality materials. The front bucket seats are a new sculptured pattern in fabric or leather with contrasting piping. The ergonomically designed center stack, which also includes the shifter, has pods of controls rather than just rows of buttons and dials. A large high-mounted color display screen serves the audio and navigation, plus displays the backup camera view. At the top of the center stack, a small display panel indicates climate control and trip computer info.

The center console can be customized by sliding panels and compartments to the most convenient positions, plus it contains pockets for iPods and cell phones with passages to hide wires. The spacious rear bench seat-backs can be tumbled forward, expanding the cargo area from 34.4 to 70.1 cubic feet.

Venza displays the high quality fit and finish typical of Toyota, but with more flair than other models. It is obvious a lot of passion went into the design and execution of this car.

Venza shopping is easy, with just the one

model and a choice of two engines and two drivetrains. All models are very well equipped with standard features like 19- or 20-inch alloy wheels, filtered-air climate control, power windows and locks, keyless entry, tilt and telescoping wheel, HomeLink® and much more. Eight option packages and four major stand-alone options add all the frosting to the cake, with everything from leather seating, to an entertainment system with JBL Synthesis® Surround Sound, to a voice-activated navigation system. All the option packages can add about \$12,000 to the final price.

The Venza is no BMW in the handling department, but it is sure-footed on all types of roads and surfaces. The stiff high-tensile-strength steel platform is rigid, and the four-wheel independent suspension keeps the V6's big 20-inch tires well grounded even in exuberant runs through the mountains. Braking is strong, with four-wheel vented discs and Toyota's STAR Safety System™. Standard on all Venza models, the STAR Safety System™ includes ABS brakes, with electronic brake-force distribution, stability control, traction control and brake assist.

All models have seven airbags, including a driver's knee airbag. To make driving on hills easier, Hill-start Assist Control keeps pressure on the brakes to prevent the vehicle from



Toyota Venza inline-4

### SPECIFICATIONS: TOYOTA VENZA

Visit your dealer or [www.toyota.com](http://www.toyota.com) for the latest info.

#### DIMENSIONS

EPA Size .....	SUV
Wheelbase .....	109.3 in.
Length .....	189.0 in.
Width .....	75.0 in.
Height .....	63.4 in.
Ground Clearance .....	8.1 in.
Turning Circle .....	39.1 ft.
Fuel Capacity .....	17.7 gal.
Cargo Capacity .....	34.4 to 70.1 cu. ft.

rolling backward when the driver switches a foot from the brakes to the accelerator.

We recently tested the 3.5-liter V6 AWD, rated at 268 -hp, boasting a 0-to-60-mph time of 6.7 seconds. This engine gets an EPA rating of 19 mpg city and 26 mpg highway for the front-drive model and one mpg less for AWD. The 6-cylinder Venza offers an impressive balance of power and economy.

The four-cylinder engine, a new 2.7-liter aluminum alloy block with DOHC is rated at 182 hp. We drove it several months ago in Pennsylvania and were so impressed we agreed this would be the best engine for everyday use. It has amazing power for a four-cylinder engine. It gets an EPA rating of 21/29 city/highway in the front-wheel-drive version (and, again, one mpg less for AWD).

The Venza is exclusively an American product, designed, engineered and produced in the US. It could easily enough be considered a wagon or hatchback version of the Toyota Camry, only better looking and more fun to drive. We have to give the Toyota Venza high marks for comfort and styling. We found little not to like. ■

### COMPARATIVE: 4-V6-FWD-AWD

#### PRICING .....4-CYL.....V6

##### FRONT-WHEEL DRIVE

Base FWD .....\$25,975 .....\$27,800

##### ALL-WHEEL DRIVE

Base AWD .....\$27,425 .....\$29,250

#### PERFORMANCE/WEIGHT.....4-CYL.....V6

##### FRONT-WHEEL DRIVE

Weight .....3760 lb .....3870 lb

0 to 60 mph FWD .....8.8 sec .....6.7 sec

Est. fuel economy FWD .....21/29 .....19/26 mpg

##### ALL-WHEEL DRIVE

Weight .....3945 lb .....4045 lb

0 to 60 mph AWD .....8.8 sec .....6.7 sec

Est. fuel economy AWD .....20/28 .....18/25 mpg

#### TOWING.....4-CYL.....V6

W/ Tow Prep Package .....2500 lbs.....3500 lbs

Standard.....1000 lbs.....1000 lbs

#### MECHANICAL .....4-CYL.....V6

Engine .....2.7L DOHC I-4 .....3.5L DOHC V-6

Horsepower .....182@5800 .....268@6200

Torque .....182@4200 .....246@4700

Fuel (all) .....87 Octane Reg Unl

Transmission (all) .....6-spd auto

Wheels .....19x7.5 10-spoke .....20x7.5 5-spoke

Tires .....245/55R19 .....245/50R20

#### SUSPENSION (all):

##### FRONT:

MacPherson strut with L-shaped lower arms, optimized anti-dive geometries for comfort and safety, center axis of coil spring slanted toward outside to reduce friction and lateral forces.

##### REAR:

dual-link MacPherson strut for superior handling and high torsional rigidity.

#### BRAKES (all):

FRONT: .....324x28mm Ventilated Disc

REAR: .....298x10mm Solid Disc

Enhanced VSC (ABS with EBD, Brake Assist, TRAC. VSC) and Hill-start Assist Control.

### OUR CONUNDRUM

by Joe Sage

We drove the full Toyota Venza lineup at its launch, in southwestern Pennsylvania, last fall (see Arizona Driver Magazine, Jan/Feb09). We were quite impressed, and we were intrigued by the fact it comes in four forms: inline 4-cylinder or V6, and with front-wheel drive or all-wheel drive. We still are. At launch, Toyota told us they anticipated sales would concentrate on the most minimal (4-cylinder FWD) and most maximal (6-cylinder AWD). We, however, think both of the middle models are still very much in play. For those, pick your poison: AWD but with the more economical 4, or V6 for its power but as a front-driver.

Lucky for us, we had a chance to spend a full week with each engine recently. Unlucky for us, the press fleet in Arizona includes only the front-drivers. (And that's too bad, since not only does it snow in much of the state, but AWD can be great on sand, wet freeways, on-ramps or punching an apex anywhere).

As you can see by the specifications at left, weight, price and fuel mileage are all relatively close, although you can be out the door in a four for mid-20s and well into the 30s with a V6, and though the EPA has modified its mileage testing to be more accurate, at least in the case of the Audi A3, we've been told to expect the 4-cylinder numbers to be more realistic. Wheels are larger on the V6 (for better cornering grip and style, but likely giving faster tread wear and harsher ride at times).

In driving the FWD V6 for a week, followed by the FWD I-4 for a week, we still liked both vehicles plenty: style, comfort and the utility of a spacious vehicle with lower profile but high ground clearance, all with more than decent fuel economy.

But we still liked the four. It felt lighter, quicker and more balanced, but we have to emphasize that this is highly subjective, and we're still not sure we'll ever be certain of a preference. For one thing, we didn't have a chance to drive them on a challenging climb like I-17 to Flagstaff or the Beeline Highway to Payson, which could challenge the 4-cylinder more (perhaps). And we didn't tow with them, though clearly if you have towing needs, the capacity specs will show you just what you need. And again, we didn't revisit the AWD models, and we'd be most inclined to be comparing the two of those. We hoped to find a bright lightbulb in the specs, to explain this, but knew a modern V6 wouldn't weigh much more than a four. We do note that both horsepower and torque peak earlier (5800 and 4200rpm, respectively) than in the V6 (6200 and 4700), and that may be a key factor. Subtleties of front/rear weight distribution may multiply the differences in weight and power. Or we may be fantasizing the whole thing.

Compared with the Ford Edge, Mazda CX-9, Nissan Murano and others, the Toyota Venza has a great edge in both purchase price and fuel economy. So if that's the basis of a decision, even though the full range of prices isn't all that wide, the same logic would drive you to the 4-cylinder. If you want to add just a little more to the mix, we'd probably sooner spend \$1500 on AWD than \$1800 on the V6, and we'd probably rather gain 185 pounds by adding AWD than 110 up-sizing the engine, or 285 pounds to add both. Tough call. Drive them both. ■

# Fueling a passion

Story and photos by Larry Edsall



*Colleen Crowninshield's passions appear to be polar opposites.*

*As manager of the Pima Association of Governments' Tucson Regional Clean Cities Coalition,*

*Crowninshield's mission is to wean Americans from their dependence on imported oil as an energy source.*

But as a woman who drag races a highly modified 1970 Chevrolet Nova, Crowninshield burns through specially blended and very expensive petroleum racing fuel in measures not of miles per gallon but of gallons per mile. Each time Crowninshield drives the quarter-mile drag strip at Southwestern International Raceway, her Nova named Ruby vaporizes at least a gallon of gasoline.

Asked about trying to balance such seemingly opposing passions, Crowninshield responds that she loves what she does—at work and at play—and, she adds, “I can assure you, I balance them very well.”

Spend just a few moments in conversation with her and you'll have no doubts in regard to her sincerity. Learn that last year the coalition she manages helped people find alternatives to the consumption of 12 million gallons of petroleum fuel and you'll have no problem forgiving Ruby's transgressions.

Crowninshield shares her passion for energy independence with an evangelist's zeal, though her sermon isn't fire and brimstone

but more of a quiet conversation during which she expresses both her strongly held beliefs in and her genuine enthusiasm for exploiting alternative sources of energy.

After just a few minutes of such conversation, you're not left feeling guilty for your past petroleum-fueled sins so much as you're seriously considering a solar water heater and eagerly awaiting an opportunity to drive a vehicle run by a cleaner fuel.

In fact, you might well wonder if we might become energy independent if only we could find a way to bottle Crowninshield's enthusiasm and pour it into our fuel tanks.

**IT'S A FRIDAY NIGHT "TEST AND TUNE" SESSION** at the drag strip just southeast of Tucson, and the first thing you notice as Crowninshield and her husband, Brian, arrive isn't Ruby the Nova sitting on a trailer but the body-wrapped Chevrolet Avalanche pickup truck that pulls that trailer. The Avalanche is a flex-fuel vehicle, which means it can run on regular unleaded gasoline or on E85, a blend of 85-percent

ethanol and 15-percent gasoline.

The Avalanche is Crowninshield's daily driver, provided by General Motors through the automaker's involvement with the state of Arizona and the national Governors' Ethanol Coalition program. The truck's ability to run on domestically produced ethanol fuel is proclaimed in the bright green, yellow and blue hues of the truck's skin-tight wrapper. Many drivers of flex-fuel vehicles rarely put ethanol into the tank, but Crowninshield assures anyone who asks that she operates the truck exclusively on ethanol unless she's in a locale where that fuel is not available.

It wasn't long ago that ethanol wasn't publicly available anywhere in Arizona.

In 1998, Crowninshield was part of the team of Pima County staffers who helped organize the Tucson Regional Clean Cities Coalition, one of 90 such regional coalitions in the United States. When the coalition's coordinator retired in 2001, Crowninshield was offered the manager's position. Just four years later, she was honored by the US

Department of Energy as Coordinator of the Year. The award included a trip to France to speak at an international symposium and the use for a year of a vehicle powered by ethanol.

There was only one problem: There was no place in Arizona that offered the public sale of ethanol fuel.

Thanks to Crowninshield and the coalition of more than 75 government agencies, businesses, schools, tribes, air bases and individuals she coordinates, that quickly changed.

Tucson became the site of the first such ethanol station, not just in Arizona but in the Western United States. In 2007, in preparation for Super Bowl XLII in Phoenix, the National Football League's so-called green Super Bowl, Crowninshield helped convince the sports league to use ethanol-powered vehicles in its official transportation fleet, which meant someone had to open the first public ethanol station in Phoenix.

Today, she notes with pride, “there are 15... no,” she counts to herself, “make that 17” such retail outlets in Arizona.

**THOUGH SHE WAS BORN IN 1965, CROWNINSHIELD'S CHILDHOOD** was one most people of her generation would associate with an earlier and bygone era, one of hands-on hard work and of never being frivolous in the consumption of energy.

(Opposite page) Colleen Crowninshield awaits her turn at the starting line. (Above top) Crowninshield and her red Nova get ready to do a burnout that heats her car's rear tires to enhance their grip for their upcoming run against a green Mopar. (Above left) Colleen Crowninshield makes sure she's comfortable in her car's cockpit (right), which is purpose-built for racing, including a special drag racing transmission.

Home was among extended family on a California cattle ranch in the foothills west of Yosemite National Park. The local school had two rooms. The house had no telephone. It did have a television, though only two stations could be accessed.

Each week her father would bring fresh milk from the local dairy farm where he worked a second job. Colleen's mother would separate cream from the milk and on Tuesday nights would pour the cream into Mason jars, add a little sugar, screw on the caps and hand a jar to each child. The children were to shake those jars as they watched *Happy Days*, *Laverne & Shirley* and, if necessary, *Three's Company*.

To make it seem more like a game than the butter-churning chore it was, during each commercial break Colleen's mother would call out “left,” “right,” or sometimes “left-left,” or “right-right” with the children passing the jars back and forth in the designated direction, the churning to resume at the end of the commercial break.

Eager for an environment that offered more than one traffic light, Colleen left the rural community after high school, moving to

Tucson, where a half-sister lived. She attended junior college, had three children, and worked for the county government.

Her husband, Brian, a Pima County construction inspector, grew up as a car guy. His father owns a 1955 Chevrolet Bel Air and a '67 Camaro SS/RS convertible. Brian's first car was a 1968 Camaro SS/RS that he sold when he went to college. Brian's brother has a 1970 Mustang Mach I. Brian and Colleen are restoring a '68 Camaro RS and a 1970 Nova SS that Brian bought from the original owner. They recently purchased a 1968 Olds Cutlass 442 clone as a future restoration project for Brian and their son, James.

“He's always wanted a race car, and we finally got to the point we could do it,” said Colleen, noting that Ruby is something she and Brian can do together, just the two of them. “I put in a lot of hours at work and this is just for us—he and I together.”

Brian found the red 1970 Nova on eBay and realized its long-time owner had put a lot into modifying it for drag racing—fortifying its 355-

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cubic-inch V8 engine with Dart heads, a full roller camshaft, Arias pistons with six-inch H-beam rods that connect them to a Nitrodad crankshaft, 13:1 compression, a special 350 drag racing transmission, 5500 stall converter with a transmission brake, 5:13 rear gear and drag slick tires. The car also was equipped with a nitrous oxide system to boost its power output for a quick but sudden burst of speed.

Brian was surprised when the car didn't draw any bids, but remained interested enough in the Nova that the Crowninshields and their drag racing friends Mark and Geanine Ballard (he won the track Sportsman division championship last year in his Chevelle while she races a supercharged Camaro) set off on a weekend getaway together, towing an empty trailer from Tucson to just north of Albuquerque, New Mexico, to take a look at the car.

As they were pulling a cover off the car, Colleen was falling in love, immediately naming the car Ruby and telling Brian to get his money out before the Nova's owner changed his mind.

**COLLEEN CROWNINSHIELD KNOWS A LOT ABOUT GETTING PEOPLE** to change their minds, and about helping them find alternatives to burning petroleum.

She can talk about a company that joined the coalition, decided it was going to all electric vehicles, and in the meantime was con-

The green light on the "Christmas tree" (upper left) signals that the quarter-mile race is underway. Though the engine in the Nova (top right) burns through gallons of racing fuel each time it sprints the quarter-mile at full speed, the truck that tows the car to and from the track (lower left) runs on and proclaims the benefits of home-grown ethanol fuel. Racing fuel for serious drag cars is kept in a special fuel cell (lower right).

verting its diesel-powered trucks to biodiesel fuel. Or about the firefighter who joined the coalition and convinced his department to switch to biodiesel for its fire trucks.

Or about attending an air quality task force meeting in the border town of Nogales and hearing officials tell about how the local sewer system kept backing up because so much grease was being dumped down drains. Crowninshield and her coalition went to work with the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, put the communities—Nogales, Arizona and Nogales, Sonora, Mexico—together with the University of Arizona and Mexico's Instituto Tecnológico college, which helped educate restaurant owners about capturing their fry grease, and bringing in the US Environmental Protection Agency to help fund a system that converts that grease into biofuel, which is being used to power the Tecnológico border school bus.

Crowninshield loves finding such regional solutions. She notes that it makes no sense to burn imported petroleum to transport corn-based ethanol from the Midwest to the Southwest, though, if it comes down to it, when her 11-year-old son is of the age for military service, "I'd prefer that my son guard a

corn field in Iowa rather than an oil field in Saudi Arabia."

Corn can be grown in Arizona as well, but it takes a lot of the Southwest's precious supply of water, and is best used for feeding people rather than fuel tanks. So Crowninshield is proud of the coalition's support for projects such as those at the University of Arizona to develop ethanol from sweet sorghum, a crop that doesn't need a lot of water, and from algae.

Though she's passionate about moving people toward cleaner and non-petroleum fuels, she rolls her eyes when people talk about going "green" and bristles when she hears calls for going "carbon neutral."

"Let's just work to be 'carbon better,'" she pleads.

She believes in taking what she calls "baby steps." For example, two years ago when Marc Lappit needed to replace the two driver's education cars at Amphitheater High School, he wanted to do so with alternative fuel vehicles. The coalition helped Lappit work with American Honda to buy natural gas-powered Civics and the FuelMaker home refueling equipment that fuels them from a standard, household natural gas line. Crowninshield's goal: expose new drivers to a clean fuel alter-

native so they "can make an informed decision when the time comes for them to buy a car." But such "baby steps" add up. In 2007, the Tucson Clean Cities Coalition could point to helping the region find alternatives that saved five million gallons of petroleum. In 2008, those baby steps accelerated; the savings grew to 12 million gallons.

"You can change the mindset of people," she said. "I want people to know there are alternatives."

**THOSE ALTERNATIVES INCLUDE A NEW FUEL SOURCE FOR RUBY**, who they towed to Tucson and took to the strip to see what she could do. Brian drove for a few passes, then asked Colleen if she'd like to try. She was overwhelmed by the noise—since cured by installation of mufflers—and was frightened when the nitrous kicked in—that bottle has been removed. But she was thrilled by the rush of adrenalin as the "Christmas tree" starting light flashed green and she and Ruby raced down the track.

"It was much more exciting than I thought it might be," she said. Colleen and Ruby have turned the quarter-

mile in 11.80 seconds at a top speed of 117 miles per hour.

Colleen's biggest surprise has been how the presence of a woman at the starting line seems to ratchet up a male competitor's already intense competitive drive. "They don't like getting beaten by 'a girl,'" she's learned.

Colleen's goal is to become skilled enough to break that 12-second barrier on a consistent basis. She did an 11.989 at 116.75 mph on her first run at the Friday Test and Tune session.

Brian's pride in Colleen's racing is obvious, and he enjoys getting the car ready, making adjustments—sometimes significant repairs—between runs, and walking alongside the car, coaching Colleen as she and Ruby make their way along the "staging" lane that leads racers to the strip's starting line.

Once there, however, it's just Colleen, Ruby, the Christmas tree—and a competitor in the adjacent lane.

Once she's consistently in the 11s—she did a run in 12.137 at 116.17 later that Friday evening—Colleen wants to participate in the Southwestern track's team racing program.

She and Brian also plan to convert Ruby to run on ethanol, now a locally produced fuel in Arizona and not only cleaner burning but much less expensive than racing gasoline. Brian already has an engine that he's preparing for Ruby's conversion into an alternative fueled and very fast vehicle ■

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# CONFIDENCE, COMFORT and a few QUIRKS



BY BARBARA & BILL CHAFFER

As the Lexus of SUVs, the LX 570 makes a big footprint in the upper echelon of off-road vehicles. Weighing in at three tons, this third-generation LX boasts a luxurious eight-passenger seating in one of the quietest cabins in the business, outstanding performance and some of the most impressive technology in the auto industry.



Like an athlete on steroids, the 2008 LX has a muscular platform riding atop an advanced suspension system with Active Height Control and Adaptive Variable Suspension, which produce a sedan-like ride on road. Off road, these systems combine the full-time four-wheel drive system with Torsen® limited-slip locking center differential to power the wheels with the best grip and keep the wheels on the ground. An innovative three-speed Crawl Control features works like a cruise control system for off-road to literally help the big SUV crawl up, down or through tough conditions—all the driver has to do is steer.

A new Wide-view Front & Side Monitor displays what's ahead and to the side, on the navigation screen, from cameras mounted in the grille and under the passenger side-view mirror. The driver simply pushes a button on the dash to activate the system, which functions at speeds up to about 7.5 mph. It's perfect for driving through tight spots like parking lots or checking the space between trees or rocks in the woods.

At 383 hp, the new 5.7-liter V-8 engine is 42 percent more powerful than the previous 4.7-liter V-8. The engine is equipped with the advanced Dual VVT-I system that controls valve timing and overlap on intake and exhaust valves to optimize fuel efficiency and emissions. Power reaches the wheels through a new six-speed sequential-shift automatic transmission. The LX accelerates from 0 to 60 mph in 7.4 seconds and has a top speed limited to 137 mph. The penalty for size and performance is a 12/18-mpg fuel economy rating from the EPA.

Owners who tow will appreciate the 8,500-pound capacity (up 2,000 pounds from the previous generation) and the standard engine oil cooler.

Inside, passengers are treated to a four-

zone climate control system with 28 air vents. The system says it is capable of maintaining a 64-degree Fahrenheit temperature at each register after 30 minutes of idling during a typical Arizona deserts summer (see sidebar). Entertainment options include a Mark Levinson Reference 5.1 surround sound system with 19 speakers and hard disc drive to store up to 2,000 digital songs. Rear seat passengers can enjoy to an available DVD movie theater with a nine-inch screen.

Safety is ensured by a 10-airbag system, which includes Roll-Sensing Curtain Airbags and driver and front-passenger knee bags. The driver's job is simplified with systems like Intuitive Park Assist, a first-in-class Pre-Collision System with Adaptive Radar Cruise Control and navigation system with XM NavTraffic® and backup camera.

Other standard or available features include split rear gate with power upper glass section, a power-retractable third-row seat, HomeLink® garage door opener and remote engine starting.

The only trim level has a base price of \$75,705 plus \$825 destination charge. Load the LX 570 with available features and the price starts to climb. Our test Lexus had a Luxury Package (with so many inclusions you are sure to want the bundle) for \$4050, the Mark Levinson audio system for \$3030, Lexus Link, the wide-view monitor system and rear seat entertainment package for \$900, \$1000 and \$1990, respectively, totaling \$88,660. Pricing for the 2010 model year is expected in late September.

Technological features, comfort, performance and off-road capabilities for the LX 570 are all pluses, but we thought the styling lacked the bling to set it apart in a crowd, though that may be exactly what some upscale shoppers are looking for. ■

## OUR LOG BOOK: ANDY ROONEY MOMENTS

We had the LX 570 in our test fleet for one week. Overall, it is a superb land yacht, so—since that's a given—we found ourselves making notes about the quirks. Here are lightly edited comments from the voice memo log.

### THE QUIRKS: ELECTRONICS

- Big plus: electric steering wheel telescope and tilt is something everybody should have. Easy to find, easy to do, even while driving.
- The screen interface is tough. Controls for tuning the radio... you try to find stations, can scan by type or scroll by type, a little confusing at first. While trying to figure it out, the buttons disappear, and by the time you get the buttons back, you're on to another station and can only scan and seek in one direction. Might be more modes, but we have no owner's manual.
- On the buttons and screen overall, it's not as clever or intuitive as they probably think it is.
- We parked and wanted to get out and lock it, the radio didn't turn off, a chime was going, looked at stop/start to see if we didn't turn it off, no we turned it off, start button was yellow, got back in, closed the door, started it, stopped it, this time the radio was already off, no chime, got out and locked it. Don't know if there's some sequence you must perform, but it seems either ill-designed or not working right.
- Fifth day, still trying to figure why we can't get out of the car. Maybe you have to put it in park, then turn it off... if we turn it off and then put it in park, it won't let us out. Or so it seems.
- Sixth day, still can't figure out how to synchronize the driver and passenger sides of the HVAC. Backing up, the rear vision camera no longer works just once, no idea why.
- As with computer programs, just because you have 100 new ideas doesn't mean you want every one of them implemented in what could otherwise be a simple interface.
- Radio controls are way down low and audio button way up high by the display, with climate controls in between. You have to go back up to the top for the climate control *screen* button, and... well, in a way that makes sense, everything for the *screen* is here, but in another way it makes really little sense at all. Controls should be near their devices.

**THE RESOLUTION:** As with any overly-gadgeted vehicle, if it's your only car, you'll get used to much of it, find some of it annoying and disregard much of it. If it's not your only vehicle, you'll get used to less of it, find more of it annoying and disregard much of it.

### THE QUIRKS: RIDE AND HANDLING

- At first, we thought it cornered well, from an aggressive start at a red light, tracked well and handled well on a corner, but then on a straight-away seemed floaty and uncertain, hunting around for a track. Later, on a slower corner, it was feeling just as floaty, so... perhaps it benefits from being aggressively driven.
- Turning circle: not bad! (Checked later: 38.7 ft curb-to-curb.) Pulling into a parking space and doing a turn to the left or the right takes you just three spaces away from where you started. U-turns on two-lane roads barely needed a touch of driveway to achieve.
- The roads in one test area are darn near pool-table-smooth, to most vehicles we drive, but this one hunts through uneven areas that you don't even notice in most vehicles. Tires?
- Really baffled by this suspension. It's finding

washboard in this smooth road that we never encountered in other vehicles. It feels like it's skittering over them quite harshly.

• There are sport and comfort modes. Set in sport mode, we back up and hit the brakes and it wallows and rocks. Set on Sport, we hit a bump like a seam in the road with the kind of firmness that makes us think we just lost our grip for a second.

**THE RESOLUTION:** The center setting might be the answer on this comfort/sport thing. Comfort makes it feel to us like a big boat and sport seems over-controlled. So we try the middle setting. We drive through big speed bumps on a deserted commercial street in all three settings. Sport was *really* harsh, hitting the bumps like a brick. Comfort wallowed through it (the word wallow appears often in the memos). We figured floating was better than harshness, in this case. Then tried the middle. Not bad. We'd set it there and mostly leave it there.

### THE QUIRKS: A/C

- There's a large interior volume to cool off in here, on a 110-degree day; after about 5 miles, it's still pretty warm. No real surprise, we guess, that it came to us with the a/c set on "low" (max). Put our hand over the vent, it's nice and cold, but the cabin is pretty warm. We reached behind and turned off the two a/c vents on the back of the console for the back seat passengers, much like hogging a fan at home, at the expense of everybody else.
- According to this, the outside temp is 82, when it's about 105. The reason we're in the climate interface is we're trying to get the two sides to run in sync. Driver and passenger temp are set separately and we're having to keep resetting both. Auto/off/front/rear/face... nothing about synchronizing. Tried pressing two at once and four at once and everything else, nothing worked. No manual.
- Day six: well, we found the coldest spot in the car... it's the glovebox in the console! The thing is like an icebox. It has its own little air vent that is probably as strong as what cools the cabin, but for one cubic foot or less.

**THE RESOLUTION:** Ride in the glovebox? Seriously, we have a hunch this can be improved, either with a service call or more fiddling (with a manual).

### THE QUIRKS: SIZE

- The phenomenon of any full-size luxury SUV is pretty interesting. In a yield intersection, you have different vehicles, different sizes, and they basically all just kind of defer to you, and more surprisingly still, you just kind of take it. Feels pretty good in a way. We don't know if you can count on it.
- It just seems you can get away with a lot more driving in these big SUVs. And in fact people even encourage you to; they're very deferential. Wondering in the future if there are fewer of these, will it be more so? less so? will people have had their fill?
- Pulling out of a parking space, we guess it's nice to have mirrors as large as these, noticeably larger right from the get-go. Normally we'd be big fans of that, always useful on a big vehicle, however the combination of A-pillar handle grip and righthand mirror create one heck of a blind spot, enough that we almost pulled out in front of a Mustang coming through the parking lot almost completely hidden.
- The format is great for a 6'2", full-size American; we certainly like sitting in something this big, but it's a lot of mass if you don't truly need it.

**THE RESOLUTION:** If you like 'em big, no resolution needed. If you don't, no resolution possible. But one lasting thing we noted in our test log was that "we have some real serenity going on here." There are only a few vehicles in this class.

# FINDING OUT WHETHER MAX IS ENOUGH

*In analyzing the Toyota Tundra, first there is the truck itself: its size, power, capabilities, options, style and price. But more than most vehicles, it does not live in a vacuum. You have to consider the dominance of domestic brands in the full-size pickup segment. And in the case of full-size pickups, maybe more than any other category, you have to consider not just the truck itself, but also buyers' emotional and even "patriotic" quotients.*

## DOMESTIC MARKET SHARE EVOLUTION

For years, the market went about evenly to Ford and GM, with just a few percentage points (5-6% or so) to Dodge. (Ford consistently comes out on top.)

With the Dodge Ram updated in 1994, its sales jumped from 100,000 a year to 240,000 in one year, peaking at just over 400,000 by 1999, when Ford and GM updated their own trucks. Updated again in 2002, the Dodge climbed to 450,000 units by 2003. Ford and GM climbed, too, but Dodge was approaching a 20% share, an incredible gain in nine years' time.

Ford's top-selling F-150 was updated again in 2004, the Nissan Titan entered the game, and the newest Toyota Tundra hit the market in 2007. By 2008, Dodge sales had slipped all the way back to 245,000, until an all-new Ram pickup was launched for 2009. But let's back up.

## TOYOTA GETS BIGGER, BUT NOT A LOT

Toyota first entered the not-quite-full-size pickup market with its T100 in 1993. This was rightly thought of as a "7/8" size pickup (and it lacked a V8). The traditional small Toyota pickup was named the Tacoma in 1995, keeping Toyota strong in its traditional small-pickup range, while also offering the larger-but-not-large-enough T100. The T100 also remained in the marketplace until 1998, cannibalizing sales from, and/or losing sales to, the Tacoma, but seldom cannibalizing sales from Ford, GM or Dodge.

Enter the Toyota Tundra, introduced in

The Toyota Tundra CrewMax looks and feels comfortably large on the open road, but pulls forward into an urban parking space easily—no need to gyrate in backwards, as expected.

From freeways, to paved rollercoasters, to unpaved washboard, handling is excellent.

The Tundra appears much larger than domestic pickups, but in fact stacks up about the same.

2000 (initially known as the T150 concept). This first-generation Tundra was still perceived as too small and light, compared with Ford, GM and Dodge, yet it doubled its unit sales over the T100 (and was the largest volume seller in Toyota's history).

## ALL-AMERICAN TOYOTA

Significantly, the Tundra was being built in Indiana, with 65% domestic content, and they added a V8—demonstrating that Toyota understood the challenge of competing with the domestic US champs, and that they were quite serious about it. Their new Indiana roots also allowed Toyota to achieve something that really made the earth move: in 2004, the Tundra was allowed to enter the NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series. For Toyota fans, this was vindication and supersized endorsement; for detractors, it was blasphemy.

## ALL-NEW TUNDRA EMERGES

Also in 2004, Toyota showed their FTX concept truck (see next page) at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit. By 2006, it had been fleshed out as a new, larger Tundra, introduced at the Chicago Auto Show, and brought to market for 2007. This is the Tundra of today.

New Fords and the new Dodge Ram for 2009 represented the best-ever pickups from both manufacturers, by a long shot. Chevy and GM have moved forward, as well, though not quite as dramatically. And Toyota? With the Tundra, they have not only moved their full-size pickup well ahead of its own Toyota predecessors, but they've advanced the product significantly in its position against Ford, GM and Dodge.

## 2010 TOYOTA TUNDRA

Quite a few standard and optional exterior, mechanical, safety and convenience features have been added to the Tundra lineup for 2010, as well as an all-new 4.6-liter i-FORCE V8

engine. For ordering simplicity, the 2010 lineup has been reduced from a three-grade to a two-grade strategy (Tundra—yes, a Tundra-grade Tundra—or Limited), trimming the total number of models from 45 to 38. Tundra grade is available on Regular Cab with V6 or V8 engines, and Double Cab or CrewMax with V8. Limited Grade is available on Double Cab and CrewMax V8. The SR5 grade has been discontinued, replaced by an SR5 Option Package. A TRD Off-Road Package has off-road tuned suspension, off-road tires on 17-inch wheels, fog lamps and graphics.

Two new packages for 2010 are the Tundra Platinum Package and Tundra Work Truck Package, both of which confirm that Toyota will leave no full-size pickup niche unchallenged. The Work Truck Package is aimed at commercial buyers or those who otherwise like a tough no-frills truck, with vinyl seats and rubber flooring. These come in Regular and Double Cab configurations with a V6 or either V8. At the high end, the Platinum Package is available on Tundra CrewMax Limited models equipped with the 5.7-liter V8 and Flex Fuel powertrains—our test truck. High-lux features in this package include heated and ventilated seats, sunroof and wood grain trim.

Our test truck was Tundra Limited grade, with the Platinum Package and the new 4.6-liter V8, in four-door CrewMax form.

All 2010 Tundra models have a redesigned front grille and taillights: The Tundra grade has a two-bar grille and the Limited grade a billet-style grille. Additional standard equipment on all Tundra models includes driver and front passenger knee airbags, height-adjustable headlamps, and a redesigned seven-pin towing hitch connector (above the hitch to help avoid dam-

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The Toyota FTX concept truck from NAIAS 2004 was clearly the basis for the new 2007 Tundra. Large side mirrors are a plus, and we are big fans of the backup camera display in the rearview. The Tundra interior outdoes most trucks and most sedans or SUVs. Storage options abound.

age during high departure angles).

The new 4.6-liter V8 is available on all 2010 Tundras. It features a DOHC aluminum alloy head with dual independent Variable Valve Timing with intelligence (VVT-i), delivery 310 hp, 327 lb-ft. of torque and EPA fuel efficiency estimates of 15 mpg city and 20 mpg highway on 4x2 models—the best combination of power and fuel economy estimates of any standard V8 in the full-size pickup segment. Like Tundra's 5.7-liter i-FORCE V8, the new 4.6-liter V8 is mated with a six-speed automatic transmission.

Engines also include a 236-hp DOHC 4.0-liter with 4-valve cylinder heads and VVT-i, teamed with a five-speed automatic featuring uphill/downhill shift logic. The new 4.6-liter V8 and a more powerful 381-hp 5.7-liter i-Force V8 with Dual VVT-i are available in every model configuration, teamed with a six-speed automatic. Both Tundra V8s meet Ultra-Low Emissions Vehicle (ULEV II) emissions certification.

Wheelbases range from 126.8 inches for Regular Cab/standard bed models; to 145.7 inches for Regular Cab/long bed, Double Cab/standard bed and CrewMax models, and a massive 164.6 inches for Double Cab/long bed models (so if you need the four-door CrewMax, you're still almost 20" shorter than the longest truck—a key reason we found it so amazingly adept at parking).

The Tundra has TripleTech full-boxed frame rails for the front portion, a reinforced C-channel under the cab and an open C-channel under the bed. Double A-arm front suspension uses coil-over spring shock units, and rear suspension uses staggered shocks outboard of the springs to improve dampening efficiency. Spring rates are tuned for a flat stance when fully loaded, while the rear frame section provides "toe-out" mounting points for the rear leaf springs, for confident towing under a full load.

The Tundra has standard four-wheel ventilated disc brakes (13.9" with four-piston calipers front, and 13.6" with two-piston calipers rear). Anti-lock brakes (ABS) with Electronic Brake-force Distribution (EBD) and Brake Assist (BA) are standard on all Tundra models. A standard Automatic Limited-Slip Differential (Auto-LSD) helps acceleration in deep sand or mud and on mixed friction surfaces. The combination of Auto-LSD and Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) standard equipment on every model is a first in the segment.

Tundra's 4x4 trucks have a part-time, electronically-controlled system with 4x2, 4x4 Hi and 4x4 Lo ranges, selected via a dial on the dash.

An available Tow Package on all Tundra i-Force V8 models increases towing capacity significantly, up to 10,800 pounds, depending on model and drivetrain. The Tundra can remain level even with 1,000 lbs. of tongue weight or payload. The Tow Package also upgrades Tundra's cooling and electrical systems, plus under-dash prewire for a third-party trailer brake controller and both seven- and a four-pin trailer brake connectors near the hitch. Optional telescoping towing mirrors are available on 5.7-liter V8 models.

Tundra grade models have a dual-zone manual climate control system with seven-speed blower, sync-mode and a replaceable dust and pollen filter. Limited grade models have dual-zone automatic climate control.

Interiors offer textured fabrics or deep-grain leathers in four colors. A manual tilt and telescoping steering wheel is standard, and Limited models offer an available power tilt and telescoping steering wheel. Standard High Solar Energy Absorbing (HSEA) glass helps filter solar heat and most UV (skin-sensitive) light energy entering the vehicle.

There are five audio systems in the lineup, with variables including AM/FM/CD, integrated XM satellite radio, hands-free phone and stream-

ing music via Bluetooth®, auxiliary/USB inputs and up to six speakers, and some with navigation and backup camera monitor.

Many other features distinguish and/or run across the various grades, models, packages, and engine/cab/bed combinations. You'll want to study the brochure, or build your own at [www.toyota.com](http://www.toyota.com).

#### MARKET SHARES TODAY

Year-to-date sales through June 2009 showed market shares of 33.8% for Ford, 29.2% Chevy, 18.4% Dodge, 9.8% GMC and 7.0% Toyota Tundra (down from 9.6% a year earlier). Nissan Titan brings up the rear at 1.7%. Great progress for Toyota, but are they winning hearts and minds?

#### OPINIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

We asked veteran pickup owners—those with the Tundra, as well as those with Ford, GM and Dodge trucks—what it would take, or indeed what it had taken, for them to make the change to Toyota. Answers were short, sweet, somewhat predictable and fell into a few categories:

- It'll never happen.
- I compared all the features and made the change.
- I did compare features, but hey, I'm just a Ford (or GM or Dodge) guy.
- What do you mean? Why wouldn't I?

Little annoyances and oddities often get noted in our test drive voice memos, along with the usual ride, fit, comfort and controls. But it was interesting to look back and see that the Tundra got none of that. Here are the highlights:

"It has all the usual great Toyota stuff. Just step right in. (Power) steering wheel adjustments are easy to do while driving. In an aggressive corner, wheel hop is controlled very well. Love the rear-view camera, which displays in the lefthand portion of the rearview mirror. Storage galore: cupholders, trays, nooks and crannies in the console, before you even open it, then even more, then more in the overhead, and even more in the side pockets. Pretty sweet. Very manageable around town. Everything is well engineered and all works together really well."

There are a great many ways to build and order your own Tundra, starting at \$22,490 for a 4x2 Regular Cab V6. Our top-end test truck stickered at \$43,405. ■



# Going, going, going... coming back.

**P**rior to last year, we would attend four Monterey events: Arizona-owned Russo and Steele, Arizona perennial RM Auctions right across the street, the Monterey Historic Races at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca (featuring some Arizona drivers), and the Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance, the longstanding anchor of the whole week. Last year, we added two: the Gooding & Company auction and the Concorso Italiano (both with Arizona connections).

This year the count climbed to eight, adding Mecum Auction, new to Monterey and presenting the Bondurant Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe (see our May/June issue) and La Dolce Vita, a spinoff of the Concorso Italiano. It's a challenging schedule, spreading from Laguna Seca to Seaside to Monterey to Pebble Beach, not to mention lodging a considerable distance away, as rooms in Monterey during these events are rare and priced accordingly.

The mood in general at the auctions was far more upbeat than last winter's, when the financial crisis was in full and unfamiliar swing. We had a preview of conditions at Meadow Brook in Detroit (see next issue), where it seemed that although prices were down a bit, interest was, well, normal. And normal hadn't been seen for awhile. Lower prices didn't seem to represent opportunism, as much as just a welcome return to a more accessible hobby. So let's check Monterey.

## Gooding & Company

**\$50+ million sales, 129 lots, two \$4+ million cars, three world records**

Gooding & Company, the official auction house of the Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance, always puts on a class act, just up the hill from the waterfront Concours site. This year's auction attracted thousands of collectors and enthusiasts from around the world.

83% of all Saturday offerings were sold, earning more than \$21 million with a total of 74 lots sold. Two world record-breaking sales were achieved: a 1953 Aston Martin DB 2/4 Drop Head Coupe at \$1,650,000, a 1953 Jaguar XK120 SE Roadster at \$192,500 and a 1938 Buick Limited Series 80 Opera Brougham at \$506,000. The evening's highest sale was the red hot 1958 Ferrari 250 GT LWB California Spider at \$2,750,000. A highlight for many enthusiasts was the sale of Ettore Bugatti's own 1938 Bugatti Type 57C Special Coupe that passed hands to its new caretaker at price of \$1,375,000. An historic collection of American race cars from the Don & Joan Lyons Collection collectively realized \$1,034,000 in sales for all seven lots consigned without reserve. The 1964 Dean Van Lines Roadster, the star of this collection and the car that launched the career of racing legend Mario Andretti, sold for \$231,000.

Sunday's totals included \$29+ million for 55 lots sold out of 70 offered. Nine exceptional cars sold for more than \$1 million each. The evening's top five sales were the 1962 Ferrari 250 GT SWB California Spider at \$5,115,000, the 1933 Alfa Romeo 8C 2300 Drop Head Coupe at \$4,180,000, the 1935 Duesenberg Model SJ Roadster at \$3,300,000, the 1954 Ferrari 500 Mondial Series I at \$1,540,000 and the 1934 Mercedes-Benz 380 Sport Roadster at \$1,078,000.

In contrast with of the evening's classics, Sunday night also included the sale of "Chassis Number One" of Bentley Motors' new flagship grand tourer Mulsanne, conceived, styled and engineered at Bentley's headquarters in Crewe, England, and presented for the first time at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance that day. \$550,000 in proceeds were donated to the Pebble Beach Phil Hill Scholarship.

**GOODING IN ARIZONA IN JANUARY:** Gooding & Company will hold its 3rd Annual Scottsdale Auction on Saturday, January 23, 2010. Info: [www.goodingco.com](http://www.goodingco.com).

## Mecum Auction

**First-ever Monterey event tops \$14 million; record \$7.25 million for Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe**

Mecum Auction ran its inaugural event at Monterey this year, scoring a great location at the Hyatt Regency Resort & Spa on Del Monte Golf Course. Well known as high-performance specialists, Mecum brought plenty of that to the party, along with a wide array of '50s and '60s cars, as well as classics and one-of-a-kinds for all eras.

Legendary race car driver Bob Bondurant of Arizona and automotive designer Peter

Brock were signing autographs on Saturday, before Bondurant drove the featured attraction, a 1965 Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe CSX2601—American racing's Crown Jewel and one of only six built—across the block in midafternoon. This was the car Bondurant drove to a World Manufacturer's Championship on July 4, 1965, in Reims, France, beating Team Ferrari (see our May/June issue).

Mecum promoted the Daytona Cobra Coupe for months leading up to this auction, with Bondurant himself driving the car for the first time in 40 years at Firebird International Raceway in Phoenix, then one near-sale in Indiana. "Selling this amazing piece of American race history at our first Monterey auction has been the crowning achievement of my career and Mecum Auction's 22 years of selling collector cars," said Dana Mecum, President. "In addition, we had an amazing array of high-end classic and exotic cars cross the auction block, from early '30s Ford street rods to late-model Bentleys. It was exciting to bring both serious car collectors and enthusiasts to the Hyatt Regency Monterey, which is just minutes from downtown and gave us ample room to display cars on the beautiful Del Monte golf course."

And indeed it was a wide array. We were struck by the venue, the displays, the accessibility and the wide range of offerings spread across the course, as well as the semi-open tent atmosphere of the auction itself. A diverse crowd enjoyed it fully. Thrilling without being stuffy, this auction is one to watch.

The inaugural Mecum Monterey Auction gave the company the highest single vehicle sale in its history—\$7.25 million for the 1965 Shelby Daytona Cobra Coupe—and reached total gross sales for the one-day auction of \$14.3 million (including buyer's premium).

Complete car-by-car results are available to Mecum InfoNet members, which is free to join at [www.mecum.com/infonet](http://www.mecum.com/infonet).

## RM Auctions

**Friday: renowned woodie collection sale sets positive tone for weekend**

The crowd at RM Auctions in Arizona last January showed the effects of the financial crisis and wide-ranging uncertainty, with quite a few empty seats as the night progressed, though international buyers were still in full force. Not so at the Portola Hotel & Spa in Monterey this summer: the facility was absolutely packed, standing room only, both nights, with overflow into the lobby and foyer. Displays of September's upcoming Icons of Speed and Style auction at the Peterson Museum in LA (see our July/August issue) kept the overflow entertained. RM Auctions' busy calendar at Monterey included an exclu-

sive online auction at [www.rmauctions.com](http://www.rmauctions.com), closely followed by the distinguished Nick Alexander Woodie Collection, then the Sports & Classics of Monterey auction event.

RM kicked off their Monterey event on Thursday night with the Nick Alexander Woodie Collection achieving in excess of \$7 million in total sales. The four-hour auction attracted spirited bidding as 51 magnificent pre- and post-war Ford and Mercury wood-bodied wagons crossed the block before a packed house. The top seller of the night was a Dearborn award-winning 1946 Mercury Sportsman Convertible, the rarest Sportsman of all, which brought an impressive \$368,500. Other highlights included an exceptionally rare 1948 Ford Super Deluxe Sportsman Convertible for \$275,000, and a handsome all-wheel-drive 1946 Ford Super Deluxe Station Wagon for \$247,500.

One final car from the collection—a 1939 Ford Deluxe Station Wagon—was saved for Saturday's auction line-up.

**Phil Hill's son drives famous dad's 1952 Jaguar C-Type to auction**

Derek Hill, son of legendary racing driver Phil Hill, drove his dad's historic 1952 Jaguar C-Type, s/n XKC-007 to an auction world record on Saturday night, selling for \$2,530,000. XKC-007 was one of the first C-Types delivered to North America. In 1952, a young Phil Hill—then just 25—drove the car at Elkhart Lake to claim the C-Type's first North American victory, before going on to achieve further success at Torrey Pines that same year.

"The global interest and enthusiasm in our 2009 Monterey event led to a packed sales room of active bidders each of the three evenings, (elevating) numbers in excess of the anticipated pre-sale expectations," said Ian Kelleher, President and Chief Operating Officer of RM Auctions.

Top sellers at RM included two additional million-dollar cars: a race-bred 1955 Aston Martin DB3S, which brought an impressive \$1,980,000, and a stunning 1935 Duesenberg Model SJ Disappearing Top Convertible Coupe which sold at \$1,430,000.

A further highlight was the sale of a factory-original 2005 Ford GT super car, offered on behalf of the Ford Motor Company and selling for \$181,500 with a portion of the sale proceeds benefiting the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation (JDRF). Ford Motor Com-

## MOBILE UPLOADS

### Gooding & Company



### Mecum Auction



KEEP RIGHT >>

pany Board Director Edsel B. Ford II and his son, Henry, joined a group of local Monterey JDRF youth ambassadors to witness its sale.

The 1939 Ford Deluxe Station Wagon, final lot of the Nick Alexander Woodie Collection reserved for Saturday night's sale, exceeded its original high estimate to bring \$215,000 hammer price. This lot capped off the extremely successful single-owner offering of \$7.3 million. The \$215,000 was donated to the Midland School in Santa Barbara, California by Nick Alexander, along with the 10% buyers premium of \$21,500 and other monies raised at Friday night's sale of a selection of photography depicting the histories of Ford, Mercury and the Iron Mountain Factories, all of which was donated by RM.

**RM IN ARIZONA IN JANUARY:** RM Auctions will conduct its 11th Annual Automobiles of Arizona event on Friday, January 22, 2010, at the Arizona Biltmore. More information is at [www.rmauctions.com](http://www.rmauctions.com).

## Russo and Steele

**Record attendance, increased sales percentage, 14% increase in bidders, 17% increase in first-time bidders, 55+% sales ratio, eight world records**

Russo and Steele Collector Automobiles specializes in European sports cars, American muscle cars, hot rods and customs. The company brings the same up-close auction-in-the-round format to Monterey (now in its 9th year) that it has used so effectively in Arizona (entering its 10th). But a lot of the buzz is created outdoors, from a rooftop reception the night before the auction series begins, to the public staging of vehicles on Calle Principal in front of the Monterey Marriott Hotel, a chance to see the equipment up close and catch the sounds and smells. Pure magic.

Bidders were present from all 50 states and 16 countries, and thirteen nations were represented by media. With the "rolling preview," a new online webcast and phone bidding, audiences everywhere could enjoy the Russo and Steele auction experience.

The two-evening auction addressed the current financially conservative market by increasing the number of cars in a higher market value range. Results demonstrate that the market is still strong when selling collector vehicles with carefully researched provenance—a Russo and Steele forte. All the major auctions make every effort to ensure top quality and accurate information, but Russo and Steele owner Drew Alcazar is a living, breathing encyclopedia of provenance.

New to Russo and Steele this year was a live online auction webcast. "Within two minutes of us testing the webcast prior to the auction starting, we had over 250 people

watching, and it increased at amazing speeds as the night progressed" said Brian Quinn, Russo and Steele General Manager.

5000 people attended the auction. Friday night set records for attendance, with crowds filling the auction room to capacity, standing room only. A 1961 Porsche 356 Carrera 2/2000 GS once belonging to Dr. Ferry Porsche sold after a lively battle for \$330,000. Saturday night's top sale was a 1964 Shelby Cobra CSX 2492 at \$475,000.

"The marketplace in Monterey performed as we anticipated," says Alcazar. "We intentionally selected automobiles within the range of \$100,000 to \$500,000 to better serve the projected marketplace. Without a doubt, the market continues to show strength for extremely desirable and well-documented examples. Dr. Porsche's 1961 356 Carrera 2/2000 GS, the 1939 Alvis Speed 25 Tourer, and the 1964 Shelby Cobra CSX 2492 among many others are clear evidence of this."

As the hobby and the economy continue to take their twists and turns, Russo and Steele has made a major point of moving to an All Reserve format. Traditionally, cars selling at No Reserve (having no hidden minimum price) may generate extra excitement that raises bidding even higher than it might otherwise have run, especially when they are the exception to the bulk of entries. But it carries the risk of a sale at an unfavorable price. A trend to No Reserve pricing in recent years has left many owners forced to sell at heartbreakingly low prices. Hence the current All Reserve commitment by Russo and Steele.

"The quality and caliber of consignments this year far surpassed any to date. I believe that this selection of automobiles proves our All Reserve format is working," Alcazar continued. "This platform benefits everyone. The consignors get a measure of control over the sale of their automobile, the auction house has the opportunity to increase the quality of its selection offered at the sale, and bidders have the opportunity to buy some of these stellar automobiles that might not otherwise be available. Russo and Steele is merely the first auction to realize this, but I am sure we won't be the last."

**RUSSO AND STEELE IN ARIZONA IN JANUARY:** Russo and Steele holds its 10th Annual Sports and Muscle in Scottsdale from January 20-24, 2010. For info: [www.russoandsteele.com](http://www.russoandsteele.com). ■

## MOBILE UPLOADS

### RM Auctions



### Russo and Steele



Camera and iPhone photos: Joe Sage

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# CHANGE A FOOT AFTER THE 36TH ROLEX MONTEREY HISTORIC AUTOMOBILE RACES

**T**he big news at the Monterey Historic Automobile Races this year came at the end of the weekend, as a significant case of politics boiled over, impacting the future of the event (or ultimately not impacting it, they seem to say)

A flurry of press releases began arriving on Sunday, the last day of the event, first announcing that the Sports Car Racing Association of the Monterey Peninsula (SCRAMP) would take over producing the historic races at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca in 2010, and that General Racing, Ltd. was out. "This has certainly been a long and rewarding relationship with Steve Earle and General Racing," said Gill Campbell, CEO and General Manager of Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. "SCRAMP has always admired Mr. Earle's creation, which has brought historic car racing to the enthusiast on such a level."

Steve Earle, General Racing Ltd. president, issued a statement in response on Monday, saying that General Racing, which had created and produced the Monterey Historic Automobile Races® (he pointedly includes the ®) for 36 years, would indeed no longer be doing so. Earle described SCRAMP's program as a new event. Many feel that Steve Earle and the long-running Monterey event have made historic automobile racing what it is in the US today.

David Love of San Rafael CA, a 74-year-old racing veteran who has driven his 1958 Ferrari 250 Testa Rossa in all 36 runnings of the race, reminisced that in 1967 a half-dozen friends gathered with their old sports cars to have what they called a mechanical picnic. The next year, "we rented a local track for \$100 and divided the cost between us," says Love. "Steve Earle heard about it, came out with his GTO to see what we were up to, and that's how we met." It didn't take long for Earle to envision a proper road race to coordinate with the timing of the Pebble Beach Concourse d'Élegance, but he knew it

would not be allowed on public streets, as many vintage events are, so he chose the track at Laguna Seca as the ideal venue.

The track, however, was established in 1957 and has been operated since its inception by SCRAMP, a not-for-profit organization which has donated more than \$12 million to communities around the Monterey Peninsula and to volunteer groups that help put on the races.

As early as fall 2008, Earle says he was advised that the terms of agreement between General Racing and SCRAMP were no longer economically viable. Unable to come to a new agreement, General Racing announced they would allow SCRAMP a one-time use of the name Monterey Historic Automobile Races for the 2010 event.

General Racing meanwhile announced that they would continue their own tradition at the Wine Country Classic at Infineon Raceway in Sonoma CA in early June 2010. "I truly believe that we have brought something special to the community of Monterey," said Earle, "as an event of world renown and the generator of substantial revenue for the local economy and the charities to which SCRAMP contributes. The purpose of General Racing, Ltd., is and always has been to encourage the restoration, preservation and use of historic, sports and racing cars... for the enjoyment of participants and enthusiasts alike."

By later that same day, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca officials had announced that August 13-15, 2010, would be the dates for the 37th Monterey Historic Automobile Races. "Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca's mission will be to maintain the integrity, authenticity and prestige of the Monterey Historic Automobile Races, while enhancing the enjoyment factor for the fans, participants and sponsors," said Campbell.

The event has been one of the cornerstones of the Monterey Peninsula's Classic Car Week and is at the pinnacle of Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca's track calendar.

By the middle of the following week, Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca officials had announced a new Selection Committee for the 2010 races, including Steve Earle.

Use of the Monterey Historic Automobile Races® name, as well as details of General Racing's plans for Sonoma next June, had not been clarified by press time. Tickets for Monterey 2010, however, go on sale November 17, 2009, available at 800-327-7322 or [www.mazdaraceway.com](http://www.mazdaraceway.com).

Full 2009 entry lists and race results are available at [www.montereyhistoric.com](http://www.montereyhistoric.com). ■

## VINTAGE WHEELS, NEW WHEELS AND TWO WHEELS AT LAGUNA

### PORSCHE SHOWCASES HISTORY AND FUTURE AS THE FEATURED MARQUE

At the 36th Rolex Monterey Historic Automobile Races, held at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca (August 14-16), the sound of over 450 race cars was complemented by the 2010 Porsche Panamera Gran Turismo making its North American debut. In addition to the 145 Porsche racers entered by their owners (one-third of the 450-plus field), Porsche showcased the Panamera on the world-famous race track and also provided display vehicles on site, including four special cars with significant American connections, on loan from the new Porsche Museum in Germany. (The Panamera also made a debut appearance at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance.) Jay Leno was on hand to drive the Panamera Turbo.



### DUCATI

Ducati was at the Monterey Historic Races for their first time, unveiling a "Martini Racing" liveried Superbike in honor of Porsche. They also had their 200hp, 366-pound Desmosedici RR MotoGP race replica on display.

Ducati reminded us that Arizona is an important market for them, with the first showroom in the world to be completed under their new retail design program to be Ducati Scottsdale, set to open by the time you read this.

### FISKER

The Fisker Karma Plug-in Hybrid made its public driving debut during the Monterey Historic Races on Saturday, just 19 months after being unveiled as a concept car, the first-ever appearance of a PHEV on track at the event. The Karma PHEV is a full-size luxury sedan with seating for four, yet has a range of 50 emission-free miles on a full charge of its lithium-ion battery, and a total range of 300 miles with an on-board generator turned by an efficient 260hp Ecotec engine. Two 201.5hp electric motors send traction through a single-speed differential, enough to hit 0-to-60 in about six seconds with a top speed of 125mph. (The Karma was also on display at Concorso Italiano, alongside the Karma Sunset hardtop convertible concept. The Sunset was on display again at the Pebble Beach Concours.) ■

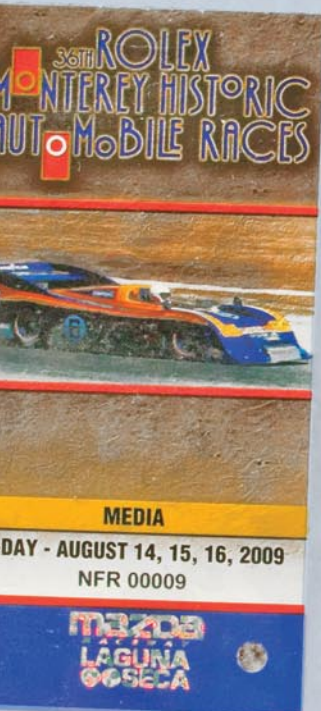
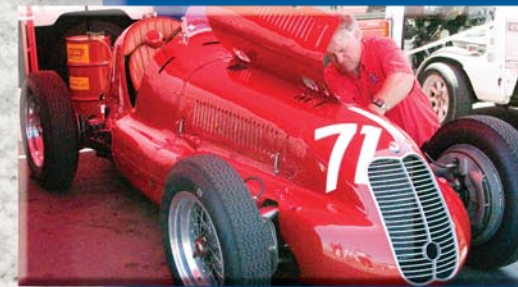
The new four-door Porsche Panamera (top left) was flown via 747 from Germany to its debut at Monterey. Photo © Dirk Michael Dekbar, courtesy Porsche AG.

Porsches navigate the Corkscrew at Mazda Raceway Laguna Seca. Photo: Kyle Burt

Ducati unveils Martini Racing liveried Superbike in honor of Porsche as featured marque.

The Fisker Karma Plug-in Hybrid made its driving debut on the track during the races.

## MOBILE UPLOADS



Last year, we attended the Concorso Italiano for our first time. It was held at the Marina Airport, northeast of Seaside (itself just north of Monterey). This was a "peace dividend" former military airport, part of old Fort Ord. The area is sure to get redeveloped in a big way. Recession or no recession, the sandy rolling hills are already being bladed into wide, flat boulevards along a lot of the old familiar back road shortcuts.

The airport site didn't seem all bad, if you'd never attended the event before: accessible for fly-in elements to the show, with plenty of parking. But those who had been before, when it was held on the green grass of the Bayonet and Black Horse Golf Resort, were sorely disappointed and lobbied for a return to such a location. Black Horse had inadvertently sent the Concorso packing when improvements they were making limited available parking for the event last year.

So a new group coalesced, attempting to pick up the torch. What ensued seemed to be a fairly brief struggle between a replacement event and a reborn original. As the dust settled and the calendar firmed up, one became La Dolce Vita Automobili and the other, with its own nice golf resort setting at Laguna Seca Golf Ranch, secured the original Concorso Italiano name. We set out to visit them both.

### La Dolce Vita Automobili at Black Horse BAYONET AND BLACK HORSE GOLF RESORT, SEASIDE

Calculating the best way to triangulate our travels with both concorsos and the Monterey Historics (as well as an auction or two en route), we headed to La Dolce Vita first. We had conflicting address information, and signage was misleading in places, but we did find the entrance to the resort. There was quite a comedy of errors from there, with media credentials missing, a denial of entry, an apology and entry after all, but denial of entry at the media tent, as we'd been given the wrong type of passes. We were unable to see much of this event. The cellphone photo of a sparse display, to the right, is basically all we saw. We were,

shall we say, disappointed. Colleagues have told us the event was indeed somewhat sparse, but with the dueling events and preparatory confusion, nobody really knew which concorso would attract what vehicles and spectators. But it did pretty well. There was indeed a nice Lamborghini grouping, as well as a showing of early Citroën Traction Avants and some truly unusual customs. The open layout and casual atmosphere were welcomed by some. The well-respected Larry Crane provided emcee duties. All in all, to the degree this had started out as a rebirth of the temporarily ill-fated Concorso Italiano, it fell somewhat short in attendance, but succeeded in regaining the original turf. To the degree it can be seen as a new event, many are hoping they pursue the broader spectrum of cars, beyond the Italians, and grow from there.

### Concorso Italiano

LAGUNA SECA GOLF RANCH, MONTEREY

Next stop: Concorso Italiano. And this seems to be where the crowds showed up, both participants and spectators. The parking areas were brimming, and well-organized. This wide-ranging Italian-focused event included a world-record gathering of 15 Ferrari 288 GTOs, a celebration of the golden anniversary of DeTomaso, Jay Leno attending to receive his La Bella Machinna award (and presenting his own heartwarming thoughts about Valentino Balboni's contributions to Lamborghini). Keith Martin, publisher of *Sports Car Market* magazine and on-air *SPEED* commentator, did emcee duties here. There were hospitable VIP and media tents, but we dined at the food booths, which offered great quality and variety, as well as the enjoyable Italian mandolin and guitar players known from the prior event. Shown together for the first time anywhere were

all four original Bertone-designed Alfa Romeo BAT concept cars, drawing flocks of admirers and photographers for the duration of the event. Lili Bertone was on hand, as well.

Martin Loge of Santa Barbara CA received the Best of Show trophy for his stunning 1969 Maserati Mexico.

There is little doubt that the 2009 Concorso Italiano succeeded in presenting the event everyone remembers as the real thing, and details have already been announced for 2010. For this year's complete results and information about next year, visit [www.concorso.com](http://www.concorso.com).

### The 59th Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance

EIGHTEENTH FAIRWAY,  
PEBBLE BEACH GOLF LINKS,  
THE LODGE AT PEBBLE BEACH

We always hit the grounds at Pebble Beach several times before the actual Concours is held—for new vehicle reveals, manufacturer displays, automobilia booths, the Gooding & Company auction and so on. This year's new vehicle launches included the Porsche Panamera (see races, prior feature) and the new Bentley Mulsanne, the company's all-new flagship grand tourer (with Number One sold at the Gooding auction; see two features prior).

The Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance is the granddaddy event that anchors the whole event-laden week. Over 200 classic cars from 30 states and 19 countries competed in 28 classes. Only the rarest and most beautiful cars are invited, and connoisseurs of art and style flock to see these masterpieces.

Bentley, a featured marque for 2009, had the largest presence on the show field. The event also celebrated the centennials of Bugatti, Audi and Morgan, and the styling of Zagato. Motorcycles were displayed for the first time, in a class of British bikes built through 1959.

Jay Leno brought a 1928 Bugatti Type 37A 2 Seat Sports and was a guest auctioneer. Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger also participated on stage, auctioning his signed bomber jacket, which raised \$30,000 for charity, adding to more than \$13 million raised through the years.

A 1937 Horch 853, owned by Robert M. Lee, was named Best of Show (right). Jerry Seinfeld collected second place in the Porsche class with his 1970 Porsche 908/03 Spyder.

This year coincided with the 40th anniversary of the famous Woodstock Music & Art Fair, and we noted one similarity in that you can spend as much time getting in and out as being there. The luckiest secure lodging on site. For this year's complete results, more great photos and information about next year, visit [www.pebblebeachconcours.com](http://www.pebblebeachconcours.com). ■

### MOBILE UPLOADS

#### Concorso Italiano



#### La Dolce Vita Automobili



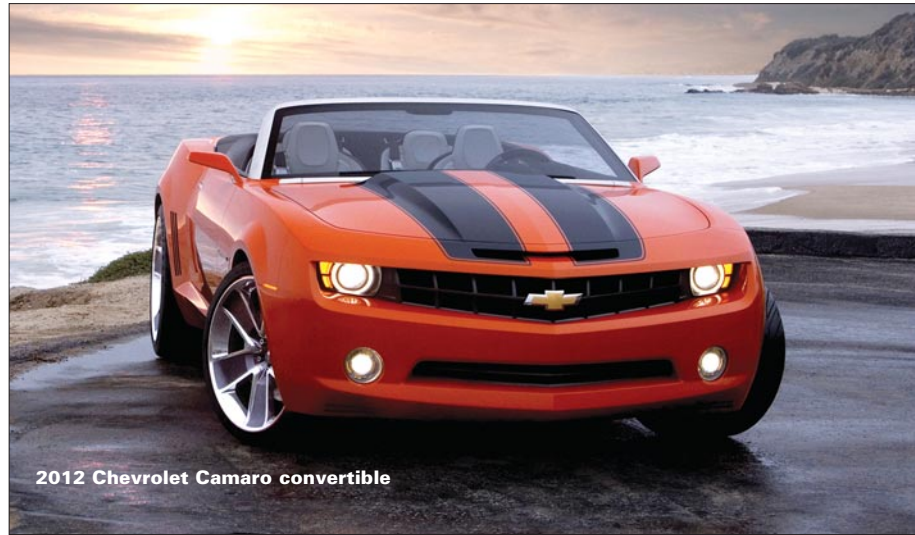
#### Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance Best of Show: 1937 Horch 853



# Concorso, Concorso, Concours



# THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS



2012 Chevrolet Camaro convertible

■ The **Chevrolet** Camaro convertible is on again, according to industry sources. It was originally planned for about a year from now but is now due during the first quarter of 2011 as a 2012 model.

■ **Volvo** is focusing on bringing a battery-powered car to the US. Working jointly with Swedish energy supplier, Vattenfall, Volvo plans to have a plug-in hybrid to market as early as 2012.

■ **Goodyear** has a new off-road tire reinforced with bulletproof Kevlar fabric. The Wrangler MT/R with Kevlar improves puncture resistance by 35 percent reducing the chances of cuts or tears to the sidewalls. For improved traction, the tires have advanced silica/rubber asymmetrically shaped tread and chunky self-cleaning shoulder blocks to aid in deep mud maneuvering. The Wrangler MT/R tires with Kevlar are available in 30 sizes and are priced from \$190 to \$350 each.

■ General Motors CEO Fritz Henderson says the 2010 **Buick** LaCrosse will get a four-cylinder option. The turbocharged 260-hp, 2.0-liter four-cylinder is the same engine used in the Chevrolet Cobalt SS, Pontiac Solstice and Saturn Sky. Earlier in the development process, Vice Chairman of Global Product Development Lutz suggested the same engine would be a good economical option for the new Camaro.

■ **Porsche** is rumored to be building a four-cylinder version of the Boxster for 2011. There hasn't been a Porsche with a four-cylinder engine since the 968 in 1995 and there has never been one in the Boxster. The most interesting thing about the upcoming four-cylinder engine is that it's rumored to be a turbo diesel from the Volkswagen/Audi camp. It is expected to produce about 270 hp.

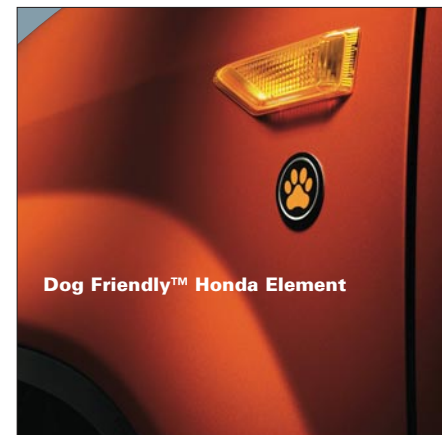
■ The NISMO Z is back and should be at **Nissan** dealerships by now. The 370Z coupe gets a full body kit with ground effects and a big spoiler, which Nissan says are all functional and add no weight. The engine is tweaked by 18 hp to 350 hp and 276 lb.-ft. of torque. Zero to 60 acceleration should drop from 5.2 seconds to the mid-to-high 4-second range. The high-content NISMO is priced at \$39,130.



2009 Nissan NISMO 370Z

■ Recycling your **Bentley**? The British luxury carmaker has become one of the first carmakers in the luxury vehicle category to provide environmentally friendly recycling or recovery at the end of the car's life. Bentley now guarantees 85 percent recyclability (or 95 percent recoverability) of materials for all the current Continental models.

■ This fall, **Honda** will be going after the canine market with a Dog Friendly™ version of the Element. The Dog Friendly equipment, engineered specifically for the Element, is designed to accommodate dogs in the second-row passenger seats or in the cargo area. Major components of the system are likely to include a cushioned pet bed with an elevated platform, second row and cargo area restraint



Dog Friendly™ Honda Element

systems, and extending loading ramp, rear ventilation fan and dog theme decor and accessories.

■ Many used car dealers are now using a **palm-sized device** placed under the dashboard and wired to the ignition of the cars they sell to disable the vehicle when payments are in arrears. Rather than sending out the repo man, so-called "buy here pay here" dealers who sell credit can remotely shut the vehicle down, encouraging owners to keep up on payments out of fear of losing use of the car.



2010 Jaguar XJ

■ **Jaguar** rolled out the all-new Jaguar XJ sedan in July, in London. The flagship XJ is constructed using the next generation of Jaguar's aerospace-inspired aluminum body architecture. Engines will include a naturally-aspirated V-8, a 510-hp supercharged V-8 and a V-6 diesel, although it's not known if the diesel will be available in the US. Like other models in this category, the XJ offers a high level of personal luxury touches.

■ **Chrysler** is doing a three-month strategic study of their business, which will likely see the front-wheel-drive Sebring and Avenger models replaced by rear-wheel-drives. Plans also call for reducing the current 27 nameplates in 13 product segments to 20 nameplates, though expanding into four new market segments by 2013.

■ **Mercedes-Benz** is expected to jump from the 2009 to 2011 model for the SL sports car. Inside sources indicate that the large inventory of 2009 models remaining at dealers should fill the pipeline until the updated 2011 model is ready.



2009 Mercedes-Benz SL63 AMG

■ The first new **Alfa Romeo** imported to the US since 1995 will arrive at seven selected Maserati dealers in January 2010. The Alfa 8C two-seat convertible is powered by a 450-hp, 4.7-liter V-8 engine and has the highest price tag ever attached to an Alfa — \$299,000. Only 35 of the 500 8Cs, which are manufactured by Maserati, will come to the US. ■

■ Supercar maker **Aston Martin** is working with Toyota to develop a luxury version of the tiny iQ compact scheduled for the Toyota lineup. The small upscale Cygnet concept would help Aston Martin offset the carbon footprint of fuel-hungry V-8 Vantages and V-12 DB9s. No details, dates or prices have been announced.

■ It appears the joint project for a **Toyota/Subaru** sports coupe is still in the works, with Toyota doing the styling and Subaru the mechanicals.



Aston Martin Cygnet concept

Power is expected to come from a 200-hp flat (boxer) four-cylinder engine with direct injection, driving the rear wheels. Cars are being developed for both brands, however they are expected to look quite similar with badging changes in their final form.

■ **Porsche** may be building an entry-level roadster based on midengine Volkswagen platform. With Volkswagen and Porsche now intertwined through joint ownership the idea of sharing platforms is even easier. Volkswagen has been showing a midengine concept called the BlueSport, which is based on the VW Polo and Golf components.

■ A heavily camouflaged version of the 2012 **Mercedes-Benz** SLK roadster has been spotted testing, and sources speculate there will be major style changes, including a more conventional Mercedes front end, dropping the Formula 1 inspired look of the current model. There is rumor of an optional diesel engine, too.

■ **Audi** is allegedly developing an RS performance version of the Q5 compact SUV. The car is expected to have a highly modified version of the supercharged 3.0-liter direct-injection V-6 gasoline engine rated at 408-hp. The drivetrain includes

Audi's new seven-speed double-clutch transmission and quattro all-wheel drive.

■ **General Motors** announced that it will stop building five models at the end of this model year. Included on the list are the Pontiac GXP sedan and coupe, Chevrolet Impala SS, Cobalt SS sedan and the Cadillac CTS-V. The Chevrolet Cobalt SS coupe will be continued for a while longer, according to Chevrolet representative Terry Rhadigan. ■

Briefs & Rumors is a summary of auto news from industry sources, trade journals and consumer magazines compiled for *Arizona Driver Magazine* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.



**ULTRA-RARE SHELBY CONCEPT AT BARRETT-JACKSON LAS VEGAS**

Two American racing legends, Carroll Shelby and Don "The Snake" Prudhomme, will be on stage when Barrett-Jackson Auction Company and Shelby Automobiles sell the original concept car for the Prudhomme Edition Super Snake Shelby GT500 Mustang on October 9, 2009. The rare Shelby concept car will be sold at No Reserve during Barrett-Jackson's second annual Las Vegas Collector Car Auction, taking place October 7-10 at the Mandalay Bay Resort and Casino.

"Concept cars and prototypes are sought by collectors because they represent a historical milestone and so few are offered to the public," said Barrett-Jackson Chairman/CEO Craig Jackson. "This is the first time that Shelby Autos has sold one of its concept cars at auction, and we're pleased that Carroll and Don plan to be on stage for such an important occasion."

Racing legend Carroll Shelby is the only man to ever win the 24 hours of Le Mans as a driver, team owner and manufacturer and was twice named *Sports Car Illustrated's* Driver of the Year. Don Prudhomme's successful racing career included four NHRA funny car championships and being the first funny car driver to exceed 250 mph. Shelby and Prudhomme joined forces to build this ultimate street-legal dragster. Shelby Automobiles announced its limited edition Prudhomme Edition Super Snake package for the GT500 Mustang at the Wally Parks NHRA Motorsports Museum in Pomona CA earlier this year.

"Don Prudhomme is one fast son of a gun who knows how to burn up the quarter mile," says Shelby. "In 1968, he drove a Shelby Super Snake dragster in NHRA for me. Last year, we decided to build a car together for grassroots racers who want a Shelby for the drags. This is the concept for that program and it's a very fast car."

"In the 1960s, Shelbys ruled the road courses and terrorized the drag strip," noted Steve Davis, president of Barrett-Jackson. "This car was built in the same spirit as the Cobra 'Dragon Snake' that made Shelby a feared name on the quarter mile. The Prudhomme Edition concept is a real piece of history and a very exclusive car."

The Prudhomme Edition Super Snake is powered by a 5.4-liter, supercharged engine that produces 800 hp on race fuel or 750 hp on 93 octane pump gas. Only 100 total Prudhomme Super Snake post-title packages are being offered by Shelby Autos to current GT500 owners, but this example is already fully converted. The package features:

- Kenne Belle supercharger
- Modified air intake atop the hood in the tilt front end
- Five-point impact safety harness and roll bar
- Borla side exhaust system
- Front and rear adjustable BMR racing suspension and drag tires
- Lower side rockers

"I've really enjoyed working with Carroll and the Shelby Autos team on this program," added Prudhomme. "When I was a kid, we'd drive our cars to the drag strip, race them and drive back home. We designed this car to do the same thing, and do it very, very well."

In addition to the live auction, attendees can review vehicles for sale, exhibitors offering an array of merchandise and play the Barrett-Jackson slot machines for a chance to win a new car. For those who can't attend, *SPEED* will provide live, high-definition TV coverage of all auction days. Event info: [www.barrett-jackson.com](http://www.barrett-jackson.com).



**NEW CSX 9000 SERIES SHELBY COBRA DAYTONA COUPE**

The long-awaited new CSX 9000 series Shelby Cobra Daytona Coupe MKII has arrived with a number of improvements, upgrades and new features. The new model will be allocated CSX9000 series chassis numbers and will come complete with a Shelby-issued MSO certificate and Chassis tag. The new models are available with either a fiberglass or aluminum body.

"The new CSX 9000 Shelby Cobra Daytona Coupe will replace the SPF Daytona Coupe, and this famous marque will in future only be marketed as a Shelby product," says Lance Stander, President of Shelby Distribution USA of Irvine CA. "Every CSX 9000 series Shelby Cobra Daytona Coupe will be listed in the Shelby World Registry, making this new addition to Carroll Shelby's stable of sports cars a collector's dream. The new Coupe will feature Shelby signature door handles and seat covers, and the stopping power for the powerful Coupe will be provided by Shelby-branded brakes."

Asked how the Coupe had progressed from a Shelby-approved replica of the original World famous Shelby Cobra Daytona CSX2000 series Coupe, which in 1965 won the World Manufacturers Championship, Stander said market requirements had demanded that the new model be upgraded and improved to be worthy of the Shelby name.

In order to increase the clearance between the driver's head and the roof, as well as between the driver's left hand and the A-post, the seats were repositioned and the steering wheel moved over to the right. This created a much more comfortable seating environment. New external door handles were designed not to mar the sleek look of the coachwork, while facilitating entry, and the doors are fitted with electric windows.

Side air intakes behind the doors are now integrated into the rear panel behind the B-pillars, with an added quarter-vent-style window. In addition to improved interior air flow, visibility has been significantly improved. The intakes are pretty sharp styling, too.

Gearheads will be delighted with improved front and rear independent suspension, including replacement of the rose joints with ball joints. The new design also facilitates adjustment of camber, caster and toe adjustment up front, as well as easy camber and toe adjustment at the rear. To eliminate noise, front and rear anti-roll bars have been redesigned, the chassis has been stiffened, and a new fuel tank with internal baffles incorporates a swirl pot design.

Arizonans will be glad to note that the oil cooler has been separated from the radiator and fitted in an area with adequate air flow, the radiator core diameter has been increased and more efficient radiator fans are fitted. "With the high ambient temperature in most of the USA in summer, and the congestion on our roads, adequate engine and oil cooling are 'must haves' in an auto that is as comfortable cruising along at 20 mph or when hugging the corners at well over a 100 mph," remarked Stander.

In keeping with modern design, the heater and climate controls for the air-conditioning have no cables and are operated via servo units, the side muffler pipes have been increased in diameter to ensure a deeper rumble, and the wheel wells have been adapted to accommodate 18 inch, deep dish Shelby Cobra style rims.

The first two new Shelby Cobra Daytona Coupes have been delivered. Shelby dealers are now taking orders for later deliveries, with production limited to two per month.

MSRP of the fiberglass bodied CSX 9000 is \$89,900.00 and the aluminum-bodied model will be offered at \$195,900.00. Orders can be placed the Shelby dealers' website at [www.shelbydistributionusa.com](http://www.shelbydistributionusa.com) or by calling 888-SHELBYUSA.



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**Pacific Street Car Association (PSCA) February 6-8**

**NHRA Arizona Nationals February 20-22**

**NHRA Division 7 Season Opener Feb 26-28, March 1**

**Whiplash MotoX March 14**

**Bug-O-Rama March 29**



**NHRA Division 7 Season Opener Feb 26-28, March 1**

**IHBA Lakefest April 24-26**

**NAPA Auto Parts Monster Truck Nationals April 25 & 26**

**NHRA Division 7 ET Finals October 1-4**

**Whiplash MotoX October 3**

**Whiplash October 30 - November 1**

**IHBA NAPA Auto Parts World Finals November 19-22**

**Hot Import Nights December 12**



**IHBA NAPA Auto Parts World Finals Nov 19-22**



**Pacific Street Car Association (PSCA) Feb 6-8**

**DATES ARE TENTATIVE AND SUBJECT TO CHANGE**





**DiMORA NATALIA SLS 2 SPORT LUXURY SEDAN: AT \$2 MILLION, THE WORLD'S MOST EXPENSIVE PRODUCTION AUTOMOBILE**

DiMora Motorcar has begun work on the Natalia SLS 2 sport luxury sedan, the world's first \$2 million production automobile. The Natalia will feature dozens of innovations, most never seen before in a production automobile. The first prototype Natalia SLS 2 is now under construction, scheduled for completion in 2010, with full-scale production to follow. The worldwide debut will be held in Beverly Hills CA, followed by a celebration at the factory, with the automobile then exhibited in Palm Springs for the public to view. Appearances will follow at auto shows in New York, Florida, Geneva, Dubai, and other cities around the world.

A variable-cylinder, aluminum DiMora Volcano V16 engine will deliver 1200 horsepower to four steerable 24-inch wheels running on innovative flat-free tires. Chassis and body weight are reduced by use of aerospace composites and structures. The Natalia will have brains as well as brawn. Onboard there will be over 60 computer systems controlling every aspect of this sport luxury sedan.

The Natalia will have the latest state-of-the-art operational, navigational, computer, communication, and entertainment systems. Environmental conditions will be controlled by each passenger, and the parked car will be kept cool (or warm, as appropriate) for hours with the engine off. Rear seat passengers will be able to enjoy a soothing high-tech massage. Beverage holders can heat or cool drinks. For the convenience of the disabled, the front passenger seat can slide to the right, rotate 90 degrees, and lower the passenger to the ground.

The founder, CEO, and driving force behind DiMora Motorcar is Alfred J. DiMora, who produced two of America's finest luxury automobiles, the Clenet (as owner) and the Sceptre (as co-founder). When President Reagan declared 1986 the Centennial Year of the Gasoline-Powered Automobile, Mr. DiMora's Clenet was selected as the Official Centennial Car. As a result, he and the automobile were honored at the Automotive Hall of Fame in Michigan and featured in their *Automotive Hall of Fame News* magazine. He also co-founded Star Bridge Systems, which developed the hypercomputers now used by NASA and other technology leaders.

According to DiMora, "The goal for the Natalia is to be completely distinctive from bumper to bumper—the most powerful four-door sport luxury automobile in transportation history. The Natalia will set the standard for 21st century automotive excellence. I have drawn on my 30 years of automotive and computer expertise to design this futuristic vehicle, one that is safe, efficient, luxurious, nimble, and powerful."

As part of the production of this unique automobile, DiMora Motorcar will employ a first-time-ever approach for the auto industry—the world can watch the design, build, and test of the Natalia, via video-streamed webcams transmitting from the company's facilities. The DMC website will afford people the opportunity to comment on Natalia's design as it progresses and to submit their automotive innovations. DiMora states, "Many of the best ideas are created by individuals in their garages." DMC plans to award prizes to thousands of people in a worldwide treasure hunt that will culminate with one very lucky person winning the grand prize—a \$2 million Natalia SLS 2.

If you'd like to follow the progress of this unique program, try the interactive features at [www.dimoramotorcar.com/nat\\_design\\_3Dviews.html](http://www.dimoramotorcar.com/nat_design_3Dviews.html). DiMora Motorcar of Palm Springs CA can be reached at 760-534-2317 or visit [www.dimoramotorcar.com](http://www.dimoramotorcar.com). ■



**2010 ICONIC AC ROADSTER DEBUTS AT PEBBLE BEACH: 210 MPH, 0-60 UNDER 3, 1/4 MILE UNDER 9, 1.1+ G SKID PAD**

ICONIC Motors made its first appearance at last year's Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance with the debut of its concept Roadster. This year, they used the same venue to launch the 2010 ICONIC AC Roadster. ICONIC says the roadster has been designed from the ground up to be one of the world's most completely refined and advanced supercars. Continuing with superlatives, they say that virtually no other car on the planet has endured the same kind of engineering development and attention to detail. The company's foundational mantra is "uncompromised excellence," and they say they focus all their efforts on delivering a one-of-a-kind timepiece that will live on for the ages. The ICONIC AC Roadster pays tribute to historic muscle cars of yesterday, but underneath the updated exterior showcases the technological innovation and advancements for tomorrow.

"The ICONIC AC Roadster is more than just a car. It's among the world's most refined and beautifully designed supercars. It's probably the lightest, strongest, most well-engineered, high-performance roadster of our time. The engine, drive train, support electronics and overall chassis make this one of the most complete vehicle packages on the market today and it is made right here in the USA," said Claudio Ballard, chairman and founder of ICONIC Motors.

ICONIC selected (and was accepted by) the 2009 Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance to debut its all-new supercar because the event's four-day exhibition is known for displaying the finest automobiles from around the world. "The Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance is similar to attending a Formula 1 event, as it brings together the highest-end vehicle showpieces, clientele and the pure nostalgic nature of the event itself. With the classy design of the ICONIC AC Roadster, there is no better venue than Pebble Beach for us to debut this historic new car."

ICONIC sets itself apart from other car companies because almost each individual part is an exclusive design of ICONIC Motors. Utilizing CAD, the engineering team begins the development process from the ground up and only uses the most advanced material sciences throughout the build phase. This allows for ICONIC to test each element of the car before it is actually created, to ensure all will work seamlessly with optimized strength and weight.

Conveying the look and style of timeless classic roadsters of the 1950s and '60s, but infusing all of the modern innovation and engineering available today, this super sports car combines high-end luxury, ultra-high-quality American-made parts and world-class fine bespoke detailing.

As part of the design and build of this all-new roadster, ICONIC has partnered with AC© Cars to brand this individual model. The partnership between ICONIC and AC represents the modern synthesis of the rich history and heritage of the AC brand, which spans over 100 years. Founded in the UK, AC holds a dash of Italian heritage from the late '60s and early '70s. The ICONIC AC Roadster also pays homage to the historic AC Cobras of the 1960s, but in a more modern and highly refined way. Today's technology allows for ICONIC to develop and engineer much more advanced vehicles.

ICONIC Motors LLC has production facilities in Dearborn, Michigan, with top-end engineers in automotive engineering, electronics and leading-edge materials science. For more information, turn up your speakers and visit [www.iconicmotors.com](http://www.iconicmotors.com). ■

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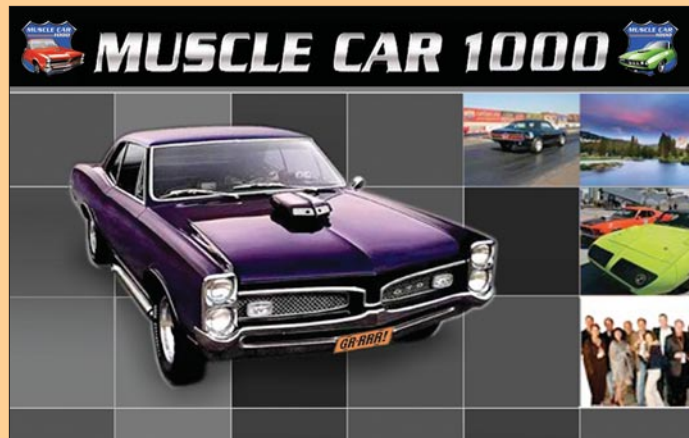
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## AZ-NM Corvette Caravan

In 2003, this trip marked Corvette's 50th Anniversary. Our group again drives to Bowling Green, for the 15th Anniversary of the National Corvette Museum.



## Meadow Brook Concours d'Élegance

A weekend in Michigan at the Meadow Brook Concours d'Élegance, Big Three design chiefs' forum and RM Auction. By Kevin A. Wilson



## 2010 Camaro SS

The show-stopping quasi-retro, quasi-21st-century rebirth of the Camaro gives GM something to brag about, and an excuse for free pizza from Papa John's.



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