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Avenger, 4-Door 200 Top Safety Picks

Exceptional safety parameters featured in a couple of Chrysler cars earned third-party validation recently when the Dodge Avenger and its twin, the Chrysler 200 four-door earned the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) Top Safety Pick+ award for 2013.

The Chrysler mid-size passenger cars are among 13 cars to earn the Top Safety Pick+ award among 29 vehicles tested to date by IIHS. The award goes to vehicles which offer superior crash protection.

"Models that earn Top Safety Pick also offer outstanding protection in many crashes," said Adrian Lund, IIHS president. "These vehicles are much safer choices than most vehicles on the market just five years ago."

The Dodge and Chrysler cars are among the 13 IIHS Top Safety Pick+ vehicles to earn good or acceptable ratings in the new IIHS

small overlap test, as well as top marks in other IIHS categories.

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2013 Chrysler 200

Ford Capitalizes on Growing AWD Demand

In an announcement boasting of greatly improved All-Wheel Drive (AWD) sales, Ford stated that it is capitalizing on the popularity of all-wheel-drive technology, with its AWD sales growing 72 percent since 2009, outpacing the industry growth rate of 53 percent.

In 2012, more than 20 percent of the industry's new car and utility vehicles were sold with AWD systems.

Originally introduced on the

2013 Escape, Ford's new intelligent AWD system is now available on Edge, Explorer, Flex, Fusion and Taurus, making Ford unsurpassed in the number of AWD vehicle offerings for a non-luxury brand.

Based on Polk retail registration data, nearly 37 percent of Ford vehicles that are available with AWD were equipped with the technology in 2012.

"All-wheel drive acceptance



2013 Ford Explorer AWD

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NDIA Mixer Offers Non-Members Chance To Meet Contacts in Defense Industry

by Jim Stickford

The Michigan chapter of the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA) will be holding an informal networking event at the GM Heritage Center in Sterling Heights on Wednesday, March 20, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Current chapter president Nancy Loerch said that NDIA has chapters all across the country and that the Michigan chapter has about 3,000 members.

Loerch said the NDIA, as a group, focuses on being a liaison between the government and the defense industry. She joined the organization through Women In Defense (WID).

"WID is an affiliate of NDIA," Loerch said. "So when you join WID, you join NDIA. That was five or six years ago."

Loerch said wanted her company, StratComm, to have stronger connections with the defense industry, hence her join-

ing WID. She became current president after serving as first vice president. In the normal course of events, the first vice president assumes the role of president for a two-year term. She assumed the presidency in July of 2012.

The value in belonging to an organization like NDIA is in meeting people and making contacts within the defense industry, Loerch said. That's why she is keen on the March 20 event.

"This is not a formal event presentation," Loerch explained. "There will be no technical papers presented. This is just a venue for people in the government and people in the defense industry to come together and socialize. It's also a chance for people who aren't NDIA members to meet and make contacts and see if they want to join the organization."

There will be one official presentation. The Red Ball Express Award which will be awarded at

the March 20th social. The award is normally given out at a NDIA event held in California, but that event was cancelled, Loerch said. The Secretary of the Army must approve government travel to happening such as the Tactical Wheeled Vehicle Conference in California, but lately he has only been giving his approval two weeks before such events.

A conference such as the California one requires people to notify if they're attending two months in advance, not two weeks, Loerch said. So without earlier notification, the conference was cancelled. Given Detroit's traditional role in designing and building tactical vehicles, it was decided to present the Red Ball Express Award at the March 20 social.

The Red Ball Express Award is presented by the Tactical Wheeled Vehicle Division of NDIA "in recognition of superb contributions to Tactical Wheeled Vehicles, the National Defense Indus-



2014 Corvette Stingray Convertible

Wow! Stingray Convertible, Coupe on Road Late 2013

Chevrolet revealed the 2014 Corvette Stingray convertible at the Geneva Motor Show, featuring an all-new, fully electronic top that can be lowered remotely using the car's key fob. The top can also be opened or closed on the go, at speeds of up to 30 mph (50 km/h).

"The convertible has been a part of the heart and soul of Corvette since the very beginning in 1953," said Ed Welburn, GM vice president of global design.

"With the all-new Corvette Stingray, we designed and developed the coupe and convertible simultaneously. As a result, the

Corvette Stingray offers an open-top driving experience with no compromise in performance, technology or design."

The Corvette Stingray coupe and convertible arrive in global markets in late 2013, with left-hand-drive models to be offered in Europe, the United Kingdom, the Middle East, Japan and Russia.

Changes to Corvettes for export vary only in equipment required to accommodate a respective market's regulations, such as lighting, headlamp washers and outside mirrors.

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Nancy Loerch of StratComm

trial Association (NDIA), and public leadership or achievement that results in significant contributions to the develop-

ment, introduction or support of Tactical Wheeled Vehicles.

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Falcon F7

Mid-Michigan SAE Event Features Lemke with Falcon F7

Attendees at the Monday, March 18 gathering of the Mid-Michigan Section of SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers) are in for a special treat.

Jeff Lemke, founder of Falcon Motor Sports in Holly, will be on hand to showcase his \$225,000 sports car, the Falcon F7. Lemke will bring an F7 to the event, held at Holiday Inn - Gateway Centre in Flint.

SAE contact Mark Pope said Lemke will tell how he got started and talk about and answer questions about the F7.

The Falcon F7 is rated at 620

horsepower, weighs less than 2,800 pounds, and has drawn accolades from automotive sources such as *Motor Trend*: "Midwestern, Mid-Engine Missile" and *Forbes*: "One of the hottest cars at the Detroit Auto Show."

The F7 also drew a lot of attention when it "held court" at the 2012 Woodward Dream Cruise.

According to the Falcon Motor Sports website, the primary goal is "to manufacture high-quality, hand-crafted, high-performance street machines for high-end automotive enthusiasts with a passionate, renegade spirit."

The car utilizes a chassis from the Chrysler Viper, has a carbon fiber body and is powered by a GM engine, Pope said. The car and other details can be viewed at www.falconF7.com.

The meeting schedules a sign in starting at 6 p.m.; dinner at 7 p.m. with the main program kicking off at 8 p.m. Ticket prices are \$20 students; retirees, \$25; \$30 members; and \$35 guests.

Reservations are due by noon on Thursday, March 14. Tickets can be purchased online at www.midmichigansae.org or call Bernard Santavy at 810-635-7948.

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