

Ram 1500 Powers to Top of CR Pickup List

by Irena Granaas

It's one thing when a major auto manufacturer like Chrysler expresses pride in a new vehicle like the 2013 Ram 1500, but quite another when a respected and well-established third-party evaluating organization agrees.

ConsumerReports.org issued a report July 16 placing the 2013 Ram 1500 squarely on top of its list of full-size pickup trucks.

"The 2013 Ram 1500 has both muscled and finessed its way to the top of our full-sized pickup truck ratings," said CR editors.

Consumer Reports tested a four-wheel-drive Ram 1500 Crew Cab, with the most popular engine, the 5.7-liter Hemi V8, and eight-speed automatic transmission.

Testers praised the truck's lighter, yet stiffer frame, coil-spring rear suspension, giving it a smooth ride, its "whisper-quiet" interior at cruising speeds, revised interior with new infotainment system, and its ability to deliver "seamless power" with the big V8 teamed with what they described as Chrysler's efficient new eight-speed transmission.

Yet, CR testers noted, the truck still manages to deliver a class-average 15 mpg overall in fuel economy. The truck's "impressive performance" in CR tests, and ability to balance work capa-

bility and refinement, vaulted it above established domestic- and foreign-nameplate competitors.

The Ram 1500 received 78 points overall out of a possible 100, while being put through its paces alongside class rivals such as the Toyota Tundra (69 points) and the Ford F-150 (68). CR editors said this was second only to the Chevrolet Avalanche, "a Suburban-based truck that entered 2013 with limited offerings and ceased production in April."

CR editors added, "Continued interior and powertrain improvements make the Ram a particularly well-rounded choice."

Bob Hegbloom, director of Ram Truck Brand, said, "It validates all of the hard work we put into the truck, and put into the planning and development."

Hegbloom said Chrysler did "tons of consumer research" as they extensively redesigned and refreshed the 1500, which again, Chrysler officials say, has been validated by the multiple awards already won by the Ram 1500 this year.

"We listened to what the consumer wanted . . . We're very confident in the truck, with all of the awards it has won this year from Truck of Texas, to *Motor Trend* Truck of the Year to North American Truck of the Year. This is one more validation that this truck can go head-to-head with

anything in the marketplace – and we're not standing still," Hegbloom said.

Hegbloom pointed out that the Ram Truck brand is throwing multiple new technologies into the ring to stay competitive. He mentioned the new 3.0-liter diesel that Chrysler will make available on its light-duty truck, expected to deliver greater than 25 miles to the gallon, the 6.4-liter Hemi V8 gasoline-powered engine coming soon for its heavy-duty trucks, as well as new air suspension systems for these workhorses.

"We're not going to stand still and wait for someone to catch up – we're going to continue to push the bar," he said.

Hegbloom said *Consumer Reports* is a resource used mostly by younger, more educated and



2013 Ram 1500

more affluent and tech-savvy consumers.

"When we look at the demographics, we are resonating with those consumers, and we are getting a higher mix of younger, more affluent and more educated

consumers than our domestic counterparts," he said.

"And this is just one more tool (for them) that they are going to be able to go and see that we've got a truck that will compete with anyone on the market."

Oakland Community College Names MacQueen New HR Vice Chancellor

Oakland Community College Chancellor Tim Meyer has named labor attorney William J. MacQueen as OCC's Vice Chancellor of Human Resources, effective immediately.

MacQueen has served as the college's interim chief Human Resources officer since March 2012.

"Bill MacQueen has brought a wealth of experience and expertise to his duties as interim chief Human Resources officer, and will continue to prove an outstanding asset to our organization," Meyer said.

MacQueen has been a volunteer mediator with the Wayne Mediation Center and the Oakland Mediation Center since 2008. He was Macomb Community College's chief Human Resources officer from 1979 until his retirement as vice president emeritus in 2008.

Honors include him being named 2010 Mediator of the Year by Wayne Mediation Center, and receiving the 2011 President's Volunteer Service Award from the Oakland Mediation Center.

Prior to joining Macomb Community College, MacQueen was a labor attorney in Wayne County's Office of the Corporate Counsel, a partner in the law firm Shapiro and MacQueen and an associate

in the law firm of Colombo, Vermuelen & Colombo.

MacQueen earned his Juris Doctor (cum laude) from the Detroit College of Law and a bachelor of arts (with distinction) from the University of Michigan. He is a member of the State Bar of Michigan, the Alternative Dispute Resolution and Labor & Employment Law Sections of the Michigan State Bar, the Oakland County Bar Association and the Southeast Michigan Chapter of the Association for Conflict Resolution.

Oakland U. Golf Fundraiser Slated

The 2013 Golden Grizzlies Golf Classic will be held Monday, July 29, at R&S Shart and Katke-Cousins Golf Courses.

Individual golfers and foursomes are welcome. Proceeds from the event will support all Oakland University athletic teams. Breakfast, lunch, prizes and giveaways are included in registration fees. Also, a silent auction will be held.

The event launches with a shotgun start at 8:30 a.m. For more details and to register, go to ougrizzlies.com/gggc.



William J. MacQueen

AH Chamber Sets Business NetWORK

Registration is now open for the fall semester of the Auburn Hills Business NetWORK, a program of the Auburn Hills Chamber of Commerce, a member-only referral program offering educational presentations by subject experts, and networking and referral opportunities.

The group meets from 8 to 9:30 a.m. on the first and third Mondays of every month for the length of the semester, at the Auburn Hills Quality Inn on Opdyke Road. The first session is Monday, Sept. 16, and the semester runs through Monday, Feb. 17.

There are 25 spots available on a first-come, first-served basis. Meetings include free continental breakfast. For information or to register, go to info@auburnhillschamber.com.

New Foam Quiets Cherokee

The 2014 Jeep Cherokee will be lighter, quieter, more environmentally friendly, and more fuel efficient, say Chrysler officials, thanks to what the automaker terms a "revolutionary" body sealer.

The Toledo Assembly Complex, home to the new Jeep Cherokee, is equipped with special applicators that inject a unique acoustic foam into strategic locations of the vehicle's body structure. Developed with and supplied by Dow Automotive Systems, BETAFOAM Renue is a soy-based product instead of the more conventional petroleum-based body sealer.

The foam blocks unwanted noise from coming into the vehicle cabin, and, because its density is lower than conventional acoustic material, it can save up to 1.5 pounds in vehicle weight, contributing to better fuel economy and even better handling.

And, say Chrysler sources, because its density is lower than

that of conventional material, less foam is required to achieve the desired performance, which translates to reduced cost.

"At Chrysler Group, we are working on a number of initiatives that further our sustainability efforts while also addressing key product goals, such as on-road refinement combined with off-road ruggedness for the all-new 2014 Jeep Cherokee," said Bill Hall, director of Sustainability and Business Continuity. "This new foam not only helps deliver noise reduction and improved fuel efficiency, but its renewable content minimizes the impact on the environment."

The new foam bolsters 10 locations of the Cherokee's body structure, including the A- and B-pillars and rear wheelwells. It has twice the shelf life of commonly used foam.

In addition, the foam's lower viscosity enables easier application, allowing for greater assembly line efficiency.



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