

SEMA Labels Wrangler 'Hottest 4x4 SUV'

For a fifth consecutive year, the Jeep Wrangler, Mopar's most accessorized vehicle, has been recognized as the "Hottest 4x4-SUV" at the 2014 Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) trade show at the Las Vegas Convention Center.

The SEMA award recognizes vehicle models that specialty equipment manufacturers believe are the best platforms for

accessorization in order to showcase the year's coolest products, said Chrysler spokesperson Beth Ann Bayus.

The winning selection was determined with a survey of vehicles displayed by participating SEMA exhibitors on the convention floor, Bayus said.

That simple metric helps identify an emerging trend as SEMA Show exhibitors choose to chan-

nel their investments into the cars they consider the top enthusiast prospects for the coming year, helping to drive the direction of an industry that generates \$33 billion per year in the United States alone.

SEMA President and CEO Chris Kersting presented the award to Pietro Gorlier, president, Mopar

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Mopar Service, Parts and Customer Care President and CEO Pietro Gorlier with Wrangler's SEMA award



2015 Camaro SS Commemorative Edition

Special Edition Camaro Introduced At SEMA Show in Las Vegas Last Week

Chevrolet revealed the 2015 Camaro Commemorative Edition at the SEMA Show last week.

The special edition celebrates the success of the fifth-generation Camaro – which, according to GM spokesperson Monte Doran, is on track to be America's best-selling performance car for five consecutive years – and marks the final year for the fifth generation. The special edition goes on sale this spring.

More than 400,000 fifth-generation Camaros have been sold since April 2009.

Camaro sales for the first 10 months of 2014 are up 8 percent over the same period a year ago, and Camaro currently leads Mus-

tang by 10,000 sales, Doran said.

"The fifth-generation Camaro was a success from the moment it was introduced, in attracting both long-time Camaro fans and new buyers who have never owned a Chevrolet," said Todd Christensen, Camaro marketing manager.

"We wanted to create a special-edition Camaro that celebrates that success as the fifth generation comes to a close at the end of the model year."

The 2015 Camaro Commemorative Special Edition is available on 2LT and 2SS coupes and convertibles and includes the

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Lower Gas Prices Fuel Rise in October Sales

By TOM KRISHER and DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP Auto Writers

DETROIT (AP) – Falling gas prices improved buyers' moods and boosted sales of SUVs and trucks in October.

GM, Toyota, Chrysler, Nissan, Volkswagen and Honda all reported sales gains last month. Of major automakers, only Ford and Hyundai saw declines.

Industry sales rose 6 percent over last October, according to Autodata Corp.

The national average price of

gasoline fell 33 cents to end October at \$3 a gallon, according to AAA. Gasoline is now the cheapest it has been in four years, and the decline accelerated a trend toward SUVs and trucks that has been going on all year.

"Gas prices coming down added a little bit of fuel to the fire, but that fire was already roaring," said Alec Gutierrez, a senior analyst with Kelley Blue Book.

Small SUVs have been the fastest-growing segment in the U.S. this year, and now make up one out of every four vehicles

sold, says Jesse Toprak, the chief sales analyst for the car-buying site Cars.com.

But gas prices fueled sales of bigger SUVs. Kelley Blue Book saw renewed interest in the mammoth Hummer H1 last month, for example. Sales of the recently redesigned Lincoln Navigator eight-passenger SUV jumped 38 percent, while Chevrolet Tahoe sales rose 6 percent.

Gas prices also convinced small business owners to go

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King Cobra 'Has Serious Bite'—Ford's Allison

Ford enthusiasts got a taste of excitement at the 2014 SEMA show in Las Vegas last week when Ford Racing unveiled a special 2015 Mustang GT built exclusively with Ford Racing performance parts.

The "King Cobra," introduced Nov. 5, has some serious bite, said Jamie Allison, director of Ford Racing.

Built to be a high-performance street-and-drag-strip car, the King Cobra can be replicated by any Mustang owner with the help of Ford Racing's extensive parts catalog, Allison said.

"At Ford Racing, we like to push cars to their absolute limit," said Allison. "This is something we have been doing for 113 years and why we were so excited to get our hands on the all-new 2015 Mustang.

"We wanted Mustang enthusiasts to be able to open up the Ford Racing parts catalog and get one of everything and see what they could get. We think the King Cobra package is it. But



2015 Mustang GT "King Cobra"

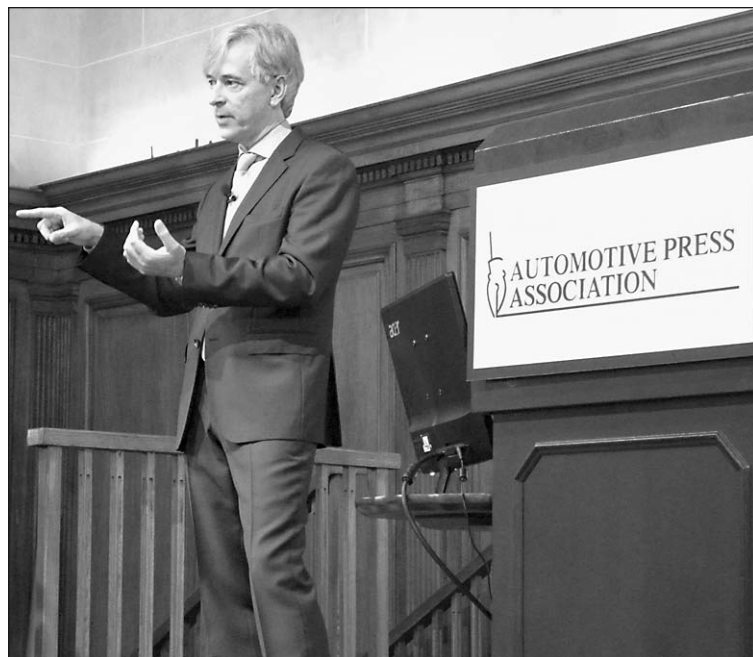
none of this great work would be possible if Team Mustang had not built the best production Mustang yet."

This one-off concept is a showcase for Ford Racing's first performance packages available for the 2015 Mustang, Allison said. It is equipped with Ford Racing's

"Drag Pack," "Handling Pack," and "Super Pack" supercharger kit that helps the King Cobra produce 600-plus horsepower.

The Drag Pack includes heavy-duty half-shafts, and a rear sub-frame kit with pre-installed high-

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Analyst John Krafcik

TrueCar President Suggests Chrysler, VW Combine Forces

by Jim Stickford

Let the rumors begin.

John Krafcik, president of the automotive shopping site TrueCar, said his company's analysis of the current North American car market suggests that some sort of agreement between Chrysler and the Volkswagen Automotive Group to combine forces and portfolios makes sense.

He shared his observations at an Automotive Press Association event held at the Detroit Athletic Club on Nov. 4.

This idea, Krafcik said, is derived from the way TrueCar looks at the overall automotive market. Instead of looking at the

market through the lens of number of vehicles sold, the company looks at it with the idea that what matters is total dollar amount of revenue generated from different vehicle market segments.

"We divide the market," Krafcik said, "into four super segments – cars, pickup trucks, utility vehicles and premium vehicles."

In 2009, the North American automotive market broke down as total revenue of about \$292 billion. Pickups and utilities accounted for about 44 percent of the market.

"Fast forward to 2014 and fully

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Ford Recalling 202,000 Cars, Vans and Trucks

By TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) – Ford is recalling more than 202,000 cars, vans and trucks in North America in five separate recalls to fix gas leaks, air bag sensors, stalling and other issues.

The company says the problems have caused one accident, but it's not aware of any injuries.

The biggest of the recalls announced Nov. 4 affects about 135,000 F-150 pickups and Ford Flex family haulers from the 2014 model year. Faulty passenger seat weight sensors can stop air bags from inflating in crashes.

Dealers will widen a gap between the seat frame and track, and then recalibrate the sensors. Also covered are some 2009-14 F-150s that were serviced for seat track problems this year.

The recalls are examples of how automakers are moving faster to report and correct safety problems in the wake of large penalties paid to the U.S. government by General Motors and Toyota.

GM was fined \$35 million for its slow response to the ignition switch recall and Toyota paid a \$1.2 billion penalty to settle a criminal charge.

So far this year, automakers have issued more than 550 recalls affecting more than 52 million vehicles. That shattered the old full-year record of 30.8 million recalled vehicles set in 2004. GM alone has issued 75 recalls totaling more than 30 million vehicles this year.

The other Ford recalls:

- About 38,600 Ford Crown Victoria, Mercury Grand Marquis and Lincoln Town Cars from 2005 to 2011. They're being recalled for a second time to fix problems with steering shafts that can separate. Improper repairs can cause loss of steering.

Dealers will inspect and replace the upper intermediate steering shaft if needed. They also will inspect lower steering column bearings and install bearing retainers if needed. Ford says it knows of one crash from this problem.

- About 27,600 Transit Connect small vans from 2014 for potential fuel line leaks. Fuel and vapor lines may have been routed incorrectly in vans with 2.5-liter engines. The lines can rub and possibly cause leaks over time. Ford says it's not aware of any fires. Dealers will inspect and reroute the lines if needed.

- About 90 Transit large vans from 2015 with 3.2-liter diesel engines. A bracket that holds the fuel filter to the frame can detach, causing engine stalling. Dealers will reinforce the underbody structure.

- About 960 F-150 pickups from 2014. A brake pedal position switch may not be set right. This could delay illumination of brake lights and require increased effort to shut off the cruise control. Dealers will reinstall the switch.

Feds Fine Hyundai, Kia \$100 Million for Overstating Gas Mileage on Window Stickers

WASHINGTON (AP) – Korean automakers Hyundai and Kia will pay the U.S. government a \$100 million civil penalty to end a two-year investigation into overstated gas mileage figures on window stickers on 1.2 million vehicles.

The penalty, announced Nov. 3 by the Justice Department and the Environmental Protection Agency, is the first under new rules aimed at limiting the amount of heat-trapping gases cars are allowed to emit. Those regulations are a cornerstone of plans to combat global warming and are achieved largely through improving vehicle fuel economy.

The payment could also serve as a precedent for other automakers who overstate mileage in violation of the Clean Air Act. Attorney General Eric Holder said the settlement shows the need for car companies to be forthcoming about their compliance with emissions standards.

Under the settlement, Hyundai-Kia will forfeit greenhouse gas credits worth more than \$200 million because the 13 affected vehicles will emit about 4.75 million more metric tons of greenhouse gases than the automakers originally claimed. The credits could have been sold to other automakers who aren't meeting emissions standards.

Hyundai-Kia must also audit test results on current models, and set up an independent group to certify future test results, at a cost of around \$50 million.

Officials said the misrepresentations put other car companies at a competitive disadvantage, especially since fuel economy is the "number one factor that consumers think about when they're going to buy a car," said EPA Administrator Gina McCarthy.

"That tilts the market in favor of those who don't play by the rules and it disadvantages those that actually do play by the rules," McCarthy said at a news conference. "And that's simply not fair, and it's also not legal."

The companies, which are both owned by Hyundai and generally sell different versions of the same models, denied allegations that they violated the law. Hyundai blamed the inflated mileage on honest misinterpretation of the EPA's complex rules governing testing. Both companies said they are paying the penalties – \$56.8 million for Hyundai and \$43.2 million for Kia – to end the probe and potential litigation.

All automakers do their own mileage tests based on EPA guidelines, and the agency does audits to make sure they are accurate.

In the past two years, the EPA has stepped up audits of automaker tests. Just two weeks ago, the agency told BMW to cut mileage estimates on four of its Mini Cooper models. Ford and Mercedes-Benz also had to cut numbers on their window stickers. EPA officials wouldn't comment on whether the agency is investigating the other automakers.

In November of 2012, the EPA ordered Hyundai and Kia to redo the window stickers on cars that made up about one-third of their model lineup. Generally, gas mileage was overstated by one or two miles per gallon. But the EPA's tests found the highway mileage of one vehicle, the boxy Kia Soul, was 6 mpg too high. Both automakers started a program to reimburse automakers for the difference between their

mileage tests and the EPA's lower numbers.

The EPA and Justice, in an agreement filed in federal court, clearly said the automakers violated the law. But the agencies said they reached the agreement because it was fair and in the public interest. The government alleged Hyundai and Kia "chose favorable results rather than average results from a large number of tests."

But in a statement, Hyundai blamed the problem on the EPA's regulations.

The company said that some EPA mileage tests are done on a dynamometer, which is a treadmill for cars. To calculate wind drag, friction in the engine and transmission, and tire rolling resistance, automakers do tests on a track, measuring how long it takes for cars to "coast down" to a stop. That test yields a number that is programmed into the dynamometer.

But Hyundai said automaker interpretations of the tests vary because regulations don't specify exactly how to do the tests. Tire rolling resistance, engine warm-up, winds and other factors can vary between EPA tests and those done by automakers, the company said.

"It was our regulatory interpretation within this broad latitude that was responsible for the ratings restatement," spokesman Jim Trainor said.

McCarthy, however, said that the carmakers' testing protocol was "systemically flawed" and "inconsistent with normal engineering practices and inconsistent with how any other company has been doing this."

NHTSA Checking Honda's Possible Failure to Report Injury Claims

By DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) – Federal regulators are investigating whether Honda Motor Co. failed to report deaths and injuries that occurred in its vehicles.

Federal law requires automakers to report any claims they receive alleging that defective vehicles or parts caused a death or injury. They are required to submit those claims on a quarterly basis, along with consumer complaints, production information, warranty claims and other incidents.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said Nov. 3 that Honda may have failed to report incidents related to Takata air bags as well as other defective parts. Honda has recalled more than 5 million vehicles in the U.S. since 2008 to fix a potentially fatal defect in air bags made by Japanese auto supplier Takata. The bags can rupture after a crash and injure occupants with shards of metal.

In a statement, Honda said it ordered a third-party audit of potential inaccuracies in its reporting of injuries and deaths in September and will soon share its findings with NHTSA. Honda said it last met with NHTSA to discuss the issue on Oct. 17.

Honda said it has not always provided verbal claims of deaths and injuries to the government because it understood that only written claims were required. But Honda said it began including verbal claims in its reports last month.

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‘I’ve Been Able to Do More with One Leg Than I Ever Thought I’d Do with Two’

by Jim Stickford

U.S. Army veteran Melissa Stockwell doesn’t let a “little” thing like losing a leg to an IED in Iraq prevent her from participating in Iron Man triathlons.

Stockwell spoke at GM’s Veterans Day Recognition event that was held in the AEC building at the GM Tech Center on Nov. 7.

Alaina Maten, who is a project purchasing buyer for GM, organized the event.

A first lieutenant in the Michigan Army National Guard,” Maten said, “We hold this event every year. I planned it with the help of the Warren chapter of the GM Employees Veterans Resource Group and the GM’s People with Disabilities group.

“This year is a big year for female leadership at the company, what with Mary Barra. So when it came time to pick a speaker, we wanted a woman in a leadership role who could speak about being a veteran.”

So they invited Stockwell, who lives in Chicago, to be a speaker.

Stockwell said she always loved America and would always talk with people in uniform. So when she went to the University of Colorado as a communications major, she saw the school’s ROTC contingent marching and thought that might be something that would interest her.

During her sophomore year,

she joined the ROTC program. It was a surprise to her parents.

“When I told them, there was silence,” Stockwell said. “Then my father said, ‘They have women in the Army?’ My family always thought that my love of the military was a phase that I would outgrow.”

The 9/11 attacks occurred during her senior year at Colorado.

“I remember watching the news while at my ROTC courses that Tuesday,” Stockwell said. “My instructor told us this was a day that would change our lives and it was now a matter of when – not if – we would be deployed.”

After graduation from college in 2002, Stockwell said, she was commissioned as an officer.

On April 13, 2004, while in Iraq, first lieutenant Stockwell was doing a “ride-along” because she would be commanding the supply convoy the next day. When they went under an underpass, the vehicle hit an IED.

Stockwell said this was early in the war and the Humvees weren’t armored. She noticed that the windshield was cracked and then she noticed she was bleeding. Fortunately, there was a combat medic in the convoy who was able to provide life-saving medical attention right away.

“In my mind, I couldn’t understand why everyone was running around trying to take care of me,” Stockwell said. “It wasn’t

until they put a tourniquet on me that I understood how serious the wounds were.”

She was flown to the Green Zone and an American hospital, then to Germany and operated on. It was there she was told that she lost her leg.

Her father was in Vienna on business and her sister was in Slovakia, so they were able to get to the German hospital within a day. Her mother was at Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington, D.C., when she arrived there.

It was at Walter Reed where she recovered and learned to walk again. She gave her stump the nickname, “little leg.”

“On my first day trying to learn how to walk with a prosthetic leg, I saw a man who had lost two legs and an arm walking,” Stockwell said. “He was showing me it could be done.”

Stockwell said people would visit Walter Reed and help the wounded pass the time. She remembers meeting Tom Hanks and having a really great talk. She also met Ozzy and Sharon Osbourne.

After being medically discharged from the Army in 2005, Stockwell went to college and got a degree in prosthetics.

Stockwell said that before she was in the Army, she was a gymnast and always dreamed of get-



Stockwell at GM’s Veterans Day event

ting a perfect 10 at the Olympics.

That never happened, but after getting out of the hospital, Stockwell decided to train full-time for the Paralympics as a swimmer. She qualified for the team and swam for the U.S. in the 2008 Paralympics in Beijing two weeks after the 2008 Olympics. Though she didn’t win a medal, she was chosen to carry the U.S. flag in the closing ceremony.

Since leaving the Army, Stockwell has participated in several triathlons – running-bicycling-swimming events and the ultimate triathlon – the Iron Man, where participants endure a more-than-rigorous test.

Stockwell, who works for a prosthetics firm in Chicago, is expecting her first child – a boy – in three weeks. She said she helps amputees with their prosthetics

and finds the work satisfying.

She considers her helper dog Jake a part of the family. She trained with him in New York and he does things like fetch her crutches when she takes off her leg at home.

Stockwell is a member of the board of directors of Wounded Warrior Project and a co-founder of dare2tri, which is a triathlon club for athletes with disabilities.

“I am proud of my story,” Stockwell said. “Life is too short not to be proud of who you are.”

She calls April 13, 2004, her “life day,” a term many veterans use.

“I’ve been able to do more with one leg than I ever thought I’d do with two,” Stockwell said. “I say don’t let setbacks swallow you up. Don’t be afraid of change – embrace it.”

Special Edition Camaro Introduced At SEMA Show in Las Vegas Last Week

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

RS performance package.

The exterior features of the Commemorative Edition include unique 20-inch wheels; exclusive stripe; body-color front splitter; ZL1 rear spoiler; and Commemorative Edition fender emblems.

Five exterior color combinations are available: Black with Cyber Gray stripe, Silver Ice Metallic with Cyber Gray stripe, Summit White with silver stripe, Ashen Gray Metallic with silver stripe and Red Hot with black stripe. SS models receive a body-color hood insert.

The new Adrenaline Red interior, only offered on the Commemorative Edition, features adrenaline red and black leather seating surfaces, adrenaline red instrument panel insert and red stitching on the seats, steering wheel, shift knob, shift boot, door trim armrest and center console lid.

Additional details exclusive to the Commemorative Edition include a leather-wrapped, flat-bottom steering wheel and Commemorative Edition sill plates.

The Commemorative Edition builds on the fifth-generation Camaro’s legacy of uniquely equipped, limited-run models with custom-inspired exterior and interior appointments, Doran said.

Previous special editions included:

- Camaro Transformers (2010 and 2012);
- Camaro Indy Pace Car (2010 and 2011);
- Camaro Synergy Series (2011);
- Camaro Neiman Marcus Edition (2011);
- Camaro Synergy Series (2012);
- Camaro 45th Anniversary (2012);

- Camaro Dusk (2013);
- Camaro Hot Wheels Edition (2013).

Since its introduction, the Camaro line has expanded to several distinct models, including:

- The 323-horsepower V6-powered LS coupe and LT coupe and convertible – including the 2LS with an EPA-rated 30 mpg on the highway – which match performance with efficiency.

- The SS coupe and convertible come with Chevy’s legendary small-block V8, featuring a 6.2L engine delivering up to 426 horsepower and 0-60 acceleration of 4.7 seconds.

- The road-racing-inspired Camaro 1LE performance package for SS coupe (manual transmission only), with unique gearing, suspension tuning and tires that make it capable of more than 1g of lateral acceleration.

- The Camaro ZL1 (coupe and convertible), which is at home on the race track, the drag strip or daily commuting. It features a supercharged 6.2L V8 with 580 horsepower and 556 lb.-ft. of torque – making the ZL1 the most powerful Camaro ever from Chevrolet. It is also the most technologically advanced, with standard Magnetic Ride Control and, on coupe models, Performance Traction Management.

- The Camaro Z/28 – the most track-capable Camaro ever. It features exterior elements designed like a race car to produce downforce that presses the car against the track for greater grip – up to 1.08g in cornering acceleration – and faster lap times. *Motor Trend* named it their Best Driver’s Car for 2014.

- Chevrolet has also offered the COPO Camaro since 2012, a hand-built race car designed exclusively for drag racing.

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Detroit Carmakers ‘Have Really Made Strides In Improving’ – Consumers Digest Editor

by Jim Stickford

Detroit’s automakers came out on top in a *Consumers Digest* list of automotive “Best Buys” for the 2015 model year.

Consumers Digest selects “Best Buys” by identifying vehicles that deliver the most value for the money within their segment.

Value is determined by purchase price and ownership costs, as well as comfort, performance and utility, among other factors, said Rich Dzierwa, *Consumers Digest* editor.

The automotive editors at *Consumers Digest* drive “Best Buy” contenders in a range of circumstances and conditions to evaluate vehicle characteristics such as acceleration, ride quality, fuel economy, fit-and-finish, styling, and interior ergonomics.

“We made a total of 44 recommendations across 12 categories,” Dzierwa said. “A number of Detroit vehicles, including the Chevy Traverse, the Buick Enclave and the GMC Acadia did very well. Overall, of the 44 vehicles we recommended, 23 of them were from the domestic manufacturers.

The magazine’s 2015 Automotive Best Buys are:

- Top three subcompacts – Chevrolet Sonic, Fiat 500, Ford Fiesta;
- Top three compacts – Ford Focus, Honda Fit, Mazda3;
- Top seven family cars – Chevrolet Impala, Chrysler 200, Ford Fusion, Lincoln MKZ, Honda Accord, Hyundai Sonata, Kia Optima;
- Top four luxury cars – Audi A6, Buick LaCrosse, Cadillac ATS Sedan, Hyundai Genesis Sedan;
- Top five sporty cars – Chevrolet Corvette, Ford Mustang, Mazda MX-5 Miata, Scion FR-S/Subaru BRZ;
- Top three hybrids – Ford Fusion Hybrid, Lincoln MKZ Hybrid, Honda Accord Hybrid;
- Top three minivans – Chrysler Town & Country, Dodge Grand Caravan, Honda Odyssey;
- Top three compact SUVs – Ford Escape, Mazda CX-5, Subaru Forester;



2014 Chevy Cruze

- Top three midsize SUVs – Honda Pilot, Hyundai Santa Fe, Jeep Grand Cherokee;
- Top five full-size SUVs – Buick Enclave, Chevrolet Traverse, GMC Acadia, Dodge Durango, Mazda CX-9;
- Top three luxury SUVs – Acura MDX, Acura RDX, BMW X5;
- Top two pickups – Ford F-150, Ram 1500.

“The 200 puts Chrysler solidly in the U.S. family sedan picture,” said Dzierwa. “The 200 sedan’s recognition as a *Consumers Digest* Best Buy in its launch year speaks well of Chrysler Group’s efforts recently.”

Dzierwa said that Chrysler really started to show on the magazine’s list starting around 2012 and 2013.

“Chrysler has been impressive for the past three or four years,” Dzierwa said. “Things really started to take off when Fiat entered the picture but even before that, Chrysler was working on improving vehicles. It really started with the Jeep Grand Cherokee, which was started before Fiat.”

Dzierwa also said that Ford’s Lincoln models are new to a couple of categories and the brand really has made some moves to improve quality that could pay off in the future. In all, the Detroit manufacturers have really made strides in improving their vehicles over the past decade, he said.

“I’ve been here at the magazine for 11 years,” Dzierwa said.

“When I first started, GM and Ford and Chrysler didn’t have too many vehicles on our list. But for the last handful of years, that’s really changed. It’s not only me. I’ve spoken with our panelists and our writers and they all say that the Detroit automakers have really caught up.

“It used to be that there’d be a lot of Asian vehicles, a few European ones and a couple of American cars. That isn’t the case anymore.”



2015 Town & Country



2014 Ford Fusion

GM Goes GREEN with Student Program

General Motors launched its watershed education program in seven new communities across Canada this year, the largest international expansion in the initiative’s 25-year history.

The GM Global Rivers Environmental Education Network (GREEN) now comprises 53 GM facilities, including all of the company’s U.S. and Canadian manufacturing plants, said GM spokesperson Sharon Basel.

GM GREEN is the longest-running conservation education program by any automaker, impacting 150,000 young people through hands-on learning since its inception in 1989, Basel said.

GM GREEN is meant to encourage community engagement by helping youth better understand their impact on local watersheds, Basel said, adding that it’s a collaboration of partners, from the nonprofit Earth Force that manages the program to local schools and conservation groups in communities in which GM operates.

“This program is a model for how the public and private sectors can come together to make a meaningful, lasting impact on the environment and in our commu-

nities,” said Lisa Bardwell, Earth Force president and CEO.

“Through GM GREEN, we are investing in two of our most precious resources – our children and watersheds.”

Through GM GREEN, employees mentor approximately 10,000 students each year in water monitoring events, classroom visits and student-driven watershed improvement projects. Students retrieve, test and analyze water samples, then channel findings into a sustainable action plan addressing water quality issues locally.

The new GM GREEN sites span four Canadian provinces:

- St. Catharines Powertrain – St. Catharines, Ontario;
- CAMI Assembly – Ingersoll, Ontario;
- Woodstock Parts Distribution Centre – Woodstock, Ontario;
- GM Cold Weather Development Centre – Kapuskasing, Ontario;
- Pointe Claire (Montreal) Parts Distribution Centre – Pointe-Claire, Quebec;
- Langley (Vancouver) Parts Distribution Centre – Langley, British Columbia;

- Edmonton Parts Distribution Centre – Edmonton, Alberta;

“Our commitment to the environment isn’t just about reducing the impact of our operations – it’s about getting the next generation of leaders excited about how they can help preserve natural resources and be a positive force in their community,” said Cathy Clegg, GM North America Manufacturing vice president.

“We work hard to serve and improve the communities in which we live and work around the world.”

More than 3,200 GM employees have been involved in GM GREEN over the past quarter-century. Additionally, GM and the GM Foundation provide financial support to the national program and local partners.

GM is committed to conserving water throughout its operations, Clegg said. Between 2005 and 2010, the company reduced water use per vehicle produced by 32 percent and committed to another 15 percent reduction by 2020.

Employee dedication to community outreach further makes an impact in protecting this critical resource.

Battery Consortium Grants \$2.68 Million for Research

The United States Advanced Battery Consortium (USABC) has awarded a \$2.68 million advanced battery technology development contract to Maxwell Technologies Inc. of San Diego, Calif.

The contract, awarded Nov. 3, is for the development of a high-performance, hybrid energy storage system for automotive stop-start applications.

The competitively bid contract award is co-funded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and includes a 51 percent Maxwell cost-share.

The 19-month program, said USABC spokesperson Susan Bairley, will focus on the technological and economic feasibility of adopting a 12-volt hybrid energy storage system consisting of lithium-ion batteries and Maxwell ultracapacitors to an automotive stop-start application that meets USABC specifications, Bairley said.

The program goals will include development of an improved capacitor.

USABC is a subsidiary of the United States Council for Automotive Research (USCAR) and is a joint Chrysler-Ford-GM program. Enabled by a cooperative agreement with the U.S. DOE, USABC’s mission is to develop electrochemical energy storage technologies that support commer-

cialization of hybrid, plug-in hybrid, electric and fuel cell vehicles, Bairley said. In support of its mission, USABC has developed mid- and long-term goals to guide its projects and measure its progress.

For more information, visit the USABC’s website at http://www.uscar.org/guest/article_view.php?articles_id=85

“We are pleased to announce the award of this contract to Maxwell Technologies as part of USABC’s broad battery technology research and development programs,” said Steve Zimmer, executive director of USCAR.

“These programs are essential to advance the technology needed to meet both near- and long-term goals that will enable increasingly efficient and affordable vehicle electrification.”

The U.S. DOE’s overarching mission is to advance the national, economic and energy security of the United States, Bairley said.

DOE’s Vehicle Technologies Office works with industry, academia and national laboratories to develop advanced transportation technologies that reduce the nation’s use of imported oil and increase its energy security.

Electrochemical energy storage has been identified as a critical enabling technology for advanced, fuel-efficient, light- and heavy-duty vehicles.



GM CAMI Assembly mentor Sarah Tea, left, and local students test water quality in Canada.

SEMA Labels Jeep Wrangler 'Hottest 4x4 SUV'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Service, Parts and Customer Care, at the SEMA Media breakfast on Nov. 4.

"Data indicate that the availability of a wide range of accessories has a strong influence on new-car sales," said Kersting. "By winning yet another SEMA Award for Hottest 4x4 SUV, the Jeep Wrangler reinforces its position as the off-road vehicle best suited to reflect consumers' individuality."

"The Jeep Wrangler is our most accessorized vehicle and to have it awarded for a fifth consecutive year at SEMA demonstrates its popularity due to the quality of the vehicle along with that of the performance parts and accessories Mopar has developed for it," Gorlier said.

"It's wonderful to see it keep winning accolades and reinforce the efforts we've made to keep adding quality Jeep Performance Parts to more than the 300 we already have available in order to provide even more options for personalization."

The Jeep Performance Parts portfolio offers high-end, "hard-core quality" Jeep parts including axles, lift kits, bumpers, winches, skid plates and suspension components, said Jeep CEO Mike Manley. "These parts offer factory-engineered solutions to increase off-road performance."

The newest Mopar parts and accessories available for the Jeep Wrangler:

- Jeep Performance Parts 2-inch Lift Kit for Jeep Wrangler;
- Jeep Performance Parts Heavy Duty 44 Series Rubicon Front Axle Housing;
- Jeep Performance Parts Front and Rear Axle Mounting Bracket Packages;
- Jeep Custom Hood Decal.

Coughlin Races Dodge Dart to 2nd at Las Vegas

Jeg Coughlin Jr. led the Team Mopar contingent in eliminations on Nov. 2 at the NHRA Nationals in Las Vegas, racing his JEGS.com/Mopar Dodge Dart to the runner-up spot and an eighth career final-round appearance at The Strip at Las Vegas Motor Speedway.

In the NHRA Funny Car class, Vegas semifinalist and Mopar Express Lane Dodge Charger R/T driver Matt Hagan will head to the final event of the six-race NHRA Countdown to the Championship playoffs holding a 21-point lead over the second-place John Force as he fights to bring home his second overall Funny Car crown for Mopar.

Defending NHRA Pro Stock champ Coughlin earned lane choice for an all-Mopar showdown in the quarterfinals against teammate Allen Johnson after using a quicker 6.596/208.91 mark to knock off Aaron Stanfield (6.670/206.76) in the opening round.

Johnson, No. 6 starter in his Magneti Marelli Quality Auto Parts Offered by Mopar Dodge Dart, posted a 6.608/208.65 to get past Chris McGaha (6.635/208.01) in round one.

In the Hemi vs. Hemi battle, Coughlin motored to the win with a 6.626/208.14 run after Johnson got out of the groove early.

In the semifinals against Shane Gray, Coughlin was quicker off the starting line with a .012 reaction time and never looked back with a quicker and faster 6.605/208.46 effort to Gray's 6.647/208.26.

"I feel fantastic about our day," said Coughlin.

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Chrysler Profits Up 32 Percent

DETROIT (AP) – Chrysler Group's third-quarter net profit rose 32 percent as worldwide sales continued to climb, helping the U.S. company prop up its ailing parent.

Chrysler made \$611 million in the July-through-September quarter, compared with \$464 million a year ago. Revenue rose nearly 18 percent to \$20.7 billion.

Fiat and Chrysler last month finished a five-year merger process to form Fiat Chrysler Automobiles. The Netherlands-based parent company made only \$221 million last quarter under international accounting standards, which are different from those applied in the U.S.

Chrysler said Oct. 5 its worldwide sales grew 18 percent in the quarter to 711,000 vehicles.

Most of the increase occurred in the U.S., where retail sales grew 20 percent largely because of the new Jeep Cherokee small

SUV and Chrysler 200 sedan.

Chrysler's U.S. market share also continued to grow during the quarter, rising 1.1 percentage points to 12.3 percent. Outside North America, sales rose 11 percent to 91,000.

The Auburn Hills automaker raised its full-year forecast for worldwide vehicle shipments by 100,000 vehicles. It now expects to ship about 2.9 million cars and trucks. It expects revenue of more than \$80 billion for the year.

On a conference call with analysts, Chief Financial Officer Richard Palmer said the company's sales growth and new products selling for higher prices should help close its profit margin gap with Detroit competitors Ford and General Motors.

Chrysler said its profit margin – the percentage of revenue it gets to keep – was 4.6 percent last quarter, but GM topped 9

percent in North America and Ford was 7.1 percent.

"We're the fastest-growing manufacturer at the moment in the U.S. marketplace," Palmer said.

"As we upgrade our vehicle portfolio, we continue to focus clearly on growing market share, improving price positions."

Palmer also said that recalls increased costs by \$200 million last quarter.

On Oct. 4, Fiat Chrysler reported that CEO Sergio Marchionne exercised stock options that raised his stake in the company to 12.1 million shares, or 1 percent of the company. Those were worth \$134 million at last Tuesday's closing price.

Marchionne, who also cashed in stock options from CNH Industrial, turned around and sold shares in both companies, netting an \$18.8 million pretax profit.

Continental Teams with Chinese Supplier

Continental Structural Plastics (CSP), an Auburn Hills-based manufacturer of lightweight composite materials, signed an agreement with Qingdao Victall Railway (Group) Co., Ltd., to form the 50-50 joint venture CSP Victall (Tangshan) Structural Composites Co. A formal signing ceremony took place Oct. 27, in Tangshan City, Hebei Province, China, said CSP spokesperson Kim Zitny in a statement to the media.

Under the terms of the agreement, CSP Victall will operate out of a 322,000-square-foot manufacturing facility located in Tangshan, Zitny said. The company will make composite components for the automotive, heavy truck and bus, construction and

agriculture markets in China.

The joint venture will also compound and sell sheet molded compound (SMC) raw materials out of the same facility.

"Through this joint venture, we gain strong, trustworthy partners in Mr. Sun and the entire Victall team," said Frank Macher, CEO of CSP.

"Our new operations in China will enable us to provide lightweight composite technologies designed to meet the needs of both the domestic and global OEMs in this important market."

"We are very pleased to be entering into this partnership with CSP," said Sun Hanben, board chairman of Qingdao Victall Railway. "Combining their innovation and technology with our existing

customer relationships and deep local market expertise will make CSP Victall a leading supplier of lightweight technologies to Chinese OEMs."

The opportunity to provide lightweight vehicle components in China is significant and expected to grow, Macher said. With the Chinese market on pace to produce nearly 20 million light vehicles and 1.5 million Class 7-8 heavy-duty trucks this year, there is a growing focus on reducing carbon emissions.

The Chinese government has set forth a number of aggressive plans to cut carbon dioxide emissions by as much as 45 percent from 2005 levels by 2020, providing opportunities for companies that can lightweight auto parts.



2015 Jeep Renegade

Brazil-Made Jeep Renegade Debuts at Sao Paulo Show

by Jim Stickford

The new 2015 Jeep Renegade made its Latin American debut at the 2014 Sao Paulo Motor Show Oct. 28.

Chrysler spokesperson Ariel Gavilan said the Renegade will be made in Brazil in a plant that will be open in early 2015.

"Brazil is the fourth largest automotive market in the world," Gavilan said. "The Renegade has a couple of powertrains designed for that market, particularly the 1.8-liter E.TorQ engine, which is a flex-fuel engine."

Ethanol manufactured from sugar cane is a popular fuel additive in Brazil, Gavilan said. He added that the Jeep brand has strong recognition in South America. In fact, SUVs down there are known as GIPes, pronounced jee-pee. So having a vehicle designed especially for that market is a great move, he said.

"With a compact size that is ideal for the region's narrow roads, the Jeep Renegade delivers a unique combination of best-in-class off-road capability, open-air freedom and convenience with a segment-first nine-speed automatic transmission that contributes to outstanding on-road and off-road driving dynamics," Gavilan said.

The Jeep Renegade also offers "powerful yet fuel-efficient engines," Gavilan said, and a host of innovative safety and advanced technology offerings. The result is an efficient vehicle created to attract youthful and adventurous customers around the world to the Jeep brand.

"One of the biggest opportunities for the future growth of Jeep is in Brazil," said Mike Manley, CEO – Jeep Brand. "We now have a locally built vehicle that perfectly fits Latin American roads, with the capability and technolo-

gy features that are unique in this segment.

"The all-new Jeep Renegade perfectly matches the spirit of adventure and can-do attitude of Brazil and will attract thousands of new customers to our brand."

In Brazil, the Jeep Renegade will be available with two engine options including the flex fuel 1.8-liter E.TorQ engine with the choice of a five-speed manual or six-speed automatic transmission, and a 2.0-liter Multijet II diesel engine, coupled with the nine-speed automatic transmission.

The Jeep Renegade will be the first compact SUV equipped with a diesel engine to be sold in Brazil and also will be the first Brazilian-made car offering the ParkAssist function, Gavilan said.

The Jeep Renegade will be produced at a new state-of-the-art plant in Pernambuco, in the Northeast part of Brazil, with sales starting during the second quarter of 2015.

Ford, LTU Combine To Set Cortina Design Contest

Ford Motor Co. and Lawrence Technological University (LTU) have again teamed up for the "Designing for the Future" competition that asks students to reinterpret the Ford Cortina for the year 2030. The prizes include more than \$100,000 in scholarships, said LTU spokesperson Eric Pope.

The Ford Cortina was built by Ford of Britain from 1962 to 1982. It was the United Kingdom's best-selling car of the 1970s and continues to have a large cult following.

The competition is open to high school seniors or transfer students interested in enrolling in LTU's transportation design or industrial design programs in fall 2015, said Pope. For more information, go to www.ltu.edu/architecture_and_design/design_competition.asp.

The first step for participants is to enter the competition by Nov. 23. The deadline for submitting entries is Nov. 30.

Students must choose a contest track, either automotive design or product design, Pope said. The first asks participants to create a C-Segment rear-wheel-drive Ford performance sedan or coupé. The second asks students to identify and create two innovative products (such as tools, shoes, furniture, and luggage) that would appeal to Cortina customers – one complementing the mass-produced Cortina, and another targeted to performance/rally customers.

The winners will be announced at the MAIN (Motorcity Auto Industry Night) Event in Detroit on Jan. 11, 2015, Pope said.

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Lower Gas Prices Fuel Rise In October Vehicle Sales

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ahead and buy pickup trucks, Toprak said. GMC Sierra sales jumped 12.5 percent in October. Ram pickup sales were up 33 percent.

Fuel economy is no longer top of mind for most buyers, according to an annual survey taken by J.D. Power and Associates in June. Last year, it ranked No. 3 on the list of reasons why people buy cars. This year, it dropped to No. 6 behind reliability, styling, brand preference, ride and handling, reputation and price.

As a result, hybrid sales are suffering. Sales of Ford's C-Max hybrid dropped 22.5 percent in October, while Toyota Prius sales were down 13.5 percent.

But sales of some small cars rose. Lower gas prices can help first-time buyers and others feel comfortable enough to buy a new car. Sales of the newly redesigned Honda Fit subcompact were up 83 percent in October, for example, while sales of the Nissan Sentra small car rose 56 percent.

"Lower gas prices are actually a tide that floats all ships," said Jessica Caldwell, a senior analyst with the car-buying site Edmunds.com.

General Motors' overall U.S. sales rose just 0.2 percent to 226,819. Chevy Cruze compact car sales were up 51 percent, largely due to increases in fleet sales to governments and rental car companies.

Ford's sales fell 2 percent to 187,897. Its car sales declined 11.5 percent, but SUV sales were up 10 percent. F-Series truck sales were flat. For several months now, Ford has tried to limit pickup sales and keep some

trucks in stock as it prepares for the launch of a new F-150 later this year.

Chrysler said its U.S. sales rose 22 percent to 170,480 for its best October since 2001. The red-hot Jeep brand led the way with a 52 percent increase over a year ago.

Toyota said it set an SUV sales record in October thanks to a 22 percent gain for its RAV4 small SUV, and a 30 percent jump in sales of the Highlander mid-size SUV. Toyota's sales were up 7 percent overall to 180,580.

Nissan, Honda and Subaru all reported their best October sales ever. Honda sales rose 6 percent, backed by a 30 percent gain in sales of the CR-V, the nation's top-selling SUV. Subaru benefitted from strong sales of the Outback small SUV, while Nissan got a boost from demand for the Frontier small pickup.

Hyundai's sales dropped 6.5 percent to 50,081. While sales of its Tucson SUV rose 44 percent, that wasn't enough to offset sagging sales of its Sonata and Elantra sedans.

Volkswagen, which has struggled for months with older products, saw sales jump 8 percent in October after the arrival of the new Golf small car.

Sales should remain strong through November and December and close out the year at 16.5 million, up 6 percent from 2013, Toprak says. He says buyers should look for big discounts in small cars as well as full-size trucks and SUVs for the remainder of the year.

"At the moment, the picture is rosy. Sales are doing well, incentive levels appear to be higher but still in check," Toprak said. "Things are in a pretty healthy balance in the industry."



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GM Saves Bats to Help Environment

An adhesive used in production of the 2015 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray may help preserve a threatened bat species in North America.

General Motors found that when processed, the adhesive can serve as a stalactite in artificial bat caves, said GM spokesperson Sharon Basel.

International bat experts from such non-governmental organizations as Bat Conservation International and the Organization for Bat Conservation are reviewing the application.

White-nose syndrome, a deadly fungus appearing on the muzzle and other parts of hibernating bats, has killed more than 5.7 million bats to date in the U.S. and Canada, Basel said. Bats with the disease act abnormally and wake from hibernation too frequently, leading to death.

“...many bat species could face extinction.”

— Rob Mies,
Bat Conservation

There is no cure for white-nose syndrome, but remedies like non-toxic fungicides and artificial bat caves show promise, Basel said.

Saving bats is important because they contribute to the overall health of the environment. A single bat eats up to 5,000 insects a night, which means farmers can use fewer pesticides. They are also pollinators that help repopulate plants and maintain forests.

“We need to do what we can to

prevent more bats from contracting white-nose syndrome while they’re hibernating,” said Rob Mies, executive director, the Organization for Bat Conservation.

“Researchers are working around the clock to find a way to stop the transmission from occurring in caves. This disease is occurring at a rapidly escalating rate and if a solution is not found soon, many bat species could face extinction.”

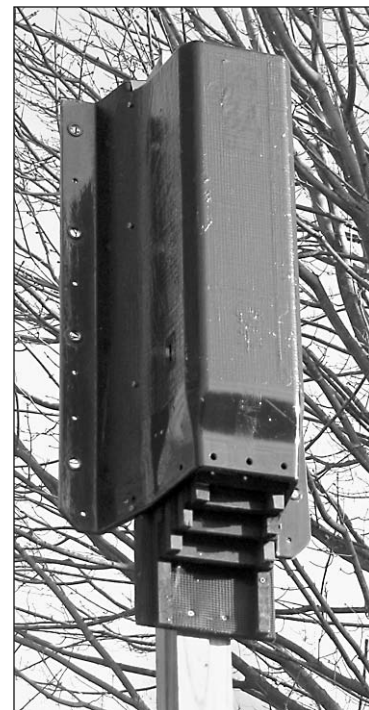
Artificial stalactites give hibernating bats more surface area from which to hang, thus spreading them out around the cave, Basel said.

Creation of the stalactite is simple. Robots that apply a structural adhesive that helps join Corvette body parts are purged regularly to keep the adhesive applicator clean and free of dried material. This dried gunk is shaped just like a stalactite, and its use in artificial bat caves avoids sending it to landfills.

Bat projects have been a part of GM for several years, examples of GM’s industry-leading 26 certified wildlife habitat programs and penchant for creative recycling, Basel said.

The company also creates bat houses out of scrap Chevrolet Volt battery covers that can hold up to 150 little brown bats each. John Bradburn, GM global manager of waste reduction, came up with the reuse idea, transforming the difficult-to-recycle material into nesting structures.

So far, 232 of these bat houses have been installed on GM properties and in other private and public lands in the United States. A tweak of the design has led to 368 specially designed structures to serve wood ducks, owls, bluebirds and scaly-sided mer-



Battery cover is now a bat house.

gansers – an endangered species.

“We think of waste as just a resource out of place and work hard to keep materials in use,” said Bradburn.

“Just like our stalactite concept or our bat houses, we seek out creative reuse projects that touch other elements of sustainability such as community engagement and wildlife preservation.”

GM often works with local youth through schools, clubs and recreation centers to put the finishing touches on the nesting boxes, Bradburn said.

“It’s important to get kids involved in these projects, helping them to see things not as they are, but what they can be,” said Bradburn.

TrueCar President Suggests Chrysler, VW Combine Forces

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

half of industry revenue comes from pickups and utilities,” Krafcik said. “Cars are about 33 percent, even though they account for about 43 percent of units sold. Remember, the average price, and I am talking about average, is about \$40,000. The 2014 F-150, which is at the end of a very long product cycle, goes on average for \$42,000.”

And these numbers reflect total revenue of about \$520 billion, Krafcik said, which he and his colleagues at TrueCar believe are a better proxy of industry profitability.

“Our thesis is that if the industry average mix, in terms of total revenue, is 20 percent pickups, 30 percent cars, 30 percent utilities and 20 percent premiums, that is a good footprint for an automaker’s portfolio.”

Krafcik said an examination of automakers’ portfolios shows how some sort of merger or cooperative agreement could help create a combined, more balanced portfolio for both Chrysler and Volkswagen.

He said that Volkswagen Automotive Group (VAG) has a very unbalanced portfolio. In 2014, VAG should have sales of about \$21 billion. Of that sum, about \$13 billion comes from premium vehicle sales.

“When people hear ‘Volkswagen Automotive Group’ they tend to forget that VAG includes Audi and Porsche,” Krafcik said. “VAG has no trucks in its portfolio and not much revenue from utilities.”

“If you look at Chrysler, its revenue should be about \$66 billion this year. Of that, \$12.7 billion comes from cars, \$17.8 billion from pickups, \$34 billion from utilities and only \$1.5 billion from premiums. That’s mostly Maserati.”

Krafcik said he has no insider information on Chrysler’s future plans, but noted that company CEO Sergio Marchionne has said in the past that there is room for more mergers in the auto industry’s future and that Chrysler likes to keep its options open.

Krafcik likened Chrysler to an atom with a nucleolus looking for a covalent bond.

“That’s all the chemistry I know, but if you combine VAG with Chrysler, you end up with a much more balanced portfolio,” Krafcik said.

“If you look at Ford in 2014 with \$20 billion in revenue from cars, \$32 billion in pickups, \$27 billion in utilities and \$4 billion in premiums, those numbers add up even better than Chrysler’s. But Ford, for various reasons, would never look for some sort of merger.”

Krafcik said that of the Detroit automakers, GM’s portfolio is the most balanced and Toyota has an even more balanced portfolio.

“Really, by breaking the market down into four segments, you create a Rorschach test of the industry,” Krafcik said. “The question becomes how do you get the ideal mix of vehicles. It’s very difficult and no automaker – either foreign or domestic – has the perfect balance.”

“But it makes sense for VAG and Chrysler to combine forces. VAG gets access to the U.S. pickup market and Chrysler gets access to the premium market. It’s not perfect, but no automaker is perfect.”

Achieving this balance is difficult, Krafcik said, because during the recent economic crisis, automakers did a pretty good job of shedding excess production capacity. So companies need great production flexibility, he said, to shift one plant from, say, cars to utilities.

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GM Delta Plant worker puts together an Acadia in Lansing.

GM Will Invest \$63 Million to Expand Lansing Delta Plant

General Motors will start construction by the end of the year on a \$63 million expansion of the Lansing Delta Township facility.

The expansion will add nearly 263,000 square feet to the facility that produces the Chevrolet Traverse, GMC Acadia and Buick Enclave large crossovers.

"This announcement is the latest example of our ongoing efforts to strengthen key plant capabilities," said GM North America Manufacturing Vice President Cathy Clegg.

"We're committed to producing the highest quality and safest vehicles in the market, which will help us earn customers for life. This is why facility investment is so important."

The expansion is part of the nearly \$300 million in Michigan-based investments that GM CEO Mary Barra referenced in a speech last month at the Detroit Economic Club.

Opened in 2006, Lansing Delta Township Assembly is GM's newest plant in North America, blending best practices and the newest technology in one facility, said Clegg. It was the first automotive manufacturing facility in the world to be a Gold Certified Leader in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED).

"UAW members have a proud history of building quality vehicles in the Lansing Delta Township plant and they look forward to the changes and upgrades made possible by what workers and management are able to achieve by working together," said UAW Vice President Cindy Estrada, who directs the union's national General Motors Department.

"The investment in the plant and in UAW Local 602 members means workers will have an updated environment in which they can continue delivering quality workmanship for years to come."

The expansion will add roughly 28,000 square feet to general assembly and more than 181,000 square feet to the body shop for the newest generation of robotics and lean flexible tooling.

A 54,000-square-foot addition to the paint shop will allow use of improved sealers and coatings to increase corrosion resistance.

A view of Lansing Delta Township by the numbers:

- Year opened: 2006;
- Employees: 3,295 (3,058 hourly, 237 salaried);
- Union: UAW Local 602;
- Facility size: 3.4 million square feet, including the stamping facility.

Since 2009, GM has announced nearly \$11.2 billion of investment in U.S. facilities, including approximately \$1.1 billion so far this year.

"GM's major investment is yet another exciting chapter in the story of Michigan's economic turnaround," Gov. Rick Snyder said.

"We've maintained a laser-like focus on creating an environment in which job providers can grow and thrive. That means more and better jobs for families and long-term opportunities for our children."

"We appreciate GM's ongoing commitment to Michigan and its contributions to the overall vigor of our auto industry. This announcement is great news for mid-Michigan and our entire state."

King Cobra 'Has Serious Bite' – Ford Racing's Jamie Allison

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

performance bushings to improve traction and put optimum power to the ground under hard acceleration.

The Handling Pack lowers the car approximately one inch with front and rear lowering springs – the front springs on pre-assembled struts. The Handling Pack also includes rear shocks and a stabilizer bar kit.

The key component of the Super Pack is a 2.3L Twin Vortices Series (TVS) supercharger assembly, co-developed and co-branded by Ford Racing and Roush Performance.

Accompanying the supercharger is a six-rib belt drive system, intake manifold, electronic throttle body, air inlet system, fuel rail and high-flow fuel injectors, complete air-to-liquid intercooler system and the Ford Racing performance computer calibration.

Ford Racing recently took an early version of the King Cobra

package on a 2015 Mustang to Michigan's Milan Dragway, where the car proved its performance capabilities with a "stunning" quarter-mile elapsed time of 10.97 seconds, Allison said.

Ford Racing chose the name King Cobra for this parts package because of its long association with high-performance Ford vehicles.

The King Cobra moniker was first introduced by Carroll Shelby in 1963 for the high-performance Cooper Monaco sports racing cars he built with mid-mounted, 289-cubic-inch Ford V8 engines.

Ford used the name again in 1970 for an aerodynamic prototype NASCAR stock car, based on the Ford Torino that never raced.

The most well-known King Cobra was an option package that could be equipped to a 1978 Mustang II, which was the first Mustang to sport the "5.0" designation for the metric equivalent of the V8 engine's 302-cubic-inch displacement.

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CHEVROLET

GM Foundation's \$75,000 Donated to Help in Warren

by Jim Stickford

High school students and the needy – all from Warren – benefited from funds donated last week by the GM Foundation's Plant City Grants program.

Officially presented at GM's Warren Transmission Plant Nov. 6, the funds – totaling \$75,000 – were presented to eight local charities.

Foundation president Vivian Pickard said the Plant City Grants program is designed to help local charities in the 45 cities where GM has facilities and workers across the country.

"The greatest thing about this program is that it allows the local employees at the various GM sites to make the decision as to which groups receive funding," Pickard said. "These groups have an impact on the community and many of them have GM employees involved with them."

Pickard said the GM Foundation is based in Detroit and foundation decision-makers can't know which local programs could help communities that could be hundreds or even thousands of miles away from the city.

"We started this program in 2011," Pickard said. "We wanted to make an impact in local communities."

"That's why we let the local employees decide which groups to donate to. They're the ones involved on the ground."

In 2014, the GM Foundation will donate \$1.7 million to 209 different groups in 45 communities, Pickard said.

The eight groups that received funds on Nov. 6 were chosen by the workers at Warren Transmission.

Mike Dulaney, Warren Transmission plant manager, said that the presentation ceremony symbolized the pride that Warren Transmission workers have in their plant and in the community that is home to the facility.

"This is our community and it's an honor to have a role in helping these groups," Dulaney said.

On hand were representatives from the eight local charities –

- Family Youth Interventions, which help homeless and near homeless people in a time of crisis;
- Winning Futures, a group that supports high school students to develop life skills through a year-long mentoring program;
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Metropolitan Detroit, which has a site-based mentoring program that helps teenagers on a one-on-one basis;
- Macomb Science Olympics, which has a mission of encouraging student interest in STEM learning and careers;
- Warren Lions Club, which has eye exam programs and helps purchase glasses for those in need;
- Judson Center, which helps



Representatives from eight local charities gather at Warren Transmission Plant to celebrate GM donation.

6,500 families and children across metro Detroit; support from GM for two decades and helps educate students on the importance of clean water through hands-on learning projects; • Warren Symphony Orchestra, which educates Warren's students on music.

Certified Pre-Owned Cars Valuable to Buying Public

Shoppers are increasingly considering CPO vehicles, and once shoppers turn into buyers, they are satisfied, loyal and many are likely to turn into new-car buyers for future purchases.

Those are the findings of AutoTrader.com's annual Certified Pre-Owned (CPO) study.

In its fourth year, the study has been a key source of insights into consumer awareness and consideration of CPO, and this year's study has been expanded to include the CPO owner experience.

"Over the next few years, more than nine million certifiable vehicles will be hitting the market, making now the time for consumers, manufacturers and dealers to pay close attention to the CPO landscape," said Rick Wainschel, vice president of customer insights at AutoTrader.com.

"The insights from this study clearly show that consumers are more open than ever to CPO vehicles, and if dealers and manufacturers can turn shoppers into owners, they are well-positioned to build long-lasting relationships with those consumers."

Wainschel said key findings from the study include:

- Familiarity with CPO is at an all-time high, with 75 percent of new car shoppers and 45 percent of used car shoppers familiar with CPO.
- Further, the number of new and used shoppers considering CPO for the first time has doubled in just one year. In 2014, 44 percent of new car shoppers are considering CPO for the first time, up from 22 percent in 2013. Similarly, 30 percent of used car shoppers are considering CPO for the first time, up from 18 percent in 2013. This increase in consideration is in part due to the economy, according to the study.
- Exposing shoppers to CPO definition increases consideration. Most shoppers still believe that vehicle certification comes from the dealership; however, their consideration increases

when exposing them to a comprehensive definition of CPO – recent/newer model vehicles that have passed a detailed inspection provided by the manufacturer and typically come with a warranty.

Among new shoppers, 59 percent indicated that they would consider CPO, but when exposed to the definition, that number increased to 84 percent. For used car shoppers, 50 percent initially indicated that they would consider CPO, but that number increased to 69 percent once exposed.

• CPO vehicles command a premium price over their non-certified counterparts, and the study revealed that more shoppers are now willing to pay that premium. Among new car shoppers, 84 percent are willing to pay more for a CPO vehicle, up 22 points since 2013.

For CPO shoppers, that number is 83 percent, up 17 points since 2013. And for used car shoppers, 51 percent are willing to pay a premium, up 17 points since 2013. However, the amount of the premium has decreased since 2013, with the biggest decrease seen among new car shoppers. In 2014, new car shoppers said they are willing to pay a premium of \$2,032, down significantly from \$2,940 in 2013. CPO shoppers are willing to pay \$2,244, down from \$2,434 in 2013; and used car shoppers are willing to pay \$2,085, down from \$2,163 in 2013.

• New, CPO and used car shoppers all reported that the peace of mind that comes with purchasing a CPO vehicle is the key motivator. Affordability and the warranty also ranked within each shopper group's top five reasons for considering CPO.

Most CPO owners are satisfied and loyal. Not only are the majority (75 percent) of CPO owners satisfied with the experience, that satisfaction turns into loyalty to the dealership and the brand.

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Big or Small, SUVs Rule the Roost

By DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) – Once a hulking symbol of American excess, sport utility vehicles are quickly becoming the world’s favorite way to get around.

It’s a surprising rebirth for a vehicle that was the subject of obituaries when gas prices spiked in 2008.

Automakers won back customers by making smaller, more fuel-efficient SUVs that also appealed to newly wealthy buyers in Asia and South America and former skeptics in Europe.

Indian drivers want SUVs to navigate rough roads. In China, they’re a status symbol. European and American Baby Boomers buy SUVs because they’re easier to climb in and out of. Upwardly mobile Brazilian families like their spaciousness.

Cheaper subcompacts like the Renault Duster are bringing in customers who couldn’t afford SUVs before.

Earlier this year, SUVs overtook four-door sedans for the first time as the most popular vehicle for individual buyers in the U.S. By 2018, analysts expect China to be the biggest market for SUVs in the world.

“The SUV genie is out of the bottle. They’ve been discovered by enough people that you’ll never put them back,” says Karl Brauer, a senior analyst with the car buying site Kelley Blue Book.

Global SUV sales rose 88.5 percent between 2008 and 2013, to 15.7 million, according to IHS Automotive. That was three times faster than auto sales as a whole. By 2016, IHS predicts annual SUV sales will total 20.1 million, or about one of every five vehicles sold.

Automakers are finding some surprising converts. France – where environmentalists used to roam the streets slashing SUV tires – is second only to China in the growth of SUVs.

Parisian Laurent Azoulai, 58, bought an all-electric subcompact SUV – the BMW i3 – in July.

“I used to have Mercedes and Renaults but I liked this because I only need it for city driving,” he said. “It’s small, and it’s electric, and I can’t stand pollution.”

Shrinking the SUV – and making it more fuel-efficient – was the key to saving it. In 2008, less than half of SUVs sold worldwide were small, and customers had fewer choices. Twenty percent were large SUVs like the eight-passenger Cadillac Escalade, which defined the segment decades ago but had limited audiences outside North America.

Seeing the unmet demand, companies started making small SUVs that were even more nimble and efficient. Subcompact SUVs like the Chevrolet Trax – which is shorter than a Toyota Corolla – were born.

It worked. Sales of small and subcompact SUVs like the Toyota RAV4, Buick Encore and Ford EcoSport have more than doubled worldwide since 2008. New subcompact SUVs from Jeep, Honda, Fiat and others will arrive in showrooms soon and keep the growth going. Small SUVs now make up 58 percent of all SUV sales worldwide.

The new crop of tiny SUVs is small enough to appeal to buyers in emerging markets but nice enough for downsizing buyers in Europe and North America. That’s good for automakers, who save money by designing one vehicle that suits many different customers.

Owners who switch have a hard time going back to cars. Mo Mard, 56, a retired investment banker who lives in O’Fallon, Mo., drove a 2003 Toyota RAV4 for 11 years. Six months ago, she traded it in for a Honda Accord

sedan, thinking she’d like something a little sleeker.

She was immediately sorry. Mard missed sitting up high, and she wanted more room for her garage sale treasures. She also found it harder to ferry around her 90-year-old mother, who has trouble getting in and out of cars. In September, she traded the Accord for a Honda CR-V.

“I’m back up higher, so I feel better,” she says.

With smaller size comes better fuel economy, another lure for buyers. The Trax is expected to get 34 mpg on the highway, better than many midsize cars. The diesel-powered version of the Ford Escape, called the Kuga, gets better fuel economy than a Toyota Prius hybrid.

Three decades ago, bare-bones SUVs like the Toyota 4Runner

and Ford Bronco were mostly used by off-roaders. They had more utility – and less refinement – than most drivers needed.

The seven-passenger Ford Explorer, introduced in the 1991 model year, changed that by emphasizing style and comfort.

The Explorer – prematurely laid to rest by some critics last decade – is now Ford’s most-exported vehicle. Ford expects to make around 280,000 Explorers this year at its 90-year-old plant in Chicago.

Around 40,000 of those will be exported to Canada, Mexico, China, South Korea and the Middle East. Last year, Ford started making Explorers in Russia to meet growing demand there.

“It’s the common link,” IHS analyst Carlos DaSilva says. “It’s the car everybody wants.”

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