

New Mirror ‘Like Driving in Convertible with Top Down’

Sometimes it’s just a very good idea to know where you’re going – even if it’s behind you.

That’s why Cadillac late this year will add high-resolution streaming video to the function of a traditional rearview mirror, removing obstructions of passengers, headrests and the vehicle’s roof and rear pillars.

The streaming video mirror improves field of vision by an estimated 300 percent, or roughly four times greater than a standard rearview mirror, said Travis Hester, Cadillac CT6 executive chief engineer.

“The closest comparison to this kind of rear vision would be driving a convertible with the top down,” said Hester.

“In addition to the increased field of view, the technology eliminates any rear seat, rear pillar or passenger obstructions, allowing the driver an unimpeded view of the lanes behind and traditional blind spots.”

Thanks to a high dynamic range, Hester said, the camera’s video feed reduces glare and allows a crisper image in low-light situations, producing a better image versus a traditional glass electrochromatic, or auto-dimming, rearview mirror.

The in-mirror display is an

industry-leading 1280-by-240-pixel TFT-LCD display with 171 pixels per inch, combined with an HD camera designed specifically to enhance rear-view lane width and maximize low-light situations.

The camera itself is placed on the deck lid by the rear license-plate box.

A water-shedding hydrophobic coating is applied to the camera to keep it clean to maintain visibility regardless of the driving conditions, Hester said, making the camera functional in just about every weather condition a driver might face.

Researchers and engineers working on this Cadillac innovation have been awarded 10 patents – one for the streaming video mirror and nine for video processing, said Cadillac spokesman David Caldwell.

“It was a very interesting car to drive,” Caldwell said.

“I liken it to driving in a convertible with the top down because you eliminate views obstructed by the roof and panels.

“You really do get a much broader view of what’s behind you.”

The patents, Caldwell said, cover innovations in the wide



Views with the new video mirror (above) and traditional mirror (below)

field of view camera image calibration, de-warping, glare reduction and camera hardware design.

Drivers can disable the mirror’s video streaming function very simply, Caldwell said. Flipping the toggle on the underside of the mirror will revert it to a traditional electrochromatic rearview mirror.

“This is done because sometimes you want to be able to see what’s going on in the backseat of your car. For example, if your kid is in the car and you want to keep an eye on her,” Caldwell said.

“We’ve all had times when we’ve wanted to do something like that, so it was important to be able to switch the system to an ordinary mirror view.”



“The streaming video,” said Hester, “is a significant enhancement for the luxury customer interested in purposeful technology.”

The new camera and viewing technology will make their debut on the 2016 Cadillac CT6, said Caldwell.

MSU Sets Classes On Composting, Area Gardening

A free class on Backyard Composting is being offered by Macomb MSU Extension.

Attendees learn how to define compost, understand the decomposition process, build and maintain bins, mix materials and use finished compost, as well as the do’s and don’ts of composting.

Information on different methods of composting as well as worm composting will also be covered. The program will take place 9-11 a.m. on Saturday, Jan. 10, at the Macomb MSU Extension office at 21885 Dunham Road, off Groesbeck, just west of the Macomb County Sheriff’s Office. Use entrance E at the rear of the building.

MSU Extension is also offering the program The How and Why of Community Gardening. This program will cover what people need to know to set up and/or participate in a community garden and the types as well as the benefits of community gardens.

This program is 6:30-8 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 14, at the same location. Deadline to register is Monday, Jan. 12.

These programs are free, but seating is limited, so those interested should register in advance by calling 586-469-6440.

GM Restoring One Millionth Corvette from Sinkhole Fall

by Jim Stickford

The earth opened up and swallowed eight Corvettes last spring.

Now, GM is restoring two of those eight vehicles that were damaged in the Corvette Museum in Bowling Green, Ky.

Museum officials determined that only three of the cars were worth restoring.

“That’s not as bad as it sounds,” said Chevrolet spokesperson Monte Doran.

“When they got the cars out of the hole, it turned out to be a blessing in disguise. The incident made the news around the world and attendance to the museum increased by something like 40 percent.

“Additionally, support for the museum and for the restoration of the vehicles poured in from Corvette enthusiasts from around the world as well. I was

there and they were getting messages from Corvette fans from places like Norway.”

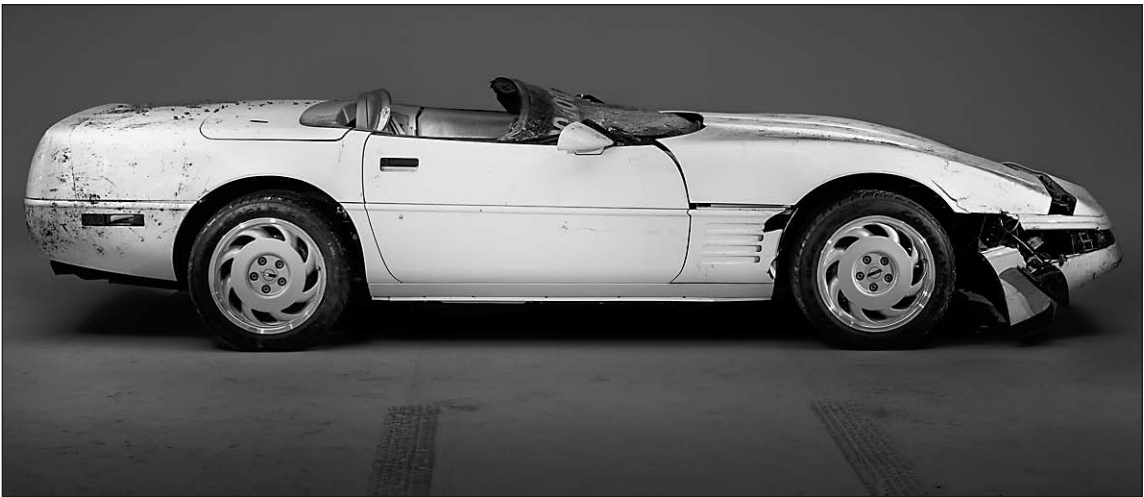
Doran said he learned about the sinkhole and what it did just like everyone else – watching a security video on the Internet that showed eight Corvettes falling down a sinkhole that opened up the museum’s floor.

“It was incredible to see, but you have to remember that the Corvette Museum is a private nonprofit entity, separate from General Motors.

“I remember having a talk with the museum’s director, Wendell Strobe, just after the sinkhole opened up. He said they might not even be able to lift all eight of the Corvettes out of the hole.”

When that didn’t turn out to be the case, Doran said, GM volunteered to help with the vehicles’ restorations.

The damage to the vehicles was determined by the order in



The one millionth Corvette after it fell into a sinkhole

which they fell into the hole, Doran said. The ones that fell in first received the most damage, as would happen when six or seven cars fall on top of one car. The vehicle that suffered the least amount of damage was the one that fell in last.

Doran said, “The five vehicles that they won’t restore were put on display and those five have become quite an attrac-

tion in and of themselves.”

One Corvette was restored by experts the museum keeps on hand, Doran said. The remaining two were sent to Detroit for GM to repair.

“These two Corvettes that GM is repairing,” said Doran, “are the one millionth Corvette, which is a 1992 model, and the 2009 ZR1 Blue Devil Corvette prototype.

“The Blue Devil was the last

one to fall in the hole. The damage to that vehicle was relatively little, to the point that it was actually able to start when it was pulled out of the hole. An oil line was cut, so it didn’t run for long, but still.”

Doran said GM technicians spent about two weeks worth of time repairing the Blue Devil. It

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Ford Emphasizing Global Performance

Ford will deliver more than 12 new performance vehicles through 2020, according to Ford officials.

The Dearborn automaker said its new global Ford Performance team will include an all-new Focus RS that will be available to customers in major markets around the world for the first time.

Ford spokesperson Craig Von Essen said that it’s part of Ford’s plan to deliver even more performance vehicles, parts and accessories for customers around the world more quickly.

“Ford remains committed to innovation through performance,” said Raj Nair, Ford group vice president, Global Product Development.

“Our new global Ford Performance team ties together racing, performance vehicles and parts.

“It will allow us to more quickly introduce products and accessories that meet the needs of customers around the world on-road and on the track.”

Focus RS, which Nair said builds on a pedigree of driving excellence dating to the first

Ford RS in 1968, was last introduced in 2009.

“To earn the RS badge, the vehicle has to be a no-compromise driver’s car that can deliver exceptional performance on the track when required, while providing excellent everyday driving,” said Nair.

Focus RS will join Ford’s existing performance lineup, including Fiesta ST, Focus ST, Shelby GT350 Mustang and F-150 Raptor.

In addition to pleasing enthusiasts, Von Essen said, these vehi-



New Shelby GT350 Mustang

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Macomb County
Executive Hackel
Has Familiar Role

MOUNT CLEMENS, Mich. (AP) – The chief executive of Macomb County plays the role of a police officer in an independent film shot near Gladwin last summer.

The Macomb Daily reports that it was a familiar role for Mark Hackel. He was a Macomb County sheriff's deputy and sheriff before he was elected to the position of Macomb county executive.

He was cast in "Urban Myths," which was written and directed by Kim Marie for Mirror Dog Productions. Marie is a former Macomb Township resident who now lives in Rochester.

"Urban Myths" is a story about high school seniors who go on a camping trip to check out myths when they find a haunted Indian burial ground.

Hackel plays the role of Deputy Matthews. He received no pay.

Marie says the film may be released by the end of 2015 or early 2016.

Buick Engineers Push Buttons to Mimic What Drivers Do

A frozen computer is frustrating, but a frozen touchscreen in an automobile is a much bigger deal.

That's why engineers test the touchscreen buttons on the Buick IntelliLink infotainment system by "pushing" them more than 2 million times every week, ensuring it consistently responds to user commands, said Buick spokeswoman Katie Bjoerk.

Multi-function touchscreen systems, which bundle controls and menus for several systems into one interface, are increasingly common in automobiles, Bjoerk said.

From playing MP3 files to placing phone calls, planning a navigation route or adjusting climate controls, touchscreens are tasked with handling more complex functions than ever and doing it seamlessly to the user.

Much like opening too many windows on your home computer, mobile multitasking can tax some infotainment systems, and force the system to reboot.

"Car shoppers expect their in-car infotainment systems to offer not only a full range of convenience features but also complete

dependability and functionality," said Karl Brauer, senior editor of Kelley Blue Book.

"That means a rapid response to user inputs and hardware components that consistently withstand consumer demands."

To make IntelliLink robust, General Motors' engineers subjected the system to exhaustive testing inside and outside the car, Bjoerk said. IntelliLink's human-machine interface, or HMI, which includes the touchscreen liquid crystal display (LCD), is hooked up to a state-of-the-art automated test bench, complete with cameras that constantly monitor the touchscreen.

The test bench fully replicates the various modules and components connected to the HMI while testing IntelliLink at a speed no human engineer can match.

The stability lab can simulate 210 days of continuous in-car use within a week, Bjoerk said. Depending on the test performed, the lab can also subject IntelliLink systems to the equivalent of more than 2 million touchscreen pushes in the same period.

"We test our systems in real vehicles, but as humans, we can only log so many hours inside a car," said Robert Rimkus, engineering group manager for GM's Next Generation Infotainment systems.

"These automated test stations help us push IntelliLink to its limits, ensuring customers get a system that's consistently reliable in their own vehicles."

Those simulated fingertaps and pushes mimic what an actual user would do while on the road, based on customer feedback and design test procedures, Rimkus said.

For example, one simulation mirrors the audio, climate, and navigation control inputs a driver would make while making a road trip from Detroit to Chicago.

Other tests replicate situations owners may subconsciously encounter in the real world, Rimkus said.

"When you shut off and leave a car, it takes the infotainment system as long as three to four minutes to fully go to sleep, much like any other computer," said Rimkus.



Buick touchscreen

"You're not always given that luxury in the real world. What if you stop at a gas station to grab a quick drink? The system hasn't fully shut off, but it needs to quickly reboot when you turn the ignition key."

The automation lab replicates other potential real-world use by staying close to GM road test engineers who drive pre-production vehicles.

Issues noted during these early engineering drives can quickly be replicated within the confines of the automation lab, allowing developers to quickly find and address software or hardware issues that might push a driver's buttons, Rimkus said.

Officials of GM Supplier in China Fired After Accident

BEIJING (AP) – China's Cabinet announced on Dec. 30 the firing of the top two officials in an eastern city where an explosion at an auto parts factory in August killed 146 people in the country's worst industrial accident since 2005.

The dust explosion at Zhongrong Metal Products Co. Ltd. in the city of Kunshan killed 75 people immediately. The death toll climbed to 146 when other workers died in the hospital. The factory supplied parts to General Motors.

The State Council also issued disciplinary demerits against a deputy provincial governor and the director of the provincial work safety bureau. Additionally, 18 other people – including factory executives and several safety and fire officials – were placed under judicial review for possible indictment, the official Xinhua News Agency said.

Dust explosions can occur when tiny metal particles – in this case powdered aluminum – are suspended in air in an enclosed space.

The accident was China's worst industrial disaster in nine years and highlighted continuing problems the country has with workplace safety. A 2005 mine accident in northeastern China killed 171 people.

Last June, a poultry plant fire killed 121 and injured 76 others in northeastern China. On Dec. 26, Chinese courts sentenced two fire chiefs and two poultry farm bosses to prison terms of up to nine years for the deadly blaze.

Beijing has been holding local

government officials and company executives accountable by meting out harsh penalties for work accidents with high casualties.

In Kunshan, a national investigation team found that local officials were negligent in enforcing safety regulations and that the plant's management failed to provide the proper safety training for workers and ignored rules on building spacing, density in manufacturing lines, dust cleanup, and use of anti-explosion equipment.



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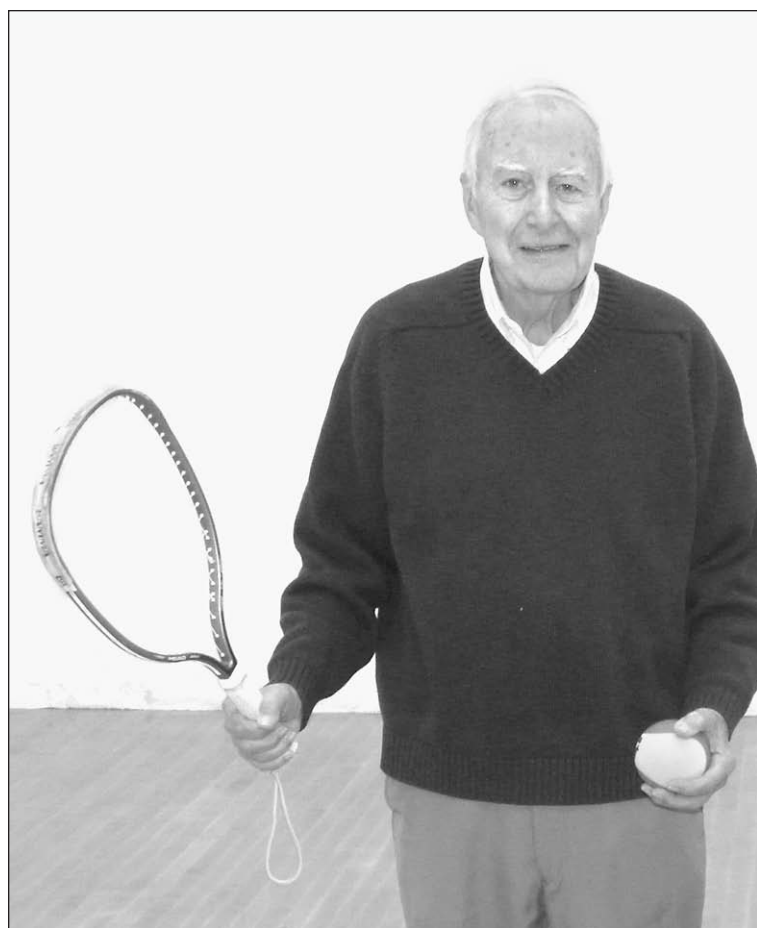
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Bob Buhl with some tools of the new game, Q-ball

One Game Hits the Wall, So Gamesman Invents Another

by Jim Stickford

When the popularity of racquetball started declining, Warren Racquetball & Fitness owner Bob Buhl decided to do something about it – he invented his own game.

The game he calls Q-ball is designed to appeal to the older athlete.

Buhl has owned Warren Racquetball & Fitness for 40 years. He said at one point he was three locations, one in Warren, one in Ann Arbor and one in Sterling Heights.

But, Buhl said, the popularity of racquetball isn't what it used to be. And factors such as Ann Arbor real estate problems have left him with one location.

"We still have racquetball and we introduced a game called walleyball, a game that was developed in California and is like a combination of racquetball and volleyball," Buhl said. "In that game, you use a racquet to hit a hard rubber ball across a net and you can bounce that ball off the walls."

The club has walleyball leagues and it's been very popular with people who work at the GM Tech Center, Buhl said. But it's also a very fast game that can take a toll on older players whose knees aren't what they used to be.

So Buhl decided to develop his own game that has a lot of the elements of walleyball but isn't quite so hard on the knees. The game that he invented is called Q-ball.

"All this came about because we wanted something to supplement what we can offer our more senior members," Buhl said. "The game is played on a racquetball court and players hit a softer ball than what is used in walleyball across a net. The ball is made by Penn and we just call it a spongeball."

Players hit the ball in the air across the net and it is hit back before the ball hits the ground, Buhl said. The game has two teams of two, and players can use strategy to determine if they

should rush the net and play aggressively, or stay back and try to cover as much of the court as possible.

"It's a lot of fun and it isn't as active as racquetball and walleyball," Buhl said.

The game has caught on among his club members, but some of the younger players asked for something a little more active.

Thus, Q-ball A was born, Buhl said.

"In Q-ball A, you can play the ball off the walls like in walleyball," Buhl said. "This game isn't as tough as walleyball, but it's a little faster than regular Q-ball."

Both versions of Q-ball are becoming more popular, Buhl said. But to help promote the game further, Warren Racquetball & Fitness will be holding classes in January to teach the game and its rules to interested athletes.

The classes are set for Saturdays on Jan. 3 and Jan. 10 at 11 a.m. Classes also will be held Wednesdays at 7:30 p.m. on Jan. 7 and Jan. 14.

To learn more and/or sign up, call 586-574-2580.

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PowerWall System Helps GM Refine Design

Talk about the opposite of a hands-on approach.

Chevrolet's use of high-resolution, high-tech display equipment is instrumental to refining vehicle design, said GM spokesman Otie McKinley.

The 4K ultra-fine resolution PowerWall system, capable of displaying both 2D and 3D images, allows designers and engineers to compare versions of part designs and ideas without the need for expensive physical prototypes, McKinley said.

The team can quickly examine several concepts and speed a decision on the best solution.

And, McKinley said, this use of modern technology paid off with the 2015 Chevrolet Colorado, which was named the 2015 Motor Trend Truck of the Year.

And thanks to this technology, designers were able to customize a Colorado with accessories that might match different owners' personalities, McKinley said.

For example, the Colorado's chrome assist step was designed with black treads in part to avoid the unsightly reflection of drain holes in the bottom edges of the cab.

The treads on the Colorado assist step were evaluated for this issue with the PowerWall more than a year before a physical prototype was available.

"That's the beauty of this kind of high definition," said Joe Guzman, engineering group manager for Global Virtual Design Process & Operations.

"Using the math data, we can render the vehicle as the customer will see it in the 'as manufactured' state.

"Designers and engineers can then scrutinize every detail to make sure they are spot-on."



A GM designer uses high-res tech to mix and match truck features.

In addition to the assist step, the GearOn customizable and adjustable cargo system for the truck bed was evaluated on the PowerWall to assure it looked and performed as intended.

Guzman, who started as a wood model maker, said the PowerWall won't replace clay model-

ing or other physical prototypes anytime soon.

But for dozens of minor and major decisions, the technology's speed, precision and lifelike accuracy allow attributes like reflections, finishes, glare and lighting to be assessed many months or years before the first physical vehicles are built.

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'Tis the Season for Designers' Snowmen

The innovative minds behind some of the world's most iconic vehicles must work within the constraints of rules and regulations, said Ford spokesperson Francesca Montini.

And that heightens the challenge for the designer, she said.

This doesn't quash the creative spirit reflected in the final product, she said, "but sometimes it's just plain fun to go a little crazy."

So as a team-building exercise, the U.S. design teams at Ford Motor Company were given "unbridled freedom for once" to create an icon of winter – the snowman, Montini said.

So in November, the teams kicked off the holiday season with a snowman-design challenge. Nine teams were given three pieces of white Styrofoam, and instructed to work together,

document the process, and have fun, Montini said.

Three of the Ford snowmen will be delivered this month to two Michigan orphanages and a senior citizens home. The remaining six will be housed at Ford design studios. These snowmen are sure to delight their new owners all winter long, Montini said.

The snowmen were created by sculpting and painting, she said, with some of the creations lit from within and wrapped in a suede-like fabric. Each snowman is thoughtfully designed to capture the strengths of its team.

From Ford's color and materials studio came a snowman featuring paint domes as vest, twigs textured with sparkling crystals for arms, and a basket-weave top hat.

Studio 2000X, the team behind

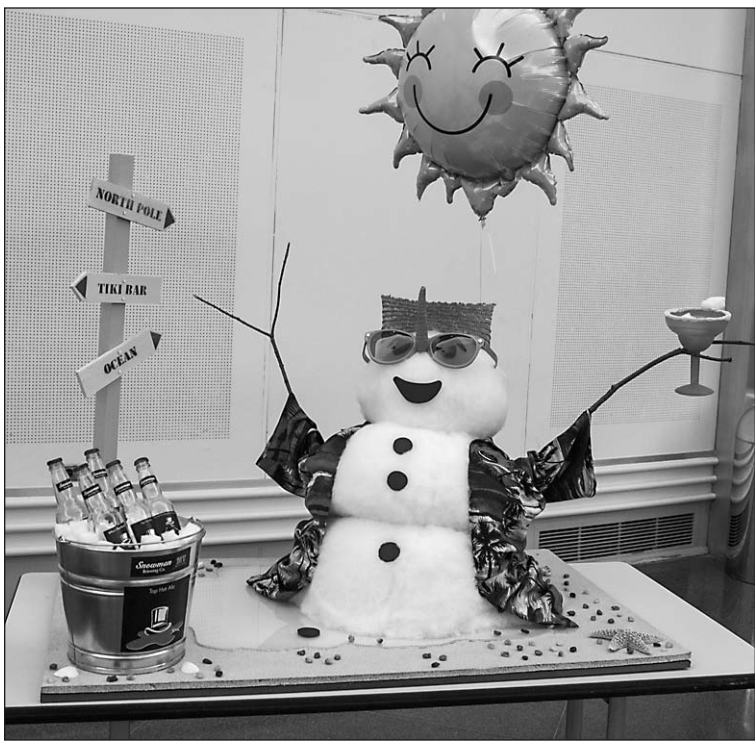
most Ford vehicle animations, designed a punker snowman with technology features such as camera-lens eyes.

The Ford team responsible for vehicle interiors presented a sled-bound trio of snowmen, complete with tablet guiding the way.

And several teams charged with developing vehicle prototypes debuted snowmen with detailed stitching, polished surfaces and refined curves, Montini said.

"Each one of these nine Ford snowmen reflects the spirit of the holiday season," Montini said. "Even when inspired by a heavy-metal band with wildly painted faces."

One snowman (pictured) was created to show a retiree enjoying the sun and a cool drink, but to not realize he was melting.



A happy snowman enjoys sun and frosty margarita – until he melts.

Cars.com Expects 16.5M New-Vehicle Sales

Cars.com forecasts December light new-vehicle sales will hit 1,510,500 units, up 11.3 percent from December 2013 and 16 percent from last month.

This would mark the highest December unit sales count since December 2006. A SAAR of 16.86 million is expected for the month.

"New-car sales are finishing the year on a high note, with total industry sales expected to exceed 16.5 million units in 2014," said Jesse Toprak, chief analyst at Cars.com.

"Bolstered by low gas prices, SUV and full-size truck sales have been particularly strong this

month – even beyond normal seasonality."

Retail sales remain steady and are projected to make up 85.5 percent of total sales in December, up 0.5 percent from the previous month.

Looking forward to the new year, Toprak added, "We expect sales to continue on a very positive trajectory, with the industry set to hit 17.1 million units in 2015."

Toprak said that Chrysler should have strong sales in December in terms of growth.

The automaker is expected to sell around 198,000 vehicles, a

year-over-year increase of 23.1 percent and a month-over-month increase of 16 percent.

"New-car sales are finishing the year on a high note."

– Jesse Toprak
Cars.com

Ford, Toprak said, is expected to sell about 225,000 vehicles in December, which is a 3.8 percent year-over-year increase for the month and a 20.6 percent month-over-month increase.

General Motors' numbers also should be strong for the month, Toprak said.

December sales are estimated to be 253,000, which represents a 10 percent year-over-year increase and a 12.1 percent month-over-month increase.

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Chrysler to Invest \$266M In Kokomo Transmission

Chrysler will invest an additional \$266 million in its Kokomo (Ind.) Transmission Plant to increase capacity of the eight-speed TorqueFlite automatic transmission.

This is the sixth investment made at Kokomo Transmission (KTP) since June 2009, bringing total investment in FCA US Kokomo operations to nearly \$1.8 billion, said Chrysler spokesperson Jodi Tinson.

Chrysler notified city officials of the new investment at the Dec. 8 Kokomo Common Council meeting, asking the council to amend an existing tax abatement to support this new investment, Tinson said.

The investment will be used to purchase new equipment and tooling, adding more assembly capacity.

If the council approves, work in the plant will begin immediately and be completed in the third quarter of 2016. The investment will permit an unspecified number of employees to be retained.

"Since the launch of the eight-speed, employees at Kokomo Transmission have been working practically around the clock to produce this advanced, fuel-efficient transmission," said Brad Clark, head of Powertrain Manufacturing Operations, FCA North America.

"We're pleased that vehicles equipped with this transmission have been so well received by consumers. This investment will

give us the additional capacity we need to make it available across even more vehicles in our product line.

"We are grateful to Mayor Goodnight and the Kokomo Common Council for their continued support of FCA US. This investment further demonstrates our commitment to this community and our workforce, and firmly establishes Kokomo as the center of competence for transmission production."

KTP has been producing the eight-speed transmission since September 2012, Tinson said. In 2013, KTP produced nearly 300,000 eight-speeds. That number has more than doubled to nearly 700,000 in the first 11 months of 2014.

Currently, the eight-speed transmission is available on the Jeep Grand Cherokee, Chrysler 300, Dodge Challenger, Dodge Charger, Dodge Durango and Ram 1500. The automaker sold more than 800,000 of these models in the U.S. through November 2014.

The KTP-produced TorqueFlite eight-speed automatics are projected to power more than one million vehicles worldwide. And their combined effect is "staggering," Tinson said.

Over their lifetimes, these vehicles are projected to save their owners more than 700 million gallons of fuel, compared with their predecessors that featured five- or six-speed automatics, Tinson said.

That quantity of gasoline is worth approximately \$2.5 billion at the pump, based on current fuel-price forecasts.

Chrysler has made five additional investments in the Kokomo Transmission Plant since June 2009:

- May 11, 2010 – Announced an investment of \$43 million to increase capacity at its Kokomo Casting and Kokomo Transmission plants, and adapt them to support production of the World Engine and improve processes for the 62TE transmission program.

- Nov. 23, 2010 – Announced an investment of nearly \$843 million in the automaker's existing transmission manufacturing facilities in Kokomo to accommodate production of a new advanced front-wheel-drive automatic transmission.

- Dec. 14, 2010 – Confirmed an investment of \$85 million in its Kokomo Transmission Plant for a variety of powertrain improvements.

- December 2010 – A \$300 million investment intended for Indiana Transmission Plant I was reallocated to the Kokomo Transmission Plant to accommodate additional production of the eight-speed automatic transmission.

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The one millionth Corvette when it came off the line in 1992

GM Restoring One Millionth Corvette from Sinkhole Fall

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

has already been sent back to the museum.

The real challenge for GM's technicians, Doran said, is restoring the one millionth Corvette. Its unique status presents unique challenges.

"Normally, when you restore a vehicle, you just take a part from another vehicle that is the same make, model and year of production," Doran said. "So, if you have a 1992 Corvette with a damaged hood, you just grab another hood from another 1992 Corvette. But this is the millionth Corvette. You start replacing all the parts and at some point it is no longer the one millionth Corvette."

So, Doran said, the GM design staff is working out ways to restore and keep as many original parts as possible. That will take

time. Doran expects the work to be completed early in 2015.

"What I can't decide is, if I am blown away by how much damage was done to the millionth Corvette or by how little damage was done to the millionth Corvette, considering it fell down a hole and had another car fall on top of it," Doran said.

"The roof collapsed and there was a lot of damage done to the hood and bumpers."

Doran said that once the one millionth Corvette is finally restored, it will be sent back to the museum. The project is truly a labor of love, he said.

"Corvettes have a lot of history," Doran said.

"One of the people who helped the museum with its work is Dave Golognino, and he has pictures of Elvis sitting in one of our concept car Corvettes from the late 1950s."

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2015 Challenger Earns NHTSA 5-Star Rating

The new 2015 Dodge Challenger has earned a five-star overall safety rating from the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Five stars is the highest possible safety rating given by NHTSA. “The new Dodge Challenger coupe further demonstrates our commitment to broaden the proliferation of advanced safety technologies, such as driver-assist features,” says Scott Kunselman, senior vice president of Vehicle Safety and Regulatory, FCA North America.

In its assessment of the new Challenger, NHTSA noted the availability of Forward Collision Warning (FCW), which features forward-facing sensors programmed to detect the potential for certain types of frontal collisions, Kunselman said. If detected, the driver is alerted with

visual and audible warnings.

The 2015 Dodge Challenger is the only car in its segment with such capability, said Kunselman.

FCW is among more than 70 available safety and security features on the 2015 Dodge Challenger, Kunselman said. Others include Blind-Spot Monitoring and Rear Cross-Path Detection, which was pioneered by Chrysler, he said.

“The 2015 Challenger checks all the boxes,” Kunselman said. “It affords premium safety and security in a stylish package that delivers a sporty driving experience.”

This latest edition of safety technology, Kunselman said, builds on the 2014 model’s legacy of honors that include Edmunds.com’s Best Retained Value Award and winner three years’ running of J.D. Power’s

APEAL Award for overall ownership enjoyment.

The 2015 Dodge Challenger ups its game, Kunselman said, with:

- Segment-first and segment-exclusive TorqueFlite eight-speed automatic transmission, which delivers an 11 percent improvement in fuel economy, compared with the outgoing gearbox.
- Significant new technology upgrades such as the all-new Uconnect Access system with standard touchscreen, standard new 7-inch multi-view TFT gauge cluster, new performance electronic shifter, Keyless Enter ‘n Go with push-button start.

Last month, Kunselman said, the Challenger recorded its best-ever November sales total with 4,157 deliveries. That’s a 52 percent jump compared with the same month in 2013.



2015 Dodge Challenger

Chrysler Recalling 66,000 Older Pickups

Chrysler is launching a global recall of an estimated 66,819 older-model pickup trucks equipped with manual transmissions.

The automaker will replace their clutch ignition interlock switches at no charge to customers, according to a statement to the media.

An investigation by Chrysler engineers discovered that

switches in certain model-year 2006 and 2007 pickups may be equipped with spring wire that differs from wire used in previous switches.

The alternate wire may break and, as a result, the vehicles may not start. In rare cases, a vehicle may – if recommended starting procedures are not followed – exhibit unintended movement

when its ignition key is turned.

The recall covers certain Dodge Dakota, Dodge Ram 1500, 2500, 3500 and Mitsubishi Raider pickups. An estimated 54,558 vehicles are in the U.S.

Notification of affected customers is expected to begin Feb. 13. Meanwhile, customers should follow recommended procedures for vehicle starts.

5K ‘Auto Show Shuffle’ Set

HealthPlus has signed on as the presenting sponsor of the 2015 Auto Show Shuffle 5K race Jan. 17.

The event helps kick off the public portion of the North American International Auto Show (NAIAS), said HealthPlus spokeswoman Kathy Bilitzke.

The race begins at 8:30 a.m. at GM Renaissance Center Wintergarden and will lead participants through Detroit, along the riverfront, across the Dequindre Cut, ending just in time for the opening of the public show, Bilitzke said.

“If you’re an auto show fan and are looking for a way to get active with your friends and family, the Auto Show Shuffle 5K Run/Walk is the perfect way to

kick off your day,” said James J. Tighe, president and CEO of the Michigan Fitness Foundation.

Registration for the Auto Show Shuffle is \$30 through Jan. 15 and \$35 on race day. All participants get a discounted ticket to the NAIAS, a medal and tech shirt. To register, go to autoshowshuffle.com.

“The auto show is one of Southeast Michigan’s premier events and we’re excited to sponsor the Shuffle to get the public show started,” said Nancy Jenkins, interim president and CEO of HealthPlus.

“The Auto Show Shuffle allows us to celebrate two of our favorite things – fitness and Detroit’s automotive heritage.”

First of New Shelby GT350 Mustangs Goes to Auction

Ford will commemorate the 50th anniversary of the legendary Shelby GT350 Mustang by auctioning the first production unit of the new-generation car available to the public for charity at Barrett-Jackson in Scottsdale, Ariz.

All proceeds will benefit JDRF, the country’s leading global organization funding type 1 diabetes research, said Ford spokesman Brian Cotter. Live coverage of the auction of the Shelby GT350 will air on Velocity on Saturday, Jan. 17.

The winning bidder of lot No. 3008 – selling at No Reserve – will become owner of the coveted first retail production unit of the new Ford Shelby GT350, and choose from available Shelby GT350 colors and packages.

In January 1964, Carroll Shelby and Ford Motor Company forever altered the automotive industry with the introduction of the GT350, Cotter said. It was offered through Ford dealers from 1965 through 1970. Today, these cars are among the most collectible vehicles in the world, and now Shelby GT350 is returning to Ford showrooms as the most innovative and track-capable Mustang in history, Cotter said.

“The all-new Shelby GT350 is a thrilling, world-class car,” said Steve Ling, Ford’s North America car marketing manager. “From the all-new independent suspension – a first for a Shelby, to the powerful engine and superb brakes, this car is simply amazing. Just as the Shelby GT350 did in 1965, we expect this new-generation pony car to demonstrate that Ford Motor Company continues to lead the world in innovation and performance.”

Team members involved in the design and development of the Shelby GT350 will sign the car in appreciation of the donations to JDRF. Ford has supported JDRF since 1983.

“JDRF is privileged to work with Ford, and we are extremely grateful for the generous support from Ford and its employees through the years,” said John Brady, JDRF chairman, international board of directors.

“We are honored to be part of the company’s 50-year celebration of the Shelby GT350 at Barrett-Jackson Scottsdale. This very exciting and worthwhile event means a great deal to not only JDRF and the type 1 community, but to me personally as well.

“We are dedicated to continue our work and to share our vision of creating a world without type 1 diabetes.”

“Ford and Barrett-Jackson have raised millions of dollars to benefit local and national charities for many years,” said Craig Jackson, chairman and CEO of Barrett-Jackson Auctions. “The auction of the new Shelby GT350 promises to be electrifying, while helping raise necessary funding for JDRF.”

Based on the popular design of the 2015 Ford Mustang, the Shelby GT350 was created with an emphasis on incredible driving dynamics and balanced performance, said Jamal Hameedi, chief engineer, Ford Global Performance Vehicles.

“We took the best Ford Mustang yet and massaged every aspect of the car that affects the performance driving experience,” said Hameedi.

“We tested endlessly on the most challenging roads and tracks in the world, and we believe serious drivers will love the Shelby GT350 Mustang.”

Shelby GT350 is powered by the first production V8 from Ford with a flat-plane crankshaft – a design typically reserved for racing applications and European sports cars, Cotter said. The 5.2-liter engine puts out more than 500 horsepower and a torque peak of more than 400 lb.-ft. – making it the most powerful naturally aspirated Ford production engine ever, said Cotter.

The car uses extra-stiff 19-inch aluminum-alloy wheels shod in state-of-the-art Michelin Pilot Super Sport tires with GT350-specific sidewall construction, tread and compound for maximum grip, Hameedi said.

For auction information, visit the Barrett-Jackson website or Facebook.

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Ford Emphasizing Global Performance

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

cles help deliver the company's One Ford plan for profitable growth, product excellence and innovation in every part of its business.

Performance vehicle sales are growing around the world – up 70 percent in the U.S. and 14 percent in Europe since 2009.

Ford's ST lineup, for example, is attracting younger buyers who love to drive, Von Essen said, noting that in the United States, more than 65 percent of ST customers come from outside the Ford brand, and more than 50 percent of Ford performance vehicle owners' next vehicle purchase is a Ford.

Millennials are purchasing ST vehicles at a rate twice that of other Ford-branded vehicles.

Since the introduction of the EcoBoost engine in 2009, Ford has produced more than two million EcoBoost engines globally.

"EcoBoost is a strong example of how we are migrating technology and engineering across our lineup, ensuring our vehicles are fun to drive – not just our Ford Performance lineup," said Nair.

"From our most nimble Fiesta to our hard-working full-size pickups and racing vehicles, our lineup benefits from the innovations we deliver."

Another example of this technology transfer, Nair said, can be found in the recently revealed Shelby GT350 Mustang, which goes on sale next year in the United States and Canada.

Aerodynamic innovations developed through Ford's investment in racing were applied to the front end of the new Shelby GT350 Mustang, helping improve downforce in the car as well as cooling, Von Essen said.

The new Mustang also has, for the first time, rear independent suspension, which required Ford to redesign the front end of the vehicle as well. The result is a vehicle that has been redesigned from the ground up to be a "global" car. But, most importantly, it's still recognizable as a Mustang.

"A lot of people don't think of the Mustang as having 'world' appeal, but it does," Von Essen said. "For example, almost half of its Facebook fans come from outside the U.S."

Ford, for the first time, is also making the Mustang with a right-hand drive, making it easier to sell in places like Japan and Great Britain. The Mustang has a large following in those countries, Von Essen said.

"We make all our Mustangs at our Flat Rock facility," Von Essen said. "It's now being made to be exported all over the world. Cars from Michigan being exported to Japan. That's something."

Ford considers racing an important proving ground for cultivating passionate engineers

– allowing them to innovate in top-level competition as they face challenges that require successful solutions in very compressed time frames.

The new Ford Performance organization unifies Ford SVT, Team RS and Ford Racing globally, serving as an innovation laboratory and test bed to create unique performance vehicles, parts, accessories and experiences for customers.

This includes developing innovations and technologies in aerodynamics, light-weighting, electronics, powertrain performance and fuel efficiency that can be applied more broadly to Ford's portfolio, Von Essen said.

"Ford is a mass producer of vehicles," he said. "We feel that innovations developed in the high-performance division should stay there. We work hard to make

them available to the mass consumer as soon as possible."

The Ford Performance organization is led by Dave Pericak, who has been appointed director of Global Ford Performance.

Performance and racing are deeply embedded in Ford's DNA, dating back 113 years when Henry Ford won the Sweepstakes Race against Alexander Winton, then America's greatest racer.

Following Henry Ford's remarkable upset victory in front of Detroit's elite businessmen, some immediately came forward to back whatever automotive venture he had in mind. Ford Motor Company opened 18 months later.

"Ford still races for the same reasons Henry Ford did in 1901 – to prove out our products and technologies against the very best in the world," said Nair.

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Visteon, Finnish Company Work On HMI Project

Mount Clemens-based auto supplier Visteon Corporation and Rightware, a Finland-based user interaction (UI) design and benchmarking software company, have become partners in a project to deliver UI and graphics solutions for the automotive industry, said Christian Feltgen, Visteon vice president, Technology Office, Electronics.

"Combining each partner's strengths," Feltgen said, "Visteon and Rightware will work to provide automobile manufacturers around the world with human machine interaction (HMI) solutions using high-definition 3D graphic rendering technologies, capable of delivering photorealistic graphics in various configurations inside the vehicle.

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