# Detroit Auto Scene®

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**MARCH 9, 2015** 

# Chrysler Gears Up 2016 Launch of Minivan

Fiat Chrysler minivan lovers, retooling," Driehorst said. fear not.

While our Windsor Assembly Plant is down for 14 weeks to implement improvements and reconfigure the assembly process to start production of the nextgeneration minivan, people might wonder if there'll be enough minivans to buy," said Fiat Chrysler editorial director for Online Media Mike Driehorst.

"The clear answer is yes."

"Through the planning we did and the extra work put in by the men and women at Windsor Assembly, I am confident we will have enough minivans to meet demand during the shutdown," said Fiat Chrysler Canada CEO and head of U.S. Sales Reid

Chrysler Town & Country and Dodge Grand Caravan led the minivan segment in 2014, selling more than a quarter-million units combined. We're not about to give up that leadership."

Since mid-2014, the men and women at Windsor Assembly have been working 24/7, ramping up production of the Chrysler Town & Country, Dodge Grand Caravan and Ram Cargo Vans in order to meet demand.

'The workers really put in a lot of sweat equity at the plant and worked hard to make sure had inventory available while the plant is down for

"Our minivans are very popular, so it's important that we have them for sale during this process.'

2014, Windsor made 374,817 minivans, which is 47,490 vehicles more - or about 15 percent more - than it made in 2013, Driehorst said.

"During the ramp-up in production, the plant made minivans in a wide range of popular configurations so that when you go into your dealer, you should have no issue with getting the features and options you want," Driehorst said.

Production of minivans ended

in mid-February, Driehorst said. Once production starts up on May 25, the men and women in Windsor will resume making the

Currently occupying 4.4 million square feet of floor space, the Windsor Assembly Plant employees total 4,600 across three shifts to produce the Dodge Grand Caravan, Chrysler Town & Country, Ram Cargo Van, and Lancia Grand Voyager.

The facility was built in 1928 with production of minivans beginning in 1983. Chrysler Group celebrated 30 years of minivan leadership in 2013 with more than 13 million vehicles sold.



Windsor Plant employees have built more than 8 million minivans.



GM Senior VP Alicia Boler-Davis and CEO Mary Barra

# Female Executive Roles Up At GM, Other 'Top' Companies

General Motors has been named one of the 2015 "Top Companies for Executive Women" by the National Association for Female Executives (NAFE), which recognizes American corporations that identify and promote successful women.

"We encourage diverse thinking and collaboration in everything we do at GM on our journey to become the most valued

automotive company," said GM CEO Mary Barra.

"At GM, one-fifth of our executives, one-fourth of our officers and more than one-third of our board members are women."

"We're counting the numbers of women in senior management at America's top companies and are happy to find that

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11



2015 Chevy Tahoe

# **GM Vehicle Sales Up 4 Percent Last Month** General Motors Co. dealers in lined more than a year ago, are

the United States delivered 231,378 vehicles last month.

Total sales were up 4 percent compared with a year ago. Retail sales were up 1 percent. Commercial and fleet deliveries were up 12 percent.

Sales of trucks, including SUVs, vans and pickups, were up 36 percent year over year.

new SUVs crossovers, combined with the three-pickup strategy we out-

dovetailing perfectly with the growing U.S. economy and a stronger job market," said Kurt McNeil, U.S. vice president of Sales Operations.

"Six months into its launch, the Chevrolet Colorado is the industry's fastest-selling pickup, regardless of brand or model year," he added.

'The Silverado had another great month, with sales, market share and average transaction

prices up sharply. And when you add the GMC Sierra and Canyon to the mix, GM's year-over-year pickup deliveries increased 37 percent.

"That follows January's 42 percent increase and December's 43 percent increase."

Cain said according to J.D. Power PIN data, the average Chevrolet Colorado spends just 15 days in dealer stock from the

CONTINUED ON PAGE 9

# February Couldn't Chill Fiat Chrysler Sales

Fiat Chrysler reported U.S. best February sales ever. sales of 163,586 units, a 6 percent increase compared with sales in February 2014 (154,866 units), and the group's best February sales since 2007.

over-year sales gains in February compared with the same month a year ago.

The Jeep brand's 21 percent increase was the largest sales gain of any Fiat Chrysler brand during the month and represented its

"In spite of snow and bitter cold that slowed auto sales in Chrysler still turned in a 6 percent sales increase and extended The Chrysler, Jeep, and Ram our year-over-year sales streak Truck brands each posted year- to 59 consecutive months." said Reid Bigland, head of U.S. Sales.

"Even with tougher year-overyear sales comparisons in 2015, our vehicle lineup continues to produce record sales results."

Nine FCA US vehicles set records in the month of Febru-

ary, including four of the five Jeep brand vehicles.

FCA US finished the month of many regions of the country, Fiat February with an 85-day supply of inventory (577,277 units). U.S. industry sales figures for February are internally projected at an estimated 16.5 million units Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate

> Jeep brand sales were up 21 percent, the brand's best sales performance ever in the month

> > **CONTINUED ON PAGE 6**



2015 Jeep Patriot



2015 Ford Explorer

# Ford Sales Down, Explorer Up 32 Percent

Ford Motor Company U.S. sales totaled 180,383 vehicles in February, down 2 percent from a

F-Series retail sales increased 7 percent, as the new F-150 remains one of Ford's fastest-turning vehicles on dealer lots.

The training of employees in the new manufacturing process at Kansas City Assembly Plant the second plant building the new F-150 - is now under way, with production scheduled to

begin this month, as planned.

Strong customer demand for the all-new F-150 drove strong February F-Series retail sales results in February," said Mark LaNeve, Ford vice president, U.S. Marketing, Sales and Service.

'The all-new F-150 continues to be the hottest vehicles on dealer lots, turning more than four times faster than the industry's overall full-size pickup segment.'

Transit drove a 30 percent increase in total Ford van sales of

13,936 vehicles for the month, including E-Series and Transit Connect. This marks Ford's best February van sales performance since 2007.

Explorer sales of 17,027 vehicles were up 32 percent compared with 2014's February sales of 12,921, marking the SUV's best February sales results since

Mustang sales increased 32

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## Plastomer Earns GM's Customer Care Award

Plastomer Corp. of Livonia has received the prestigious 2014 General Motors Customer Care and Aftersales On-Time Shipping Award.

Plastomer achieved Platinum Supplier Status that states that Plastomer played an important role in GM's effort to design, build, and sell world-class vehi-

David Poole, general director of Supply Chain, said Plastomer's "dedication and commitment to consistently perform above expectations are very much appreciated by the entire General Motors team and we want to recognize your organization for its outstanding perform-

The award comes at the conclusion of Plastomer's 60th anniversary year, said Plastomer spokeswoman Kim Baughman.

"The family-owned company is proud of its heritage as a Hall of Fame member in the flexible foam and die-cutting industry. As such, Plastomer has pioneered standards of quality, customer satisfaction, and quick response for customers like GM.

The company has a long relationship with GM that stretches back six decades. We were surprised to receive this award, and also proud. It's always nice to be recognized for the work you do."

Baughman said that Plastomer provides GM with foam and rubber parts such as HVAC gaskets and seat toppers.

"Seat toppers go over actual seats and provide protection to the person sitting in that seat in the case of heated or cooling seats," Baughman said. "We employ about 150 people, and have a plant in Livonia and warehouses in Tennessee and Mexico."

"At Plastomer," said George Baughman Jr., Plastomer's Sales and Marketing vice president, "we strive every day to delight our customers by going above and beyond what is required. For GM to acknowledge our efforts in this way is very special."

# **VW CEO: Tough** Times Ahead

GENEVA (AP) - The CEO of Volkswagen AG is staying with his cautious outlook for this year, saying it's a "balanced statement" based on growth in the U.S., Europe and China versus trouble spots such as

Martin Winterkorn told AP that "I think it's quite a good assessment.

"As usual, we at Volkswagen do not want to lose touch with reality despite all the successes.

As it announced increased profits for 2014, Volkswagen in late February cautioned that 2015 could be a turbulent year.

It predicted increased sales but said there was no guarantee of a successful year for the company or the industry as a whole.

# **New Ram Laramie Limited Features** 'Highest Level of Luxury' - Hegbloom

Fiat Chrysler's Ram brand kept on trucking at the recent Chicago auto show with the introduction of the new 2015 Ram Laramie Limited.

Considered Ram's benchmark in truck opulence, said Ram spokesman Nick Cappa, "the new Laramie takes the vehicle to an even higher level of sophistication and attention to detail.'

The upgraded interior and exterior trim aligns with a long list of best-in-class titles under the Ram moniker, including fuel economy, payload, torque and towing capacity, Cappa said.

"Among Ram Truck's greatest strengths is our ability to quickly react to customer demand," said Bob Hegbloom, president and CEO, Ram Truck Brand.

"The new Laramie Limited trim is a perfect example of how Ram directly responds to customer input with the highest level of luxury available in pickups. The Laramie Limited trim exceeds the high expectations of affluent truck buyers by combining capability with refinement."

Hegbloom said the Laramie features premium materials, such as an all-black, fullleather seating, real wood interior components and unique badges. Ram Laramie Limited is a "black-tie" luxury alternative to popular southwesternthemed Laramie Longhorn edition pickup, he said.

"Today's high-end Ram pickups have more features than select luxury sedans," said Hegbloom. "We will continue to strive for the highest levels of sophistication, while keeping the core needs of a truck owner top of mind."

The new Ram trim, available on the 1500, 2500 and 3500 mod-

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els, made its debut at the 2015 Chicago Auto Show.

The Laramie Limited's new grille is the most prominent change of the exterior. As the leading point of the new Limited, its new billet port grille breaks from the long tradition of a crosshair styling with bold "RAM" lettering, Hegbloom said.

Exterior features include a body-color front fascia with fog lamps and a matching, painted rear bumper. For added flash, Hegbloom said, an optional exterior package covers the front and rear bumpers in bright chrome.

To address customer demand, select-colored Ram 2500 and 3500 trucks come standard with

On each side of the grille, a quad headlamp design includes a bi-functional halogen projector system placed in a dark background. Fifteen amber LEDs illuminate park/turn/position lamps and three amber LEDs serve for the side markers. A vertically ribbed inner lens, said Hegbloom, softens the glow and retains the improved visual component of the segment-exclusive LEDs.

The Ram design team carefully crafted the interior bezel and housing to create a visually entertaining, yet functional piece of hardware, Hegbloom said. Also, a Ram shield logo is molded into the housing, and the Ram name is molded into the inside of the outer lens.

Ram Laramie Limited also is equipped with air suspension (1500 only), wheel-to-wheel side steps, navigational radio, remote start, backup camera, power adjustable pedals with memory, heated steering wheel, front ventilated and heated seats,

► FLU SHOTS ◀



2015 Ram 1500 Laramie Limited Crew Cab 4x4

heated rear seats and RamBox Limited 2500 and 3500 will be (Heavy Duty, 6-foot-4-inch bed only).

The Laramie Limited trim will be available in Ram 1500, Ram 2500 and Ram 3500 single- and dual-rear-wheel; Crew Cab and Mega Cab (Heavy Duty); fourwheel drive and two-wheel drive; and short- and long-wheelbase models.

The Ram 1500 Laramie Limited luxury trim will be available in the second quarter of 2015 as a 2015 model. The Ram Laramie

available in the third quarter as a 2016 model.

Since its launch as a standalone division in 2009, the Ram Truck Brand, Hegbloom said, has steadily emerged as an industry leader with one goal: to build the best pickup trucks and commercial vehicles in the industry.

Creating a distinct identity for Ram Trucks has allowed the brand to concentrate on core customers and features they find valuable, Hegbloom said.

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# Sneak Peek of Malibu Cloaked in Shadows

New York City, you can make it anywhere.

And that's what Chevrolet is doing with the 2016 Malibu, which will be unveiled in April at the New York auto show.

Using a blank slate approach, Chevrolet designers benefited from an entirely new architecture, said GM spokesman Chad Lyons.

That new architecture, he said, includes a wheelbase nearly four inches longer than the outgoing model, which provides increased rear legroom and interior space.

Due to a higher-strength steel structure, the new Malibu is also expected to be 300 pounds lighter than the current model, which benefits the sedan's fuel economy and handling, said GM spokesman Chad Lyons.

"The Malibu is in the mid-sized market segment," Lyons said. This is a major segment that includes many popular cars.

"But the Malibu was recently honored by J.D. Power in both its initial quality study and its longterm dependability study. It beat out cars like the Fusion, the Camry, the Accord and the Optima."

The Malibu, Lyons said, also enjoys a "broad" customer range. "Buyers are split 50/50 be-

They say if you can make it in tween men and women," he said.

buyer is between 35 and 40, but we have people in their 20s buving them and people in their 50s and 60s who want to downshift to a smaller vehicle buying them as well."

Lyons said the new Malibu's debut at the New York auto show should have a big impact on the public, but he declined to offer any specific details because "that would ruin the surprise." He did say he has seen the new Malibu and believes the public will like what it sees.

"Malibu's gorgeous styling is the result of a masterful understanding of proportions," said Ed Welburn, GM's vice president of Global Design.

"The roofline has been stretched rearward giving a more sleek profile, while the front wheels have moved forward and front and rear overhangs have been reduced. Along with the sculpted body side, these cues help Malibu appear more dynamic and sophisticated."

The Malibu was first introduced back in 1964 as a top-line subseries of the mid-sized Chevrolet Chevelle from 1964 to 1972. It went through four iterations before it was discontinued.

Chevy brought back the name "The typical age of a Malibu in 1997, and the Malibu went through another redesign in 2008.

> The current Malibu is based on GM's Epsilon II platform, which was introduced in 2008 and is adaptable for front- and allwheel-drive applications. The architecture of the platform was orginally developed by Opel in Germany. Like the upcoming Malibu, this generation of the car saw its North American debut in New York City.



Chevrolet's released-to-the-media photo of 2016 Malibu

Other vehicles built around the platform include the Cadillac XXTS, the Chevy Impala and the Roewe 950, made in China. The Malibu is currently assembled at GM's Fairfax Assembly plant in Kansas City, Kan.

More details about the 2016 Chevrolet Malibu will be shared each week leading up to the vehicle's global debut, Lyons said.

The 2016 Malibu is expected to go on sale by the end of this





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# Ford's F-650, F-750 Tonka Trucks Are Not Child's Play

difference between men and boys are the price of their toys.

That's certainly the case with Ford's new Tonka truck.

Yes, you heard right - Tonka truck.

The wraps came off the mighty Ford F-750 Tonka truck - the nearly 10-foot-tall ultimate Tonka truck that's also Built Ford Tough – at the NTEA Work Truck show March 3.

Based on the new 2016 Ford F-650/F-750, the bold dump truck is painted signature Tonkayellow with a custom blackout nostril grille and fully functional dump body from Truck Tech Engineers.

The F-750 Tonka is ready to move dirt at job sites, create new playgrounds and fuel the imaginations of kids of all ages.

"From Generation Z to the Greatest Generation, Ford and Tonka continue to set the standards for tough trucks," said John Ruppert, general manager of Ford Commercial Vehicle Sales and Marketing.

"People of all ages have been counting on Ford F-Series and Tonka trucks to get the job done - from construction site to sandbox - for more than 60 years."

The Ford F-750 Tonka truck -

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It's often been said that the which will be on display at major work truck, commercial and vocational trade shows through the end of the year - is a collaboration between Ford and Funrise Toy Corporation, Tonka manufacturer of Tonkabranded products under license from Hasbro.

> "We are proud Tonka trucks are put to work every day around the world," said Kathy Hawk, Funrise vice president of Market-

> "Creating this F-750 Tonka truck is a special way to celebrate that many of today's Ford truck customers first drove a Tonka truck."

> Offered in Regular Cab, Super-Cab and Crew Cab styles and in straight-frame, dock-height and an all-new dedicated tractor model for heavy towing applications, the 2016 F-650/F-750 features "a bold look inside and out," Ruppert said.

> The Ford F-750 Tonka's exterior styling is meant to command attention on the road and at the job site with "Built Ford Tough" looks that also help deliver upgraded functionality, Ruppert said. The custom grille, framed by hallmark Ford nostrils, helps improve airflow for optimal cooling performance.

Sharp fenders, rugged headlamps and F-650/F-750 badges embossed in the "Bold Leadership" font are new for all 2016 F-650/F-750 trucks.

Available PowerScope trailer tow mirrors feature large standard mirrors and spotter mirrors and segment-exclusive power telescoping and folding design.

The area behind the cab was redesigned to more easily accommodate custom work bodies, such as for tow trucks, dump trucks and ambulances.

The Ford F-750 Tonka carries Ford's most capable gross vehicle weight rating of 33,000 pounds on a 158-inch wheelbase, Ruppert said.

Its Truck Tech Engineers dump body can haul up to 17,000 pounds to support the construction needs of almost any imagination, he said.

The three diesel power levels available for the 2016 Ford F-650/F-750 are:

- Standard 270 horsepower, 675 lb.-ft. torque;
- 300 horsepower, 700 lb.-ft. torque;
- 330 horsepower, 725 lb.-ft. torque.

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gine power to work applications and operations.

The 6.7-liter Power Stroke V8 comes with a five-year, 250,000mile warranty.

Ford is the only medium-duty truck manufacturer that designs and builds its own diesel engine and transmission combination ensuring the powertrain will work seamlessly with all chassis components and vehicle calibrations, Ruppert said.

In addition to its Power Stroke diesel engine, Ford remains the only automaker in the segment to offer a gasoline-powered engine for a medium-duty truck.

The 6.8-liter V10 engine with 320 horsepower and 460 lb.-ft. of torque will now be available for both F-650 and F-750 models with the TorqShift HD six-speed automatic transmission.

The 6.8-liter V10 engine can be factory-prepped for converting to compressed natural gas or liquid propane gas as cost-effective alternatives to gasoline.

The new  $\overline{\text{Ford}}$  F-650/F-750 Super Duty are medium-duty commercial trucks produced by a joint venture of Ford Motor Company and Navistar International.

The 2016 Ford F-650/F-750

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Little Tonka, Big Tonka

medium-duty truck lineup will be available this summer and is being built at the Ohio Assembly

# Ford Sales Down, **Explorer SUV** Up 32 Percent

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

percent with 8,454 vehicles sold compared with last February's sales of 6,410 - representing its best February sales since 2007 and making it the best-selling sports car in the U.S. since the launch of the new model last fall.

Not all the sales news was good, however.

Fiesta sales went from 4,844 in February 2014 to 3,708, representing a sales decline of 23.5 percent.

Sales of the Ford Focus followed a similar path, with sales of 14,019 last month compared with 15,926 in February of 2014.

Fusion sales saw a slight decline of 4.9 percent - 22,732 versus 23,898 the same time a year prior.

Sales of the Ford Taurus went down a whopping 25.1 percent -3,587 in February 2014 compared with 2,685 units last month.

Escape sales also declined, going from 23,145 in 2014 to 20.915 last month.

And, the Ford Edge saw a 40 percent drop in sales from 10,965 in February 2014 to 6,526 last month.

Lincoln retail sales increased 3 percent versus last year.

Lincoln MKC continues to build momentum for the luxury brand, along with Navigator, which posted an impressive 96 percent sales increase.

# Hyundai Recalls 263,000 Cars for Steering Problem

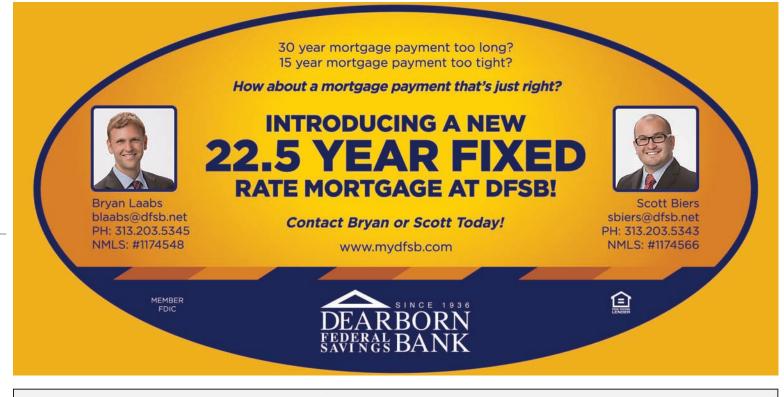
NEW YORK (AP) - Hyundai is recalling about 263,000 cars in the U.S. and Canada because a sensor problem could cause drivers to lose power-assisted steering.

The company has not reported any injuries or accidents. A representative for Hyundai Motor America wasn't immediately available for comment.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says a sensor in the affected cars could detect a discrepancy in the steering input and signals and disable power-assisted steering as a result. Cars would revert to manual steering and require greater effort to steer at low speeds, raising the risk of a crash.

Hyundai Motor America says it plans to notify owners and that dealers will fix the control unit of the electronic power steering at no cost.

The affected cars include model years 2008 to 2010 of Elantras made between June 1, 2008, and April 30, 2010, and Elantra Touring vehicles made between Nov. 1, 2008, and April 30, 2010.





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ARTIC RUSH

# Mopar, Dodge **Back Viper ACR-X** Cars in Trans Am

Mopar and the Dodge brand will provide joint support for Dodge Viper ACR-X vehicles competing in the Trans Am 3 International Group (TA3i) class of the SCCA-sanctioned 2015 Trans Am Series season with a contingency program to reward drivers for their dedication and commitment to excellence.

"This initiative is part of our ongoing efforts to recognize the sports car drivers and teams that work hard and have shown loyalty and support for our performance cars and quality parts," said Pietro Gorlier, CEO of Mopar Brand Service, Parts and Customer Care.

"Mopar and Dodge have a long tradition of commitment to both professional and amateur racers across many different motorsports platforms and will continue to share the passion for performance with these sports car racers and road racing fans."

At each of the 12 races, a Dodge Viper driver that earns a win, a second- or third-place finish will be awarded \$1,500, \$1,000 and \$500 respectively by Mopar for their loyalty and podium performance.

At season end, should a Dodge Viper driver win the class championship, finish second or third overall, an award of \$5,000, \$2,500 and \$1,250 will be given to honor their success in representing the brand.

'We're pleased to have Mopar and Dodge supporting racers competing in the Trans Am series," said John Clagett, president of the Trans Am Race Company. "Our partners tell us the momentum and continued growth of the series provides them with a great platform for their products.

# Chrysler Brand Runs Multicultural TV Ad Campaign

The Chrysler brand launches a new multicultural marketing campaign on March 4 for the 2015 Chrysler 200 this week, featuring actor Gael García Bernal ("Amores Perros," "Y Tu Mamá También," "The Motorcycle Diaries").

The campaign consists of four national television spots across U.S. Hispanic media – one 60-second and three 30-second commercials - and also includes digital and social initiatives.

Key partners for the Chrysler brand include Univision and Telemundo, for which the brand will be a presenting sponsor of "La Voz Kids," the No.1 show for family co-viewing in all of broadcast, regardless of language, on Telemundo. The first spot, "Kid, You're Not Me," is on YouTube.

In the first of the four-spot series, Morgan said Gael steps into his 2015 Chrysler 200 and finds a young boy sitting in the car who claims to be Gael, visiting from his past. Right away, the boy starts telling Gael to do something different with his life.

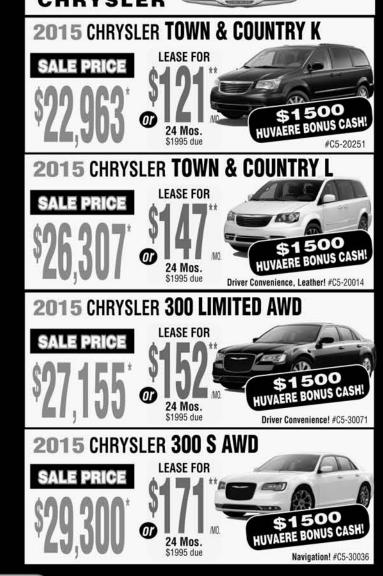
At first, Gael is confused, but then realizes that the boy, whose name is Paquito, has mistaken him for his neighbor, Paco, from across the street.

After catching a glimpse of his "real" future self, Paquito is inspired to leave ordinary behind and go with Gael.

"This campaign's unique creative uses humor, cultural cues and the spirit of individuality to capture our millennial audience's attention, and its charm rests squarely on the enormous appeal of Gael, one of the premier Hispanic actors of his generation," said Olivier Francois, Fiat Chrysler's chief marketing officer.









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1972 Riviera SilverArrow III, one of many past-year Buicks to influence the new concept Avenir

# Taking a Page From the Past, GM Designers Come Up with the Newest Buick Concept

by Jim Stickford

As Shakespeare once wrote, "past is prologue." And that's certainly the case with the 2015 Buick Avenir concept car, which made its debut in January at the Detroit Auto Show.

The vehicle, in part, was based on six different Buick concept and production vehicles from the brand's storied history.

Greg Wallace, manager of GM's Heritage Center in Sterling Heights, said the first concept car ever built was a Buick.

"If you go back as far as 1927 with GM's LaSalle, you can see a car where its design isn't all based around function," Wallace said. "You can see that its form was influenced by the idea of design.

GM was the first to hire a designer whose job it was to create beautiful cars, Wallace said. His name was Harley Earl and he was a legend at Buick and at GM for decades.

Earl was commissioned by Lawrence P. Fisher of Cadillac to design the 1927 LaSalle, Wallace said. This work proved to be so successful that Earl was hired to be the first director of GM's brand new Art and Color department.

This was an important step in the auto industry, Wallace said. It was signaling the fact that cars were more than just transportation, they were purchases where style played an important role in the consumer's decision to buy.

By 1938, Wallace said, GM created the first true concept car the Buick Y-Job. This vehicle, said Wallace, was influenced by the cutting edge of technology in the 1930s - aircraft design.

Andrew Smith, the current chief designer for Buick, said he thinks its very "cool" that the first concept car was a Buick.

The Y-Job gave the public a peek at the creativity that went on in the design room," Smith said. "Right now, the role of a concept car is to build excitement for the brand to show the stand-alone headlight pods influpublic where we are taking Buick."

And that's where the Avenir comes in, Smith said. Part of building brand awareness for Buick is building on Buick's past as a brand that designed great concept cars and put into production beautiful vehicles that showed off the latest designs, he

"The Avenir is showing where Buick is going as a brand," Smith

"It's showing the public just what we can do. Buick is a creative brand that doesn't limit where we can take our vehicles."

Part of the fun of a concept car, Smith said, is showing some of the ideas that designers came up with during the development process of various vehicles.

"People don't realize that we do lots of concepts as we develop production vehicles," Smith said. "As we develop these cars,



The 2015 Avenir is a concept car that's influenced by all these Buicks.

we do 'bake-offs' of our various concepts within the design department to help build enthusiasm among the designers.

"But we're very strategic about what concepts we show the public. They don't get to see every concept we come up with."

And, Smith said, because Buick is known for its creative designs, young designers are enthusiastic about working for the brand.

Being creative in 1938, Wallace said, meant taking cues from the airplane industry.

"That was the cutting edge back then," Wallace said. "While people knew that planes existed, most had never taken a plane flight. People used to have pictures taken of them next to airplanes just because it looked cool, even if they never rode in a

"You can still see some strands of that airplane-influenced DNA in today's Buicks."

The major airplane influence on the Avenir, Wallace said, was the Wildcat series, which was out between 1953 and 1955.

"This vehicle had the look of a jet fighter," Wallace said. "The art deco propeller plane designs were gone and Buick was in the space age.

"But beyond the look of a jet fighter, the Wildcat had the latest powertrain - compound carburetion. This was a really forwardlooking vehicle."

Wallace said features such as ence other designers outside GM. He noted that the Chrysler Imperial of the early 1960s looked a lot like the Wildcat. The name was popular and in 1985 Buick used it for another concept

"By this time, concept cars were a way of telling the pubic what was coming down the road in terms of development," Wallace said. "It was so modern it even had a telephone as one of its features."

The next concept to influence the Avenir, Wallace said, was the Riviera Silver Arrow III in 1972.

"This was a precursor to the 'boat-tailed' Buicks of that era,' Wallace said. "It's one of my favorite concept cars. It had 'modern' features like traction control and when you look at the interior, it had pillow-top seats. It was just an outstanding looking

"It had halogen headlights,

which were new then and are only now being replaced by LED lights. It even had moving seats and adjustable pedals, which would become popular later on in trucks and SUVs."

Wallace said the influences of the Centieme concept car of 2003 can be seen on proportion design cues on the Avenir. The Centieme also emphasized interior design, a concept that had taken a back seat to other features. But four years later, some of that vehicle's interior cues could be seen in other Buick production vehicles.

The last concept car to influence the Avenir, Wallace said, is the Velite, which came out in 2004. Besides using technology like turbocharged engines, this vehicle took its cues from previous Buicks and included features like portholes and front fenders whose look links back to the

"One look at the Velite and you can see Buick's DNA all over it," Wallace said. "You don't have to see the tri-shield logo to know that car was a Buick. And under the hood, it had a lot of horsepower. It wasn't just pretty, and this idea can be seen in the design of the Avenir.'

Smith said the Avenir reflects not only Buick's past, through design cues taken from a variety of concept cars made over decades, but also the brand's future.

"GM chief designer Ed Welburn pointed out that this is a vehicle that designers around the world worked on, and it's true," Smith said. "These days it's much easier for different design teams in different countries to collaborate. And at GM we all know each

This possible, Smith said, because since about 2000, GM has made a concerted effort to have its designers work together. Smith, for example, is an Australian and has worked at GM's design center in Australia and Korea and is now based in War-

He said his moving around for the job is not unique and, as a result, designers can use modern technology to communicate with people across the world they've worked with face-to-face.

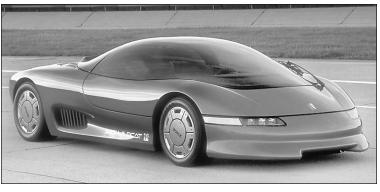
Smith said that in the past there might be a "national" style of car design. Someone might be able to look at a vehicle and say it was designed in the U.S. or Germany or Korea. But now vehicles



1938 Y Job reflected the art deco airplane designs of the era.



1954 Wildcat II still influenced by planes, but this time jets of the 1950s.



1985 Wildcat mirrored planes of the day - this time a "Stealth" fighter.



2003 Centieme was a return to beautiful interiors for Buicks.



2004 Velite showed classic Buick beauty a decade before the Avenir.

are more designed around the are no plans to make the Avenir a character of the brand.

"It's not us in the United States versus them anymore." Smith said. "Really, it's all us now. There aren't enough of 'them' anymore."

Smith said that currently there reality.

production model, but "never say never."

It is possible, he said, that if there's enough demand from the public, GM might decide to take the vehicle from concept to

# No Chill to Chrysler Sales

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

of February and its 17th consecutive month of year-over-year sales gains. The Jeep brand has set a sales record in each month dating back to November 2013.

Sales of the Jeep Patriot were up 59 percent in February, the compact SUV's best sales month ever and largest percentage increase of any Jeep brand model. The Jeep Cherokee, Wrangler, and Compass each recorded their best-ever sales in the month of February. Sales of the Jeep Grand Cherokee were up 8 percent for its best February sales in nine years.

Chrysler brand sales increased

13 percent, the brand's best February sales since 2008 and its eighth consecutive month of year-over-year sales gains. Sales of the Chrysler 200 were up 31 percent, the mid-size sedan's best-ever sales in the month of February.

Sales of the Ram pickup truck were up 7 percent in February. That is its 58th consecutive month of year-over-year sales gains. It was the pickup truck's best February sales since 2004.

Sales of the Fiat 500L were up 19 percent last month, its best sales ever in the month of February. Sales of the 500L have been up year-over-year for four consecutive months.

# 'The 1969 Model is the Iconic Camaro to Me,' Says GM Global Design Chief Ed Welburn

the final year of its fifth generation, Chevrolet has asked five designers who have contributed to the sporty car's design to reflect on the styling legacy that helped create an icon.

While Camaro has evolved with cultural and design trends, it has consistently represented the approachable, attainable sports car with an emphasis on fun that's evident in its styling," said Ed Welburn, vice president of GM Global Design.

"As a result, each generation of Camaro has evoked an emotional connection with enthusiasts connections spanning 48 years and five generations.'

Welburn, who owns a 1969 Camaro, said, "The Camaro should not have been a design success, as it was based on an existing architecture and admittedly hurried to market to address the personal coupe revolution occurring with Baby Boomer customers.

"However, the first-generation Camaro (1967-69) delivered a pure, classic proportion that will forever be regarded as one of the best-looking cars of its time. It was very lean and muscular, with comparatively minor embellishments for high-performance models.

'That was in contrast to some of the brasher competitors during the muscle car era, and it has helped the first-generation Camaro maintain timeless good looks.

The Camaro's first generation lasted only three model years, but one stands out for Welburn.

"The 1969 model is the iconic Camaro to me," he said. "From the dual-plane grille design and speed lines stamped into the fenders and doors, it was original and distinctive. It didn't borrow from any other design, and all these years later, it still looks fresh.

Welburn's design analysis highlights for the 1969 Camaro include:

- "Every effort was made to make it appear wider, sleeker and more muscular.
- "Character lines that trailed the wheel openings gave the car an aura of speed.
- "The rear fenders were pulled out, giving the car a wider, more muscular flair.
- "Dual-plane grille added visual interest to the nose and became a trademark of Camaro
- "Wide taillights, with bodycolor sheet metal between them. exaggerated the car's width."

The second-generation lasted 12 years, from 1970 to 1981.

Ken Parkinson, executive director of design, Chevrolet Trucks and Global Architecture, who owns a 1968 Camaro, gave his design analysis.

"I've always loved the '68 Camaro," he said, "but for some reason, it was the second-gen car I'd find myself sketching during high school math.

"It was a radical departure from the first-gen. For the first time, it was built on its own dedicated architecture, which gave the design team the freedom to create a pure expression.

"What that team created was a powerful expression of American muscle, influenced by a European grand-touring aesthetic. There was simply nothing else like it.

"The second-gen car is pure Camaro, with a dramatic proportion and lean, muscular form. You won't confuse it with the first generation, but it's unmistakably a Camaro.

'The second-generation Camaro's styling evolved during its

12 model years." For his design analysis high-

As the Camaro rolls through lights, Parkinson focused on the floors today," said Bennion. early models, circa 1970-73, for "their pure expression of the original design."

- "The strong horizontal crease running the length of the body sides creates strong tension and forward motion.
- "Below this horizontal crease, the body tucks in dramatically, exposing the tires for a more muscular appearance and great stance.
- "The bold split-bumper design on RS models was a signature feature that gave the car an aggressive and more contemporary design, arguably one of the greatest fronts on any car."

The third generation lasted 11 years, from 1982 to 1992.

John Cafaro, executive director Chevrolet Global Car Design, previously owned a third-generation Camaro "1LE" racecar.

The third-generation Camaro will always be a cultural symbol of the 1980s because its design epitomized the era's high-tech cultural trends," said Cafaro.

"It also grew into more of a serious sports car and, with that, its form was wrapped around a chassis system designed for a new level of function.

"To support that more performance-oriented mission, an aggressive front end designed to enhance downforce was styled for it. And for the first time, the Camaro was offered as a hatchback - another automotive archetype of the 1980s.

"The third-generation Camaro represented a distinct breakaway from the previous generations, which were undeniably influenced by European grand touring cars. This was a uniquely American design with a form developed for function - and its aggressive front-end styling was deemed almost too aggressive by some in the company.

"It was also the first high-volume American car to incorporate aero-enhancing, racing-inspired ground effects, and its large backlight, which comprised most of the hatchback, represented a technological achievement for automotive glass production because of its size and compoundcurve sculpture.

"Customers and the media responded. Sales jumped 50 percent for 1982 and the Camaro Z28 was named the 1982 Motor Trend Car of the Year.

"Perhaps more than any other generation, the third-generation Camaro was a car of its time. You can see that influence in every detail of the car, from the aerodynamic details of the exterior, such as the ground effects on the Z28, to the introduction of digital instruments on the interior."

Cafaro's third-generation Camaro design highlights include focus on the 1982 Z28:

- "Quad rectangular headlamps gave Camaro a contemporary appearance and were part of the aggressive front-end design.
- "A hatchback was de rigueur in the 1980s and the Camaro's backlight compoundlarge curved glass was a technological achievement in its day.
- "Ground effects on the Z28 were inspired by Formula 1 racecars and represented the first production application for a mass-produced American car kicking off a styling trend that would become an industry-wide staple of 1980s automotive de-

The fourth-generation Camaro lasted from 1993 to 2002.

Kirk Bennion, Chevrolet Camaro exterior design manager, who owns a 1993 Camaro Z28, offered his design analysis.

"More than 20 years after its debut, the fourth-generation Camaro still looks as sleek anything on showroom

"It was a very aggressive design intended to evolve the proportion from the third-generation car with a provocative exterior and greater aerodynamic performance. It has a very sculptural form vocabulary that was definitely all-new for the Camaro.

"The dramatic proportions for the fourth-generation Camaro included a fast-rake windshield, which extended the front cowl/firewall line forward, combined with a change to a 'bottombreathing' engine-cooling arrangement, to support the strong wedge shape of the over-

"Having a low front end was important to the design. It really worked with the high deck lid rear spoiler to enhance the appearance of motion. All these years later, it still looks contemporary – and fast.

"The Camaro received an updated front-end appearance in

Bennion selected the aggressive good looks of the higher-performance 1996 Camaro SS to highlight the best attributes of the generation:

- "Four, mini-halogen headlamps were new during design development and helped achieve the goal for the low front end.
- "Super-fast 68-degree windshield was one of the most radical of its day, and was a primary element of the car's sleek propor-
- "Smooth body sides with integrated wheel flares were a first for Camaro."

The fifth-generation Camaro started its run in 2010.

Tom Peters, Chevrolet Camaro exterior design director, who owns a 1969 Camaro, presented

The 'Iconic' 1967-69 Chevy Camaro was the early forerunner....



to the popularly designed, fifth-generation 2016 Camaro.

his thoughts on the design of the latest model – the 2016 Camaro.

"They say absence makes the heart grow fonder and that couldn't have been truer than as demonstrated with the enthusiasm that followed the introduction of the fifth-generation Camaro," he said.

"After an eight-year absence, the return of Camaro was a thunderbolt that reignited the passion of Camaro enthusiasts around the world

"While the iconic 1969 Camaro was the unmistakable inspiration for the fifth-generation Camaro, its design had to be more than simply a 21st century update.

"Distilling the timeless essence of the design and translating into

a fresh, contemporary Camaro was a challenge.

"The final design perfectly straddled that razor-sharp line between heritage and retro.'

Peters focused on the 2010 Camaro SS to call out the highlights of the fifth-generation design.

- "It's all about proportion and sculpture," he said, "from the dash-to-axle dimension that suggests performance to the efficient, 2+2 'canopy,' its sculptural design conveys lean power.
- "The cross-car, dual-plane grille is a heritage cue reimagined and gives the car a sporty character.
- "Rear fender 'gills' pay homage to the iconic cue of the 1969



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# **Dow Introduces Three New Bonding Agents for OEMs**

keys to having automobiles meet federal fuel standards coming down the pike.

And this creates opportunities for automotive suppliers.

Any company that can help OEMs meet these requirements will not want for business, said Chris Swart, spokeswoman and global communications manager for Dow Automotive Systems.

To that end, Swart said, Dow has just introduced three new adhesives that provide environmental and cost benefits when bonding elastomeric materials to metal, engineering plastics or other elastomers.

MEGUM 5386, THIXON P-21 and THIXON 526 bonding agents are used in a wide variety of

Lightweighting is one of the transportation and industrial applications, including belts, hoses, mounts, bushings and seals.

Swart said that Dow developed these three new adhesives because, in the case of lightweighting, pretty much "all the lowhanging fruit had been picked" and the next step was creating new substances.

The MEGUM and THIXON portfolio of bonding agents includes low-viscosity, organic, solventbased solutions and/or dispersions of polymers and other reactive chemicals, Swart said.

They're used as one-coat bonding agents or two-coat primer and cover-cement systems. Some products within the range are clear, non-pigmented solutions and others are waterbased

"The addition of these three new products to our strong adhesives portfolio targets the growing customer need for versatile and sustainable solutions that enable optimization of the manufacturing process," said Frank Billotto, Dow Specialty Adhesives business manager.

"Dow Automotive Systems is formulating more sustainable products at every opportunity, which helps customers meet compliance regulations.

> "Improving mileage is creating openings for Dow."

> > - Chris Swart, Dow

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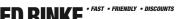








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"These new MEGUM and THIXON adhesives can also allow customers to consolidate the number of products used and can reduce annual adhesive costs as part of their production process.

MEGUM 5386 is a new, highperformance cover coat adhesive suited for bonding soft and difficult-to-bond elastomers, Swart said. Bonds using MEGUM 5386 are extremely resistant in high-temperature applications, boiling water, salt fog and various hydraulic fluids.

"It also has excellent resistance to glycol and has a higher reactivity at lower dry film thickness, so customers can use less product than competitive materials to achieve comparable performance, which also reduces volatile organic compounds."

The new THIXON P-21 and THIXON 526 next-generation primer and cover coat system provides outstanding performance at competitive cost, said Swart. The primer and cover products can be used together or separately, she said.

THIXON P-21 primer enables primer standardization and consolidation, and meets industry performance requirements. It offers low viscosity and needs less solvent for spraying, said Swart.

THIXON 526 cover coat offers well-balanced performance, she said, and enables cover standardization and consolidation with good boiling water, heat and pre-bake resistance.

Swart said better adhesives allow different, lighter materials to be used in cars of the future.

"Improving mileage is creating openings for Dow," Swart said.

"Our resources in chemistry allow us to understand these new materials and we can work hand-in-hand with our customers to meet their needs.

"We call this bench-to-bench service, and the suppliers that can best do this will thrive.'

# **GM Sales Increase 4 Percent**

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1** 

day it arrives on the showroom for its best-ever February. floor.

Chevrolet Silverado's retail market share in the full-size pickup segment was 27.2 percent in February, up 1.5 percentage points from a year ago, Cain said.

Average transaction prices rose by almost \$1,700 per unit from a vear ago.

In addition, strong truck and crossover sales drove the GMC brand to its best February since

Highlights (vs. 2014, except as noted):

- Chevrolet had its best February since 2008.
- Trax small • The new crossover, which began arriving in showrooms in December 2014, saw deliveries of 3,821 units.
- The Camaro, Corvette and Spark were up 3 percent, 7 percent and 4 percent, respectively.
- Tahoe sales were up 49 percent, Suburban sales more than doubled and the Traverse was up 28 percent for its best-ever February.

The Equinox also had its bestever February sales, with deliveries up 1 percent.

- The Silverado was up 24 percent for its best February since 2007.
- The GMC Yukon and Yukon XL were up 43 and 85 percent, respectively.
- The Sierra, which has the highest average transaction prices of any pickup line in the industry, was up 6 percent.
- GMC dealers delivered more than 2,500 Canyons, AutoWeek magazine's "Best of the Best/Truck" for 2015. It was the vehicle's best-ever February sales.

- The Acadia was up 4 percent and Terrain was up 17 percent
- The Denali series vehicles PIN also estimates that the are now 21 percent of all GMC vehicles, up from 18 percent.
  - Buick Encore deliveries rose 60 percent for its best February ever. It remains the best-selling vehicle in the small crossover segment.
  - Demand for the new Cadillac Escalade continues to grow. Sales were up 86 percent for the vehicle's best February since

GM's Average Transaction Prices (ATPs) were \$34,700, according to PIN estimates through Feb. 22, up \$2,700 per unit compared with a year ago, Cain said.

Additionally, incentives spending as a percentage of ATPs was 9.7 percent in February, down 0.9 percentage points month over month, according to PIN estimates, while industry average spending was 9.9 percent of ATPs, up 0.1 points.

Cain said strong pickup, large SUV and crossover sales drive a 35 percent increase in commercial deliveries, the 16th consecutive monthly year-over-year increase.

Strong pickup and SUV sales drove a 25 percent increase in government deliveries.

Cain said GM estimates that the seasonally adjusted annual selling rate (SAAR) for light vehicles in February was 16.5 million units.

Trucks, including pickups, SUVs and vans, accounted for 17.3 percent of the retail industry, according to PIN estimates, up 1.6 percentage points.

Crossovers represented 39.2 percent of the market, up 1.2 percentage points, and cars represented 43.5 percent, down 2.8 percentage points.

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#### 2015 Dodge Dart SXT

HEATED SEATS, REMOTE START, 8.4" UCONNECT RADIO, REAR CAMERA, RALLYE PKG, 6 SPEED **AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION** SATELLITE RADIO AND MUCH MORE.



24 MO. LEASE PRICE

\$74\* \$16,153\* EVER ONE

16,153\* \$74\*

## 2015 JEEP Patriot

Latitude AUTOMATIC TRANSMISSION, HIGH ALTITUDE PACKAGE, HEATED LEATHER SEATS. UCONNECT RADIO, VOICE COMMAND WITH BLUETOOTH, REMOTE START AND MUCH MORE.



EMPLOYEE MO. LEASE \$127**\*** 6,307\*

EVER ONE 24 MO. LEASE \$17,285\* \$127\*

#### 2015 **DODGE Journey** Crossroad

THIRD ROW SEAT, 3 ZONE AUTO TEMP CONTROL, HEATED SEATS, HEATED



EMPL 24 MO. LEASE \$166\* 19,874\*

EVER ONE 24 MO. LEASE \$20,995\* \$166\*

2015 Chrysler

**Town & Country** 

HEATED LEATHER SEATS

REMOTE START, REAR DVD

24 MO. LEASE

24 MO. LEASE

#### 2015 Jeep Cherokee Limited

HEATED LEATHER SEATS HEATED STEERING WHEEL, REMOTE START, 8.4" UCONNECT RADIO, REAR CAMERA AND MUCH MORE



EMPLOYEE 24 MO. LEASE PRICE \$166\* \$21,092\* EVERYONE

24 MO. LEASE PRICE \$173\* \$22,229\*

2015 Chrysler 300

## \$24,717\* \$188\*

EMPLOYEE

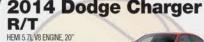
EVERYONE

\$177\* \$23,459\*

Limited HEATED LEATHER SEATS, VOICE COMMAND WITH BLUETOOTH, UCONNECT RADIO, SATELLITE RADIO WITH 1 YEAR SUBSCRIPTION AND MUCH MORE. Stk# FH74288

24 MO. LEASE PRICE \$24,019\* \$182\* EVERYONE

24 MO. LEASE PRICE \$25,279\* \$192\*



HEMI 5.7L V8 ENGINE, 20" CHROME WHEELS, HEATED FRONT AND REAR LEATHER SEATS, BEATS PREMIUM AUDIO WITH 10 SPEAKERS, SUBWOOFER AND 552 WATT AMPLIFIER, REMOTE START



PRICE

PRICE

EMPL 24 MO. LEASE PRICE \$197\* \$24,409\* EVERYONE

24 MO. LEASE \$212\* \$25,749\*





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24 MO. LEASE PRICE 21,072\*

**EMPLOYEE** 

**EVERYONE** 24 MO. LEASE PRICE

21,897\*

### **2015 GMC Terrain**



EMPLOYEE PRICE 24 MO. LEASE \$23,363\* \$144\*

EVER YONE **\$208**\*

**\$24,373**\*

### **2015 GMC Acadia**



EMPLOYEE 24 MO. LEASE \$214\* \$29,126**\*** 

YONE DVDR **\$269\*** \$29,917**\*** 

#### **2015 GMC Sierra** SLE Double Cab



EMPLOYEE

39 MO. LEASE PRICE \$227\* \$31,360\* EVERYONE

\$31,897\* \$243\*

#### **2015 Buick Lacrosse**

GROSSE POINTE MICHIGAN



DMIPLOYDD 39 MO. LEASE PRICE

\$29,342\* \$289\* EVER YONE 39 MO. LEASE PRICE

\$314\* \$29,396\*

2015 Buick Verano

BELOW EMPLOYEE PRICE

\$17,941\* \$115\* EVE YONE

\$19,231\* **\$170**\*

### 2015 Buick Regal



BELOW EMPLOYEE PRICE 24 MO. LEASE PRICE

\$148\* **\$23,732**\* YONE EVE PRICE

\$217\* \$25,461\*

## **2015 Buick Enclave**



EMPLOYEE

36 MO. LEASE \$282\* \$33,757\* EVER RYONE

36 MO. LEASE \$282\* \$33,757\*

#### 2015 GMC Yukon SLE 4WD



DIMIPLOYIDE 39 MO. LEASE PRICE \$490\* \$46,759\*

EVIER YONE PRICE \$528\* \$48,212\*



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# Female Executive Roles Up At GM, Other 'Top' Companies

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

are responding to the competition," said NAFE president Betty Spence.

"The 2015 NAFE Top Companies demonstrate their understanding that having women in top executive posts increases the bottom line.'

The full list of this year's winners is posted on workingmother.com and nafe.com, said GM spokeswoman Lesley Warnke.

Compared with last year's list, Warnke said, findings for the 2015 NAFE Top 50 Companies reveal:

- The percentage of women who hold board seats at the 2015 NAFE Top Companies grew to 29 percent from 27 percent last year. Forty percent of top earners on the NAFE list are women, up from 35 percent last year.
- Half of the winning companies now have four or more women board directors; at the NAFE Top 50, 29 percent of board members are women, compared with just 19 percent among companies that make up the S&P 500. The GM Board of Directors has five women composing 38 percent of its members.
- Fifty-eight percent of the 2015 NAFE Top Companies now offer sponsorship programs, compared with 42 percent in 2013; 98 percent offer job rotations, up from 80 percent two years ago.
- Female representation at the CEO level held steady at 10 per-

representation at all levels, Warnke said, especially the corporate officer and profit-and-loss ranks.

The vetting process includes tracking access and usage of programs and policies that promote the advancement of women as well as the training and accountability of managers in relation to the number of women who ad-

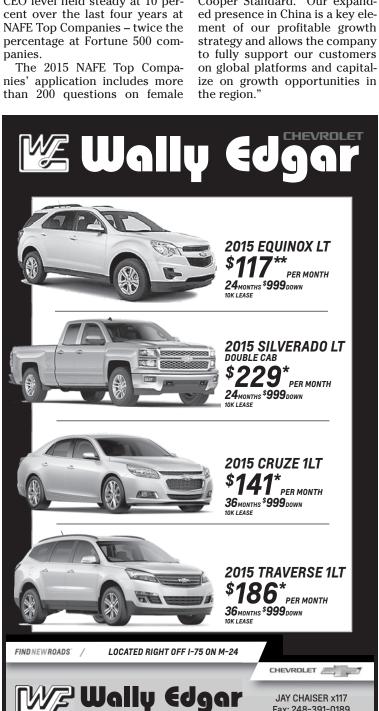
In order to be eligible for the NAFE Top Companies survey, entrants must have a minimum of 1,000 employees, two women on the Board of Directors and be a public or private company.

NAFE also separately names the Top 10 companies in the nonprofit sector, Warnke said.

# **Cooper Standard Buys Huayu Share**

Cooper-Standard Holdings, the parent company of Cooper-Standard Automotive Inc., completed its purchase of Huayu Automotive System Co.'s share in Huayu-Cooper Standard Sealing Systems Co., Ltd. on Feb. 27. Cooper Standard is now 95 percent equity owner of the business, said Cooper Standard spokeswoman Sharon Wenzl.

"The completion of this purchase further solidifies Cooper Standard's role as the leading sealing systems supplier in the global automotive industry," said Jeffrey Edwards, CEO at Cooper Standard. "Our expand-



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EMPLOYEE \$

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2015 CTS 2.0L TURBO STANDARD COLLECTION



63 AVAILABLE

11 AVAILABLE

EMPLOYEE \$

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**LUXURY COLLECTION** 

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2015 XTS FWD STANDARD COLLECTION



**EMPLOYEE** 36 MONTH/10K PER YEAR

EMPLOYEE \$ PRICE

36 MONTH/10K PER YEAR

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