## GMC's Truck and SUV Lineups Win Top Marks from Buyers

ever, GMC has scored big with ex-

2017 Brand Image Award for SUV lineups from new vehicle

up trucks are more popular than It's the fourth year in a row GMC has earned the award, as it continues to earn praise GMC won Kelley Blue Book's for its premium truck and

At a time when SUVs and pick- Most Refined Brand April 11. buyers, said GM spokesman Trevor Thompkins.

On March 1, Reuters reported light trucks accounted for 62 percent of light vehicle sales in February. In 2016, that split was 59.5

percent in favor of trucks and SUVs, according to Autodata Corp. Over a full year, that shift would mean roughly two assembly plants' worth of cars had been replaced by SUVs or trucks.

Brand Image Award winners are based on consumer automotive perception data from Kelley Blue Book Strategic Insights'

info@detroitautoscene.com

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4** 

## Detroit Auto Scene®

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**APRIL 17, 2017** 

## Dodge Finally Unleashes Challenger SRT Demon in NYC

Introduced last week at the New York Auto show, 2018 Dodge Challenger SRT Demon is a vehicle meant to burn up the road.

VOL. 85 NO. 13

Dodge rocked the high-performance car world in 2014 with the 707-horsepower Charger SRT Hellcat and Challenger SRT Hellcat. They were the most powerful at 140 mph. muscle cars ever - until now, said Dodge spokesman Dan Reid.

"Today, Dodge is shaking the foundation of the entire performance car industry, launching New York International Auto Show week with its wickedly fast new 2018 Dodge Challenger SRT Demon - highly capable on the street, absolutely dominating at the drag strip," Reid said.

Powered by an 840-horsepower, supercharged 6.2-liter Hemi Demon V8, the limited-production Challenger SRT Demon is the world's most powerful factoryproduction V8 - bar none, said Reid. NHRA-certified 9.65 seconds elapsed time at 140 mph makes the Dodge Challenger SRT Demon the fastest quarter-mile car in the world, Reid said.

Performance numbers:

- 0-30 mph: 1.0 second;
- 0-60 mph: 2.3 seconds;
- Quarter-mile: 9.65 seconds

The Challenger SRT Demon also is the world's first production car to lift the front wheels at launch and set the world record for longest wheelie from a standing start by a production car at 2.92 feet, certified by Guinness World Records, Reid said. The Challenger SRT Demon also registers the highest g-force (1.8 g) ever recorded at launch in a production car, he said.

"With Demon," said Kuniskis, head of Passenger Cars - Dodge, SRT, Chrysler and FIAT, FCA North America, "our goal

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



The public got to see the new Dodge SRT Challenger Demon model at the New York Auto Show last week.

This Max Motor device is the stuff dreams are made of - literally.

## Parents Can 'Drive' Their Baby to Sleep - at Home

when people think of Ford vehicles, the phrase "sleeping like a drives, Gardiner said. To all apbaby," isn't the first thing that comes to mind.

Well, Ford has done something about that.

For many new parents, there is only one guaranteed solution to putting their baby down at the end of the day - a nighttime drive that soothes, calms and eventually helps a little one nod off, said Ford spokesman John Gardiner.

But that still means a disrupted night for mom or dad, who research shows can typically expect little more than five hours' equivalent of 44 days' sleep in just the first year of their child's life, Gardiner said. Help, however, could soon be at hand.

Ford has developed a cot that could simulate - in the comfort of a parent's own home - the mo-

It's probably safe to say that tion, engine noise, and even the street lighting of those nighttime pearances a regular cot, the Max Motor Dreams, comes to life using a smartphone app. This enables it to record and then reproduce the comforting movement, lights and sounds of a particular journey.

> "After many years of talking to mums and dads, we know that parents of newborns are often desperate for just one good night's sleep," said Max Motor Dreams designer Alejandro López Bravo, of Spanish creative studio Espada y Santa Cruz.

"The Max Motor Dreams could sleep a night while losing the make the everyday lives of a lot of people a little bit better.'

For now, the Max Motor Dreams is a one-off pilot. But following numerous enquiries, the company is considering putting the unique cot into full-scale production, Gardiner said.

## Enclave Gives Owners More Interior Space

New and versatile functionality, spaciousness and intuitive technologies mark the next evolution of the Buick Enclave, said Duncan Aldred, vice president, Global Buick and GMC.

More third-row space, improved towing capability and a thoughtful combination of safety technologies, useful interior features and premium materials are a few highlights included on Buick's new seven-passenger midsize luxury SUV, Aldred said.

Within a visually lower and slimmer body, the Enclave boasts more interior space. The third row alone offers 5.6 more inches of standard legroom than an Acura MDX, 4.5 inches more than an Audi Q7 and nearly three inches more than an Infiniti QX60, he said.

The new Enclave also features a longer wheelbase than the previous generation, yet its turning circle is 1.4 feet tighter than before, pairing the space customers need with added maneu- set the tone for a more progresverability, said GM spokeswoman Jennifer Korail.

"Enclave was introduced as a game-changer for the Buick brand and has since become one of our most successful and important vehicles," said Aldred. "It

sive Buick, helping change perception for us and serving as the standard-bearer of what our products stand for: smart, stylish luxury."

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 2** 



2018 Buick Enclave

## **Rooney Promoted to CEO at Continental**



Rooney

Steve Rooney, formerly president and COO of Continental Structural Plastics (CSP) of Auburn Hills, has been named CEO, while Steve Wisniewski, controller, has been promoted to vice president, Finance, said CSP spokeswoman Kim Zitny.

Former CEO Frank Macher and CFO Jon Smith, are retiring from CSP, a worldwide manufacturer of lightweight composite materials, both effective April 1.

Rooney joined CSP as president and COO in 2011. He brings to the position more than 30 years of experience in the automotive manufacturing industry

with expertise in manufacturing, operations management, multiplant management and engineering, Zitny said.

Prior to joining CSP, Rooney served as vice president of operations at Johnson Controls; vice president of operations at Plastic Engineered Products; plant manager at Baily Corporation/Venture Industries and materials manager at Barry Controls.

He holds a Bachelor of Science in Business Management and Finance from the University of Massachusetts.

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#### **Enclave Offers Spacious Interiors**

**CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1** 

Enclave highlights:

- New proportions, bodylines and accents combine for an athletic stance that accentuates the redesigned front end and
- · A comprehensive offering of standard and available safety technology includes customizable safety alerts.
- The new body structure was built for safety, strength and mass efficiency, and there are 17 radar, camera and ultrasonic sensors when fully equipped.
- There's seating for seven and more cargo volume behind the first row than the Acura MDX, Audi O7 and Infiniti OX60.
- Buick-first Evonik Acrylite lighting technology provides a distinctive light signature.
- Tow capacity of up to 5,000 pounds is more than enough to tow a typical 21-foot sport boat.
- A standard 3.6L V6 engine with stop/start technology, Buick-estimated 302 horsepower and 260 lb.-ft. of torque is paired with a nine-speed automatic transmission.
- Standard MacPherson strut front and five-link rear suspension are tuned for a refined, isolated ride
- Available intelligent AWD with active twin-clutch rear differential and Buick-first switchable AWD help improve control and efficiency.
- 20-inch wheels are available (18-inch are standard).

"Every detail of the all-new Enclave is designed to feel premium, well-crafted and integrated," said Helen Emsley, executive director of Global Buick and GMC

"Customers in feedback clinics have described it as having a 'sleek' appearance, which isn't typically a word associated with three-row SUVs.'

"The Enclave's sophisticated suite of available radar, camera and ultrasonic crash avoidance technologies is engineered to help drivers continuously monitor their surroundings in an intuitive, assisting manner so they can feel more confident behind the wheel," said Dean Perelli. chief engineer for the Buick Enclave.

## **Chevrolet Building Limited Edition Corvettes**

Turns out there is a limit to the Corvette.

Chevrolet is commemorating the 65th anniversary of the Corvette with a new Corvette Carbon 65 Edition offered on 2018 Grand Sport 3LT and Z06 3LZ models. Limited to only 650 numbered vehicles globally, the distinctive Carbon 65 blends visible carbon-fiber exterior elements - notably, a new carbonfiber rear spoiler and quarter ducts - with a new Ceramic Matrix Gray exterior color and special interior appointments, including a new carbon-fiberrimmed steering wheel, said GM spokesman Ron Kiino.

"Corvette is one of the most storied names in Chevrolet and sports car history, with a heritage few can match," said Paul Edwards, U.S. vice president of Chevrolet Marketing.

"The new Carbon 65 Edition honors that legacy, while offering customers another unique, special-edition model that personalizes the ownership experi-

The Carbon 65 Edition package on the Grand Sport 3LT and Z06 3LZ trims:

- Ceramic Matrix Gray exterior (blue top on Convertibles);
- Unique fender stripes and door graphics;
- · Black wheels with machined grooves paired with summer- only tires (Cup-style wheels for Grand Sport and Blade-style wheels for Z06):
  - Blue brake calipers;



To celebrate 65 years of Corvettes, 650 limited edition Carbon 65 Corvettes will be produced by GM.

effects, hood section and roof (Coupe models) or tonneau inserts (Convertible models);

- New visible carbon-fiber spoiler (all models) and quarter intake ducts (Coupe);
- Center caps with Carbon lo-
- Carbon Flash badges and outside mirrors;
- Jet Black suede-wrapped interior with blue stitching;
- · Carbon-fiber steering wheel rim and gloss carbon-fiber interior trim:
- Competition Sport seats;
- Carbon 65 Edition sill plates. The Corvette Carbon 65 Edition package will cost \$15,000 and will be available this summer, along with the rest of the 2018 Corvette lineup

2018 Corvette Stingray features include:

• New standard 19-inch front and 20-inch rear wheels paired with summer-only tires\*. Derived · Visible carbon-fiber ground from the Z51 package, they re-

place the previous 18-inch/19inch standard wheels.

- Five new wheel options, including Torque and Motorsport designs, are paired with summeronly tires.
- Magnetic Ride Control is of-
- fered as a stand-alone option. Revised interior breakup on 2LT trim.

The Carbon 65 Edition package2018 Corvette Grand Sport features include:

- Ceramic brakes are offered without the Z07 Performance
- Satin black center stripe is available with the Heritage Package.
- interior Revised breakup on 2LT trim.

2018 Corvette Z06 features in-

- · Two new wheel choices are Black Z06 wheel with yellow stripe and Pearl Nickel Blade design (paired with summer-only tires).
  - · Gray interior available.

All 2018 models have these features:

- HD digital radio is standard.
- Available Performance Data Recorder - Cosworth Toolbox offers four additional data channels: individual wheel speeds, individual suspension displacements, yaw rate and intake and ambient air temperatures.
- Improved rear-view camera image features higher resolution and wider angle.
- Enhanced Head-Up Display rotation setting.
- Ceramic Matrix Gray replaces Sterling Blue in the exterior color palette.
- Spice Red convertible top. Spice Red interior offered on 3LT and 3LZ trims.
- Jet black suede-wrapped interior includes carbon-fiberrimmed steering wheel and gloss carbon-fiber interior trim.
- New interior color stitching packages (red/yellow/blue) offered on 3LT and 3LZ trims.

#### Weakened Demand for SUVs Result in Lower Vehicles Sales in China Market

BEIJING (AP) - Growth in China's auto sales plunged in March as demand for SUVs weakened and purchases of sedans contracted, an industry group reported April 11.

Sales of cars, minivans and SUVs in the biggest market by number of vehicles sold rose 1.7 percent from a year earlier, according to the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers. That was down from 6.3 percent growth in the first two months of the year. Total vehicle sales, including trucks and buses, rose 3 percent to 2.5 million.

Auto demand was forecast to cool after Beijing raised a sales tax Jan. 1, but the March decline was unexpectedly sharp. Forecasters expect sales growth in mid-single digits this year, down from last year's 15 percent.

A steady decline in sales growth is squeezing global brands that look to China's crowded market to drive revenue and newer local brands that are expanding abroad.

Sales of SUVs, which are shoring up revenue for automakers as demand in other segments plunges, rose 19.6 percent from a year earlier to 832,300. Still, that was down from 21.6 percent growth in January-February.

Sales of sedans shrank 4.9 percent to 990,000 units, down from 3.8 percent growth in Januaryfrom a year earlier, according to after a 10 percent sales tax on February. CAAM. It said March exports rose 23.8 percent to 70,000 units. In the year to date, overall market growth slowed to 4.6 per-

Chinese drivers bought a total cent, down 2.1 percentage points of 24.4 million vehicles last year

small-engine vehicles was cut by half. Part of that was restored in January, raising the tax from 5 percent to 7.5 percent.



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The Maserati display at the 2016 Los Angeles Auto Show.

## Maserati is Moving Its U.S. Headquarters to Michigan

The Walter P. Chrysler Museum in Auburn Hills has been home to some classic automo-

Now the building will be home to the North American headquarters for Maserati.

According to reports in the *De*troit Free Press and Crain's Business Detroit, Fiat Chrysler is moving its U.S. headquarters from New Jersey to the building that until December was used to house the Walter P. Chrysler Museum.

The reports stated that the move only affects the brand's North American headquarters. Its world headquarters will remain in Modena, Italy.

Other Maserati regional headquarters are located in Dubai, United Arab Emirates and Shanghai. China.

"The idea is to bring us into Auburn Hills while remaining distinct and separate from the other FCA brands," said Tom Shanley, head of Maserati North America to the Free Press while attending the New York International Auto Show last week. "We have our separate office space. We will be sharing that office space with Alfa Romeo.'

Maserati currently has 108 dealerships in the United States, and re-entered the North American market in 2004, after a 12vear absence.

#### **New General Counsel Joins OCC**

(OCC) has named Eileen Husband as general counsel. Husband had been general counsel and vice president of legal services at Henry Ford College, said OCC spokeswoman Bridget M. Kavanaugh.

Husband has more than 15 years of local and statewide community college experience, including general counsel to the Michigan Community College Risk Management Authority while a partner at Cummings, McClorey, Davis and Acho.

'We are delighted to have the caliber of professional experience that Eileen brings to the

Oakland Community College College as an instructor and general counsel for higher education, public entities and business." said OCC Chancellor Timothy Meyer. "She has represented many of our colleagues across Michigan, including work at OCC and as a resident of Oakland County. We are happy she is bringing this depth of experience to her home community.

> Prior to her work in higher education, Husband was general counsel at Little Caesar Enterprises, Inc., onsite counsel for Greektown Casino and assistant general counsel for the Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART).

## Retired Local Teacher Wins Dodge Durango

Chalk it up to luck.

Detroit-area native and retiredturned part-time science teacher Sandra Moussiaux has been named the grand prize winner of the Fiat Chrysler 2016 National Sweepstakes. A resident of Clinton Township, Moussiaux was one of 825,833 nationwide contest entrants.

Moussiaux won a \$45,000 voucher toward her choice of any Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram or Fiat brand vehicle on April 7, said Fiat Chrysler spokeswoman Eileen Wunderlich.

Moussiaux selected as her prize a 2017 Dodge Durango GT in White Knuckle with leathertrimmed bucket seats, heated first- and second-row seats and 20-inch Hyper Black aluminum wheels as her winning prize. Moussiaux's brand new vehicle of choice is being delivered to her courtesy of Bill Snethkamp Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram in Redford.

Each year, Fiat Chrysler hosts the National Sweepstakes as a part of its many consumer experiences throughout the country. Consumers enter by participating in a Fiat Chrysler event where they can experience and interact with a knowledgeable product specialist at a branded booth or tent space - or get inside a Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram or Fiat brand vehicle to take a test ride or test drive, Wunderlich

Entries were collected through a number of hands-on Fiat Chrysler brand initiatives that took place nationwide in 2016, including the Woodward Dream Cruise. Events were Camp Jeep off-road driving courses, Ram Truck brand test tracks at auto shows and numerous test drive and school fundraising events involving the Fiat, Chrysler and Dodge brands.

"I was in complete disbelief when I was told I had been selected as the grand prize winner of the 2016 FCA US LLC Sweepstakes," said Sandra Moussiaux of Clinton Township.

"A simple birthday trip to a Broadway play turned into a wonderful surprise one year later. After test driving the 2017 Durango GT, I fell in love with the way it drove. My family and I take



Sandra Moussiaux and son Brian Wrubel with 2017 Dodge Durango GT.

vacations together so we cannot wait to travel in this new beautiful and comfortable vehicle.

"I never dreamed that I would win a new car! I feel very fortunate and I am appreciative of Snethkamp's Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep, Ram in Redford, where staff took exceptional care of me throughout this process. A big shout out to them."

Moussiaux secured her entry in May of last year while she was attending a showing of "The Sound of Music," in honor of her birthday, at the Fisher Theatre Broadway in Detroit, Wunderlich

Moussiaux was fortunate enough to try her luck after noticing a representation of a new 2017 Chrysler Pacifica. There was also a knowledgeable product specialist with whom Mousiaux spoke about the vehicle. That was when she learned about the national sweepstakes, Wunderlich said. She took that opportunity to enter the contest.

The FCA US LLC National Sweepstakes is always an exciting time for us and truly one of the best parts of the job," explained Jason Russ, head of Experiential Marketing, Chrysler US.

"Sandra is a dedicated educator who equips our children with the knowledge they need to succeed in the classroom each and every day. With our U.S. headquarters in Auburn Hills, FCA is very proud to reward a local resident like Sandra with a new Dodge Durango that she deserves.'





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## Dodge Finally Unleashes Challenger SRT Demon in NYC

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

was to build a car that would tattoo the Dodge logo into the subconscious of the general market, beyond even our loyal enthusi-

"To do so, we had to set records that have never been set before, do more than has ever been done before, go beyond even the legendary Hellcat. The result: an 840-horsepower, 9-second muscle car unlike anything that has ever come before it."

The Challenger SRT Demon's record-setting performance is the result of collaboration among the Dodge//SRT, Design, Engineering, Powertrain and Manufacturing teams inside Fiat Chrysler, many of whom are experienced and active drag racers, said Reid.

While the 2018 Dodge Challenger SRT Demon remains a potent street car, every component was scrutinized and optimized for weight, capability and durability on the strip, said Reid.

Production of the limited-edisingle-model-year Challenger SRT Demon begins later this summer, with 3,000 vehicles for the United States and 300 vehicles for Canada.

Deliveries to Dodge//SRT dealers will begin this fall, Reid said. rapidly storing up and releasing

The heart of the 2018 Dodge Challenger SRT Demon is the supercharged 6.2-liter Hemi Demon V8, rated at 840 horsepower and 770 lb.-ft. of torque, Reid said.

The Challenger SRT Demon is the first-ever, street-legal factoryproduction car designed to run on 100+ unleaded high-octane fuel, Reid said. That fuel is readily available at select gas stations, specialty shops and drag strips.

The keys to unleashing the SRT Demon's full performance fury are in the Demon Crate: Direct Connection Performance Parts include a new powertrain control module calibrated for the highoctane unleaded fuel and a new switch bank for the center stack that includes a high-octane but-

The SRT Demon leaves the factory with a powertrain control module configured for 91-octane premium unleaded pump gasoline, which delivers top-level performance.

SRT engineers went digital to isolate and resolve one of the biggest challenges to clean launches and driveline integrity wheel hop, Reid said.

In simple terms, wheel hop happens when tires quickly slip and regain traction at launch.

high torque spikes can quickly and severely damage driveline components – and up until now, the only solution was to back out of the throttle.

The 2018 Dodge Challenger SRT Demon is the widest Challenger ever and first-ever, factory-production muscle car with wide-body fender flares, Reid

The Demon Crate is further customized with the buyer's name, VIN and serial number, Reid said. Production of the 2018 Dodge Challenger SRT Demon begins later this year at the Brampton (Ont.) Assembly plant.



The SRT Demon has a bold cockpit.

## GMC's SUVs and Trucks Earn Driver Praise

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Brand Watch study. Brand Watch is an online brand and model perception tracking study tapping into more than 12,000 in-market new-vehicle shoppers annually on Kellev Blue Book's KBB.com.

The comprehensive study provides insight on how shoppers identify important factors influencing their purchase decision and captures brand/model familiarity and loyalty among new-vehicle shoppers.

"GMC's 'Professional Grade' ideology has struck a resonant chord with consumers, and that's reflected in car buyers visiting Kelley Blue Book's website, KBB.com, naming GMC 2017's Most Refined Brand," says Jack Nerad, executive editorial director for Kelley Blue

In previous wins, Kelley Blue Book has acknowledged Denali, GMC's highest expression of premium vehicles, for continuing to elevate the brand's overall per-

ception among consumers, Thompkins said. Kelley Blue Book's findings show that consumers recognize that GMC trucks and SUVs pair professional grade capability with exceptional features and technology.

"Receiving the Most Refined Brand award for a fourth consecutive year reflects GMC's commitment to our core brand pillars," said Duncan Aldred, vice president, Global Buick and

## Hydrogen Fuel Cells Have the Potential to Overtake Electric Powertrains

DETROIT (AP) - Hydrogen fuel those leases are limited to Calicell cars could one day challenge electric cars in the race for pollution-free roads - but only if more stations are built to fuel them.

Honda, Toyota and Hyundai have leased a few hundred fuel cell vehicles over the past three years, and expect to lease well over 1,000 this year. But for now,

fornia, which is home to most of the 34 public hydrogen fueling stations in the U.S.

Undaunted, automakers are investing heavily in the technology. General Motors recently supplied the U.S. Army with a fuel cell pickup, and GM and Honda are collaborating on a fuel cell system due out by 2020. Hyundai will introduce a longer-range fuel cell SUV next year.

"We've clearly left the science project stage and the technology is viable," said Charles Freese, who heads GM's fuel cell busi-

Like pure electric cars, fuel cell cars run quietly and emissionfree. But they have some big advantages. Fuel cell cars can be refueled as quickly as gasoline-powered cars. By contrast, it takes nine hours to fully recharge an allelectric Chevrolet Bolt using a 240-volt home charger. Fuel cell cars can also travel further between fill-ups.

But getting those fill-ups presents the biggest obstacle. Fueling stations cost up to \$2 million to build, so companies have been reluctant to build them unless more fuel cell cars are on the road. But automakers don't want to build cars that consumers can't fuel.

The U.S. Department of Energy lists just 34 public hydrogen fueling stations in the country; all but three are in California. By comparison, the U.S. has 15,703 public electric charging stations, which can be installed for a fraction of the cost of hydrogen stations. There are also millions of garages where owners can plug their cars in overnight.

As a result, U.S. consumers bought nearly 80,000 electric cars last year, but just 1,082 fuel cell vehicles, says WardsAuto.

That's why automakers will keep hedging their bets and offer electric vehicles alongside hydro-

Honda began leasing the 2017 Clarity fuel cell sedan earlier this year; about 100 are already on the road. At this week's New York Auto Show, the company also introduced electric and plug-in hybrid versions of the Clarity.

The plug-in hybrid can go 42 miles in electric mode before a small gas engine kicks in, Honda says. The all-electric Clarity can go 111 miles on a charge. Both will go on sale later this year.

"We think going forward the powertrain market is going to be very diverse," said Steve Center, vice president of the environmental business development office at American Honda.

Fuel cell cars create electricity to power the battery and motor by mixing hydrogen and oxygen in the specially treated plates that combine to form the fuel cell stack.

The technology isn't new. GM introduced the first fuel cell vehicle, the Electrovan, in 1966. It only seated two; the back of the van housed large steel tanks of hydrogen and oxygen. It went about 150 miles between refuelings, and its hydrogen tank exploded on at least one occasion.

Advances in hydrogen storage,

fuel cell stacks and batteries have allowed engineers to significantly shrink those components to fit neatly inside a sedan.

Oxygen is now collected from the air through the grille, and hydrogen is stored in aluminumlined, fuel tanks that automatically seal in an accident to prevent leaks. Reducing the amount of platinum used in the stack has made fuel cell cars less expen-

Honda's new Clarity can go 366 miles between fuelings, the longest range in the industry.

The Clarity leases for \$369 per month for 36 months. That's more than the \$354 monthly lease payment for the Chevrolet Bolt electric. But Honda, Toyota and Hyundai are all throwing in free hydrogen refueling. It costs between \$13 and \$16 per kilogram for hydrogen, or up to \$80 to fill the Clarity's 5-kilogram capacity, according to the U.S. Energy Department.

Even with that perk, analysts think sales of fuel cell vehicles will be limited until more fueling stations are built. But carmakers will still invest in fuel cells. GM's Freese says there are many applications beyond cars, including unmanned, deep-sea vehicles or backup home power systems.

"One of the reasons global car companies do something like this is they want to have a finger in the pie. Should we suddenly have to shift over, they want to be able to do it," said Jack Nerad, an executive market analyst with Kelley Blue Book.

The number of fueling stations could also grow quickly if automakers partner with governments and energy companies, as they have done in California. Earlier this year, 13 companies - including Shell and BMW - formed a council to accelerate the adoption of hydrogen as a transportation fuel.

Heather McLaughlin of San Ramon, Calif., was one of the first customers to lease a 2017 Clarity. She says she prefers a fuel cell car over an electric because she can refuel it in minutes. And one fill-up a week more than covers her 50-mile daily commute to Benicia, where she serves as the city attorney.

She recently drove the Clarity to Southern California and found plenty of stations along her



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#### Mopar Says That Now is the Time To Check Car

The arrival of spring and warmer weather encourages people to get outside, roll down the windows and go for a drive. Sometimes that drive is just around the neighborhood or down to the ice cream stand. For others, it's a longer trip for spring break.

"Whatever your destination, now is a great time to get the basics checked on your car, truck or SUV," said Mopar spokesman Dale Jewett. "A little bit of TLC now from Mopar-trained technicians at your favorite Chrysler-Dodge-Jeep-Ram-Fiat dealership helps ensure trouble-free trips in the weeks to come."

There is some common sense behind April being National Car Care month, Jewett said. In many parts of the country, winter conditions put wear on key vehicle parts – tires, battery, oil and wiper blades come to mind quickly. Those are the parts that take the brunt of winter driving – hitting potholes, cranking the engine on a cold morning, sweeping the road crud off the windshield.

"Also, what vehicle doesn't benefit from a good spring cleaning that vacuums the carpets, wipes down the interior and gives the exterior a cleansing bath," Jewett said. "For our friends who live in areas that don't see snow frequently or at all during winter, this springtime inspection and service makes sure all is in good order before the daytime temps begin their summer residence at the upper end of the thermometer.

"Some of us like to get up close and personal with our vehicles, taking advantage of a nice day and a favorite playlist to clean up the daily driver in the driveway. It's also a great way to get the kids involved in a chore and spark the next generation of car enthusiasts. Beware: Somebody's going to get sprayed with the hose."

#### OCC, State Have Motorcycle Driving Courses

If you're ready to experience the open road on two wheels, Oakland Community College (OCC) has programs to help, said OCC spokeswoman Bridget M. Kavanaugh.

Through the Michigan Secretary of State's ofice, the school is offering three Motorcycle Safety programs through June.

A motorcycle endorsement is required to drive on public roads; the motorcycle safety course is required for teens, Kavanaugh said.

Courses will be held at OCC's Auburn Hills campus at 2900 Featherstone Road. Contact the office at 248-522-3700 to reserve a spot. The courses are:

- Basic Rider Course-Web Enhanced: Designed for someone who has minimal experience operating a motorcycle, this course focuses on the development of basic riding skills. Three hours of online preparation is to be completed before class start date. Course dates: April 22-23; April 29-May 1; May 13-15; June 3-5: June 10-12 and June 24-26.
- Basic Rider Course-Traditional: Same content and course duration as the Basic Rider Course-Web Enhanced; however, this is all in-person instruction. Available May 20-22.
- Returning Rider Course: A one-day course designed for the experienced but unlicensed rider to become licensed and legal. Many experienced, licensed riders use this course as a refresher and skills tune-up. This session takes place May 7 or June 18.



## Buick's Avenir Concepts Hitting the Market

Debuting with the 2018 Buick Enclave, the new Avenir subbrand represents the highest expression of Buick luxury, said Duncan Aldred, vice president of Global Buick and GMC. Buick first displayed the Avenir concept car at the 2015 Detroit Auto

Avenir, said Aldred, offers unique styling cues and an extensive set of standard features and premium materials throughout the vehicle. New and versatile functionality, interior spaciousness, and intuitive technologies build on the Enclave's established popularity, Aldred said.

Smart innovation and style come standard on the 2018 Buick Enclave Avenir, said Aldred, adding that Buick-first Evonik Acrylite exterior lighting illuminates the road ahead with the power of more than 100 LEDs across the vehicle.

A Rear Camera Mirror provides a clearer, broader view of what's behind, he said, and in-vehicle ionization leaves the air cleaner and fresher.

It's all packaged within an elegant design that combines concept car inspiration with improved interior luxury amenities and roominess for up to seven passengers, Aldred said.

"The Enclave has been a successful formula for the Buick brand, with sales results that have defied traditional product cycles, and 90 percent of customers purchasing in the top two trim levels," said Aldred. "It's a beacon for the modern, attainable luxury that Buick stands for and is a natural place to launch Avenir."

Aldred said highlights of the Enclave Avenir include:

Avenir model comes stan-

It's a concept whose time has dard with extensive active safety, connectivity and luxury features for a simple and convenient buying experience.

• A new body structure for safety, strength and mass efficiency, plus 17 radar, camera and ultrasonic sensors when fully equipped.

• It accommodates seven passengers comfortably and offers more cargo volume behind the first row than the Acura MDX, Audi Q7 and Infiniti QX60.

- Standard hands-free powerprogrammable liftgate with a Buick tri-shield logo illuminates the ground below the hidden sensor and power-folding third
- Avenir-exclusive sional mesh grille, badging, pearl nickel 20-inch aluminum wheels and luxurious interior materials are standard.
- Buick-first Rear Camera Mirror is standard.
- Buick-first Evonik Acrylite lighting technology provides a distinctive light signature.
- Tow capacity of up to 5,000 pounds is more than enough to tow a typical 21-foot sport boat.
- A standard 3.6L V6 engine with stop/start technology, Buick-estimated 302 horsepower and 260 lb.-ft. of torque is paired with a nine-speed automatic transmission.
- Standard five-link rear suspension and available continuously variable real-time damping (CDC) offer a refined, isolated
- Available intelligent AWD with active twin-clutch rear differential and Buick-first switchable AWD help improve control and efficiency.

All Avenir models, said Buick spokeswoman Jennifer Korail, will feature an exclusive 3-dimensional mesh grille paired with



2018 Buick Enclave Avenir



The 2018 Buick Enclave Avenir interior

chrome wings inspired by Buick concept cars.

Additional Enclave Avenir notable styling cues include 20inch, six-spoke wheels with a pearl nickel finish; five premium exterior colors; an Avenir Chestnut and Ebony interior with piping on the seats and contrasting stitching; embroidered first-row headrests; Avenir floor-mats; a wood-accented steering wheel; and bold Avenir-scripted sill plates on all four doors.

A wide array of advanced

technologies and interior features emphasizing premium comfort and inclusive luxury comes standard in the Enclave Avenir, including heated and ventilated front seats; heated second-row seats; navigation; wireless charging; a dual moonroof; an 8-inch diagonal reconfigurable cluster display; a 360-degree surround vision camera system for easier parking; and a rear camera mirror that can function as a traditional mirror or as a camera.

#### U.S. Orders Kia, Hyundai to Recall 1.4 Million Cars

DETROIT (AP) - Hyundai and Kia are recalling 1.4 million cars and SUVs in the U.S., Canada and South Korea because the engines can fail and stall, increasing the risk of a crash.

The recall covers some of the Korean automakers' most popular models in the U.S. and Canada including 2013 and 2014 Hyundai Santa Fe Sport SUVs and Sonata midsize cars. Also covered are Kia Optima midsize cars from 2011 through 2014, Kia Sportage SUVs from 2011 through 2013 and Kia Sorento SUVs from 2012 through 2014.

The South Korean recall includes Hyundai's Grandeur and Sonata sedans and Kia's K5, K7 and Sportage with engines produced from 2009 to 2013. All have either 2-Liter or 2.4-Liter gasoline engines. The U.S. engines were made in Hyundai's engine plant in Alabama.

The companies say in documents posted April 7 by the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that debris left from manufacturing can restrict oil flow to connecting rod bearings. Since they are cooled by oil, the restriction can increase temperatures and cause the bearings to wear and fail, and the engines could stall.

Owners will hear a knocking sound from the engine that increases in frequency as the engine speed rises. They also could get engine warning lights on Hyundai dashboard, spokesman Jim Trainor said. Those with problems should contact their dealers.

Hyundai and Kia will notify owners and dealers will inspect the engines. They'll replace the block if needed at no cost to owners. The recall starts May 19.

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1 Payments are for a 2017 ATS 2.0 Sedan Standard Collection with an MSRP of \$37,590. 24 monthly payments total \$6,696. Payments are for a 2017 XT5 Crossover Luxury Collection with an MSRP of \$40,985. 36 monthly payments total \$11,124. Payments are for a 2017 Escalade Luxury Collection with an MSRP of \$86,490.36 monthly payments total \$27,684. Payments are for a 2017 XTS Sedan Standard Collection with an MSRP of \$46,290.39 monthly payments total \$15,561. Payments are for a 2017 CT6 3.6L AWD Luxury Collection with an MSRP of \$61,390. 39 monthly payments total \$19,071. Option to purchase at the end for an amount to be determined at lease signing GM Financial must approve lease. Take delivery by 4/30/17. Mileage charge of \$.25/mile over 30,000 miles. Lessee pays for maintenance, excess wear and a disposition fee of \$595 or less at the end of lease. Not available with some other offers.



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## New Car Transaction Prices See Increase During March

The analysts at Kelley Blue climbed 18 percent as it attempts Book, www.kbb.com, reported on April 4 that the estimated average transaction price (ATP) for light vehicles in the United States was \$34,342 in March 2017.

New-car prices have increased by \$587 (up 1.7 percent) from March 2016, while falling \$133 (down 0.4 percent) from last month, said Kelley spokesman Andrew Nicolai.

"New-car prices are up yet again by just under 2 percent, which is a slightly lower increase than in the first two months of the year," said Tim Fleming, analyst for Kelley Blue Book.

"While numbers for automakers are mostly flat to slightly positive, there are signs of weakness in some popular vehicle segments. Perhaps most notably, the full-size truck segment is down 2 percent year-over-year, a rare occurrence for this category, which has seen large price improvements over the last few years.

"Also, transaction prices for subcompact SUVs, one of last year's hottest segments, are down 3 percent as demand for the small utility vehicles appears to be leveling off."

Rising incentives and discounts on cars have become common, but now they are growing more in truck and SUV segments, due to slowing consumer demand for new vehicles and high levels of inventory available, Fleming said.

Nissan North America is up 5 percent again in March 2017, continuing a strong run of improving transaction prices.

The Nissan brand rose 5 percent on a much higher mix of SUVs versus last year, led by the Rogue. The redesigned Armada

to make headway in the full-size SUV segment, which has traditionally been dominated by General Motors.

Infiniti was up just 1 percent, helped most by the Q50 sedan, which was up 6 percent, and the recently redesigned Q60 coupe, also up 6 percent.

On the other hand, Volkswagen Group average transaction prices fell more than 2 percent, although the Audi brand did rise 5 percent. Audi's redesigned A4 sedan was up 7 percent, while the new

A4 allroad was up 11 percent.

Meanwhile, Volkswagen was flat,

while Porsche was down 7 percent on a higher mix of its entrylevel model, the Macan, Fleming said. Average transaction price

changes among segments between March 2016 and March 2017 are:

- Compact car plus 2.1 percent increase to \$20,563;
- Compact SVU/Crossover plus 1.6 percent to \$28,395;
- Electric vehicle minus 12.2 percent to \$34,086;
- Entry-level luxury car plus 2.5 percent to \$41,678;
- Full-size car plus 1.5 percent to \$34,606;
- Full-size pickup truck minus 2.4 percent to \$45,252;
- Full-size SUV/crossover plus 1.2 percent to \$60,670;
- Minivan plus 2.8 percent to
- Mid-size car 0.0 percent,
- Mid-size pickup truck plus 1.6 percent to \$31,986;
- Mid-size SUV/crossover minus 0.3 percent to \$37,398;
- Subcompact car plus 1.2 percent to \$16,421.



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## Supplier Preh Earns High **Quality Marks from GM**

supplier Preh was named a GM Supplier of the Year by General Motors during its 25th annual Supplier of the Year awards ceremony held March 31 in Orlando,

"We are focused on building positive supplier relationships, bringing new, customer-centric innovations to GM and being the OEM of choice among suppliers," said Steve Kiefer, GM vice president, Global Purchasing and Supply Chain.

The companies we recognize tonight not only have brought innovation, they delivered it with the quality our customers deserve.

GM recognized 118 of its best suppliers from 15 countries that have consistently exceeded GM's expectations, created outstanding value or brought new innovations to the company, said Preh spokesman Barrett Kalellis. The announcement represented the

The Novi-based automotive most suppliers GM has recognized since debuting the Supplier of the Year event in 1992. This is the fifth time Preh has received the award.

More than half of the suppliers were repeat winners from 2015. Winning suppliers were chosen by a global team of GM purchasing, engineering, quality, manufacturing and logistics executives and selected based on performance criteria in Product Purchasing, Indirect Purchasing, Customer Care and Aftersales, and Logistics, Kalellis said.

"It is a great honor for us to be among the top suppliers of GM once again," said Christoph Hummel, CEO of Preh. "We are proud of this award, because it confirms that our commitment to innovation and quality in the development, manufacturing and supply of human machine interface systems is appreciated by one of our most important cus-

## Honda Orders Air Bag Recall

TOKYO (AP) - Japanese auto- tive history, involving 42 million maker Honda said April 7 it was recalling 37,000 vehicles in the U.S. to check if replacement air bags contain the recalled Takata inflators that may have been installed prior to the massive Takata recalls last year.

Honda Motor Co. said the recall of the front air bag inflator of the 2003 2-door Accord doesn't affect its vehicles in other regions. No ruptures have been reported. The inflators made by Japanese supplier Takata Corp. are blamed in at least 16 deaths and more than 180 injuries worldwide. The problem set off the biggest recall in U.S. automo-

vehicles. Globally, the tally is more than 100 million. The inflators can explode with too much force, sending shrapnel spewing.

The latest recall is unusual in that Honda is trying to find 2,500 inflators that were replaced during repairs, but it doesn't know where the 2,500 inflators went, so it's recalling all of the possibly affected vehicles so they can be checked.

In February, Takata pleaded guilty to concealing a deadly defect in millions of its air bag inflators. The company agreed to pay \$125 million to individual victims and \$850 million to automakers.

blitvin@lunghamer.com



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## Chevy Doubles Down on Brand's Sporty SUVs

ever and Chevrolet has just unveiled a sporty version of the Tahoe and Suburban on April 6.

'Chevrolet has continually invested in Tahoe and Suburban. developing models with varying combinations of capability, technology and performance to meet the needs of different customers," said Sandor Piszar, Chevrolet Truck Marketing direc-

"The RST is designed for customers who want a street performance look without sacrificing capability or refinement, along with the option of increased performance as

The new special edition for the Tahoe and Suburban is known as street-performance Rally Sport Truck, or RST, said spokesman Phil Lienert.

The Tahoe RST will also be available with a new Performance Package that includes a 420hp, 6.2L V8 engine; Magnetic Ride Control with performance calibration; and a new Hydra-Matic 10L80 10-speed automatic transmission.

RST will be available on Tahoe and Suburban models in the fall of 2017, said Lienert. Inspired by aftermarket trends, virtually all chrome trim has been eliminated for a street performance appearance. Changes include body-color grille surround and door handles; gloss-black grille and mirror caps; black roof rails, window trim, badging and Chevy bowties. RST also includes exclusive 22-inch wheels wrapped in Bridgestone P285/45R22 tires.

Available upgrades for Tahoe and Suburban RST include a Borla performance exhaust system that offers a 28 percent improvement in exhaust flow, for a the truck will be cable of 0-60

SUVs are more popular than 7-10-horsepower gain at the rear wheels, Lienert said.

An available brake package features massive front red Brembo six-piston, fixed aluminum calipers with brake pads clamping on larger-than-stock 410 x 32mm (16.1 inch x 1.3 inch) Duralife rotors coupled with a 84 percent increase in brake pad area and a 42 percent increase in rotor area to increase system thermal capacity.

Duralife rotors feature a hardened surface to reduce corrosion and provide quieter braking with less vibration.

The Tahoe RST will also be offered with an exclusive Performance Package that includes Magnetic Ride Control with performance calibration, 6.2L V8 and the new 10L80 10-speed automatic transmission.

This is the first time Tahoe will offer the 6.2L V8, which delivers an estimated 420 horsepower and 460 lb.-ft. of torque, Lienert said. The engine features three state-of-the-art technologies - direct injection, Active Fuel Management and continuously variable valve timing - to make the most of power, torque and efficiency across a broad range of operating conditions.

The 6.2L V8 will be paired with a new 10-speed automatic transmission. With smaller steps between each ratio, the transmission maximizes engine power under acceleration, Lienert said. With a wide 7.39 overall gear ratio spread and lower numerical top gear ratio, the transmission also improves efficiency by reducing engine revolutions at highway speeds.

Based on preliminary estimates, the Tahoe RST Performance Package will offer a towing capacity of 8,400 pounds and



The 2018 Chevrolet Tahoe RST

Full performance metrics will be announced closer to launch, Lienert said.

Magnetic Ride Control is an active suspension that "reads" the road every millisecond, trigger- cruising, Lienert said. The new

mph acceleration in less than 6 ing damping changes in the electronically controlled shock absorbers in as few as 5 milliseconds. As a result, the suspension delivers both improved body-motion control during cornering and a more comfortable ride while performance calibration included in the Tahoe RST Performance Package increases body control for even higher levels of responsiveness and comfort.

"When you want to hustle, it is incredibly fast, with significantly higher levels of acceleration, braking and road-holding grip," said Eric Stanczak, chief engineer for Chevrolet full-size trucks. "When you want to relax, it is very refined, with exceptional ride comfort and interior quietness.

Chevrolet has been the bestselling full-size SUV brand for 42 years, said Leinert. Today, Tahoe and Suburban are the top two vehicles in the segment, he said. They also account for 49.3 percent of retail sales, or nearly one out of every two full-size SUVs Americans bought in 2016. Tahoe and Suburban customers are also the most loyal owners in the segment, he said, with 79 percent of owners replacing their vehicle with another Tahoe or Suburban.

## **Rooney Promoted to CEO at Continental**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Wisniewski had served as CSP's corporate controller since 2013, Zitny said. He brings nearly 25 years of experience in Finance to the job. Prior to joining CSP, he worked as director of Finance at GKN. Previous positions include financial analyst and performance manager at Teksid Aluminum; senior financial analyst at Delphi and analyst at EY.

He holds a Bachelor of Science in Accounting and Psychology, from the University of Michigan.

"As we move to the next chapter with CSP as part of Teijin, I am excited to be taking the reins," said Rooney. "We have a tremendous opportunity ahead of us as we combine the significant expertise of our two companies to develop the next generation of lightweight materials for our customers. We will certainly miss Frank and Jon, but they built a strong team and we're ready to take CSP into the future.

Macher, who joined CSP in 2010, played a key role in turning CSP into the successful and innovative Tier I supplier the company is today, Zitny said. It was through his vision that CSP built up its R&D capabilities to develop the award-winning, lightweighting technologies which CSP is known. He led the company to global growth and significant profitability, culminating in the 2017 sale of CSP to Teijin. CSP milestones achieved under Macher's leadership in-

• The 2013 move into a new world headquarters facility that includes a 29,000-square-foot staffed by Ph.D. chemists, chem- to work to implement standard- joint venture, CSP Victall, until ical engineers, polymer engi- ized processes, including stan- their terms expire.

neers, materials scientists and technicians.

- The 2013 acquisition of a 130,000-square-foot manufacturing and R&D facility in Pouancé, France, where CSP currently conducts most of its research in carbon fiber and other advanced technologies.
- The acquisition of five plants from Magna's composites operations in 2014, further expanding CSP's footprint to 14 fa-
- The introduction of the revolutionary Tough Class A (TCA) Ultra Lite material in 2014.
- The 2014 formation of a 50-50 joint venture with Qingdao Victall Railway Group in Tangshan, China, to form CSP Victall.

"Serving as the CEO of CSP has been one of the most rewarding of all of the positions I've held, because we've been able to make such a significant impact in a relatively short period of time," said Macher.

"We took something that was very broken, and turned it into a world-class innovator for the automotive industry, and this is something I will always be very proud of. I will certainly miss the day-to-day interactions with my team, but I know I'm leaving CSP in very capable hands as I retire for the sixth time."

Macher will continue on in a strategic advisory role for three months before stepping down for good in June 2017.

When Smith joined CSP in 2012, the company was pulling itself out of near insolvency and was saddled with high interest debt. It was lacking in financial discipline, including any standardized processes or proce-R&D and Prototype Center dures. Smith immediately went with the company's Chinese

dardized reporting and KPI reporting company-wide, and a well-defined new business quoting model.

Smith worked side-by-side with Macher and Rooney in the transformation of CSP, and was the financial lead for all expansions, acquisitions and joint ventures over the past 5 years. In addition, he:

- Guided the company to top line growth of 18% CAGR, and EBITDA growth of 38%.
- · Initiated two major refinancings of the company's debt structure, yielding significant savings and providing greater flexibility for future growth.
- Implemented a number of procedural improvements, including a signature authority matrix with a focus on establishing accountability and improved visibility at all levels; a long-term strategic planning process; enhancements to data security, disaster recovery and systems redundancy to insure no interruption of product supply to cus-
- Upgraded in-house IT talent yielding tremendous growth in systems capability and data se-

"Joining the CSP executive team gave me the opportunity to apply my years of financial expertise to a system that presented a number of opportunities for improvement," said Smith.

"It's been a great experience to watch the company embrace the proper disciplines and subsequently grow and prosper. As a bonus, we had quite a bit of fun along the way."

Both Macher and Smith will continue in their board positions

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## New Members Selected for NACTOY Jury

Mark Phelan, Detroit Free Press auto reporter acting as a spokesman for the North American Car, Truck and Utility Vehicle of the Year panel, said on April 11 that four new judges were appointed to the jury that chooses NACTOY winners. They are:

- Paul Brian, "Drive Chicago" on WLS Radio and "His Turn, Her Turn" on ABC/Disney-owned and operated TV stations;
- Jodi Lai, managing editor, Autoguide;
- Gary Vasilash, Automotive Design & Production magazine and "Autoline" TV:
- Al Vazquez, FAMA magazine and video.

"Brian, Lai, Vasilash and Vazquez bring years of experience, a history of insightful work and bring a range of new outlets serving a variety of audiences to the jury," Phelan said. "With their addition, the jury is at its maximum of 60 members."

The North American Car and Truck and Utility Vehicle of the Year awards honor excellence in innovation, design, safety, performance, technology, driver satisfaction and value.

Initiated in 1994, the awards, Phelan said, are the longest-running awards not associated with a single publication. Each year, new-model vehicles are judged by a diverse base of professional automotive journalists from the United States and Canada who report for magazines, television, radio, newspapers and web out-

The diversity of the jurors' outlets and areas of specialization provide broad and deep viewpoints, Phelan said.

- The 2017 award winners were: • North American Car of the Year: Chevrolet Bolt;
- North American Truck of the Year: Honda Ridgeline;
- North American Utility Vehicle of the Year: Chrysler Pacifica. Jurors are already evaluating new vehicles eligible for the 2018

honors

Finalists for the 2018 North American Car, Truck and Utility Vehicle of the Year will be announced at the Los Angeles Auto Show in November. Winners will be announced at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit on Jan. 14, 2018.



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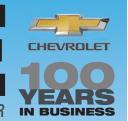
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