Romulus, Lansing GM Facilities Getting \$56M in Upgrades

ship with the state of Michigan, as well as the automaker's employees.

The company is investing \$36

future crossover production, as well as \$20 million in GM's Romulus Powertrain facility.

GM currently builds the Chev-

General Motors is making million at its Lansing Delta Town-rolet Traverse and Buick Enclave moves to improve its relation- ship (LDT) assembly plant for crossovers at LDT and its new V6 engine and new 10-speed automatic transmission at Romulus Powertrain. The announcement was made Feb. 19.

GM spokesman Dan Flores said the new investment in Romulus will be used to purchase additional machining equipment that will enable the transmission capacity expansion.

For competitive reasons, GM is not disclosing specifics or timing related to either the Lansing or Romulus plants'

info@detroitautoscene.com

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Detroit Auto Scene®

"FIRST IN THE HEART OF DETROIT"

VOL. 87 NO. 7

ESTABLISHED 1933 AS NEW CENTER NEWS AND 1983 AS OAKLAND TECH NEWS

FEBRUARY 25, 2019



Testing tools were created to design noise suppression for Explorer.

Ford Goes All Out to Give **New Explorer Quiet Ride**

Call it one for the books.

The new Ford Explorer, said Ford SUV Marketing Manager Craig Patterson, is designed to provide its quietest interior ever, thanks to a first-for-Ford breakthrough that helps keep noise out and delivers a more comfortable ride for passengers - "and is so quiet a librarian could love it."

We've spent a lot of time learning about what our Explorer customers want and love in their SUV, and near the top of the list is a comfortable vehicle they can enjoy with their loved ones," said Patterson. "Whether it's taking the family up north for the weekend or taking a date to the movies on Saturday night, a quieter interior allows them to better connect with those who are along for the journey."

Explorer passengers, Patterson said, will enjoy that sense of peace and relaxation courtesy of three sound-reduction features a first-for-Ford dual-wall dashboard, acoustic glass and Active Noise Control, available only on Limited Hybrid - designed to combat engine, road and wind noise in the cabin.

Explorer's new dual-wall dashboard is designed to ensure passengers enjoy a cabin free from engine noise caused by vibrations that can manifest in a hum-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



This EV pontoon boat was on display at the recent Detroit Boat Show.

GM Creates Boat Prototype That Uses EV Technology

by Jim Stickford

It's an idea that just might float – an all-electric pontoon boat.

Dan Nicholson, GM vice president, Global Electrification, showed off a prototype at the recent Miami Boat Show. The same boat was displayed at the Detroit Boat Show, which ended on Feb. 24.

Nicholson gave a speech in Miami talking about the EV pon-

toon boat in which he said that GM's vision of zero crashes, zero emissions and zero congestion in the future extends to beyond roads.

"We brought with us some examples of the most tried and true marine engines in the busines," Nicholson said. "For more than 60 years, GM Marine has been supplying some of the most re-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Ram 1500 Top of Edmunds List

The 2019 Ram 1500 has been presented the Edmunds Editors' Choice Award for trucks.

'One of the best vehicles we've driven in a long time, the new Ram 1500 is a clever mix of oldschool brawn, cutting-edge technology and thoughtful engineering," said Alistair Weaver, Editorin-chief at Edmunds.

"It drives well, tows well, and inside it feels more upmarket than even some luxury cars. It's a standout vehicle in all aspects and easily grabbed top honors for trucks in 2019."

Edmunds editors test more than 300 vehicles a year and rate each vehicle on more than 30 criteria across five categories, said FCA spokesman Nick Cappa.

Vehicles are subjected to that gauntlet to ensure winners represent the gold standard of automotive excellence and worthy of the Editors' Choice designation,

The editors wrote: "The new 2019 Ram 1500 is a no-compromise truck, leading in luxury, efficiency, capability and innovation. Ram leads the full-size truck segment with significant gains in

fuel efficiency through a new eTorque mild hybrid system in both V6 and V8 configurations."

They noted that overall weight

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



The 2019 Ram 1500 proved to be a winner with Edmunds editors.

Ford Promoting Safe Driving for Youths

You've bought a car for your teenager, so now what?

Ford Driving Skills for Life is celebrating 16 years of its awardwinning driver safety program. As Ford Driving Skills for Life turns "Sweet 16" – the traditional driving age across most of North America - its 2019 national tour will kick off at NRG Stadium in Houston, said Ford spokeswoman Marci Frick.

The stop will be the first of more than 60 free, hands-on driver training sessions for teens and parents in 14 cities across the United States. More than 6,000 people in the U.S. will get behind the wheel this year with professional drivers on a specially designed course to learn advanced maneuvers that can help keep them safe, Frick said. Class dates will be announced later this year.

As Ford Driving Skills for Life continues to move forward and adapt to changing driver behaviors and new road safety concerns, the program will again introduce innovative tools and add specialized programming to enhance the learning experience for new drivers.

Highlights of this year's Ford Driving Skills for Life program in-

• Innovative new sleep suit technology to demonstrate the dangers of drowsy driv-

- New training module to explain how to use ever-improving vehicle safety technology.
- Expanded program for the unique circumstances of driving in rural and emerging markets.
- Addition of a parent module to assist in teen training away from Driving Skills for Life events.
- U.S. communities that are new participants in the program's hands-on training.

"Everything we do is designed to reduce crashes and fatalities by helping new drivers develop

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



The Ford Driving Skills for Life program is making a return visit to sites - including Michigan - across the U.S.

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Look to the Skies And Be Prepared, Says Patterson

Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson has declared the week of March 24-30 as Severe Weather Awareness Week, during which the county will conduct a special test of its outdoor warning system at 1p.m. on Wednesday, March 27.

"Emergency saves lives," preparedness Patterson said. "Whether it's learning to spot tornadoes or having an emergency plan, we encourage residents, businesses and organizations to heighten their awareness of severe weather.'

To help, Oakland County offers free Skywarn weather spotter training in March and April.

Those interested should go to OakGov.com/HomelandSecurity and click on the Skywarn logo to register.

Individuals who attend Skywarn training sessions will learn how to accurately observe weather such as cloud features that do and those that do not lead to tornadoes. To learn more, call 248-858-5300.

Romulus, Lansing GM Sites Getting Upgrades

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

future products at this time, Flores said.

"Romulus has a long-standing reputation of quality, productivity and performance and we are proud of the hard work and commitment displayed by the entire Romulus team," said GM Chairman and CEO Mary Barra during a visit to the plant to meet with employees and community lead-

"GM's investment in Romulus will enable the plant to continue playing an important role in our core business going for-

Since 2009, GM has invested more than \$880 million in the Romulus plant.

The plant currently employs about 1,350 people.

"We are also proud of the hard work and commitment of the entire Lansing team. The Chevrolet Traverse and Buick Enclave are important products in our growing crossover portfolio," Barra said as she also visited the Lansing plant and met with employees and Lansing community lead-

"This investment will allow us to prepare the plant for future crossover production."

Also at the Feb. 18 announcement in Lansing was General Motors Executive Vice President of Global Manufacturing Alicia Boler Davis.

Since 2009, GM has invested more than \$600 million in the Lansing Delta Township plant.

Lansing Delta Township assembly, GM's newest assembly plant in the United States, has built more than 2 million crossovers since the facility opened in 2006.

"With over 110 years of automotive history in the Lansing

area, LDT is proud to be the first a Gold Certified Leader in Energy Environmental Design (LEED)," Barra said.

"Today, the plant operates two shifts of production and employs approximately 2,600 employees.'

GM has strong presence in Michigan with more than 51,000 employees working at 33 locations, Flores said.

He said that Michigan is home to more than 3,100 GM suppliers and that GM spends more than \$10 billion with those suppliers annually.

Lansing Delta Township/Lans-U.S. manufacturing facility to be ing Regional Stamping statistics:

- Facility size 3.6 million square feet.
- Employees approximately 2,421 hourly at the assembly facility, 212 at the stamping
- Salaried 214 at the assembly facility, 18 at the stamping facility.
- Facilities stamping plant, body shop, paint shop and general assembly facili-
- Highlights advanced technologies, including 3D print-

ing onsite and collaborative

Since its opening, more than two million crossovers have been built at the site, Flores

said.

The Romulus plant originally opened in 1976 as part of GM Detroit Diesel Allison Division, making diesel engines and components, said Flores.

Romulus began to produce engines in the 1980s, and, for the last 30 years or so, has produced more than 10.8 million V8 engines and more than 6.6 million V6 engines, he



Barra, right, talks with GM employees Angela Jarrett, left, and Kayla Owens in Romulus.

Ford's Going All Quiet With New Explorer

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

ming sensation, said Patterson. Separating the engine compartment from the passenger cabin, he said, are two walls - one of which is made of sheet-molded composite material - with an air gap in between.

The dual-wall dashboard, which significantly reduces the traveling sound that comes with a running engine, mimics a semianechoic chamber similar to those used in noise, vibration and harshness testing at Ford's driving dynamics lab.

Parker Lewis, Ford NVH engineering manager, said keeping noise out of the cabin with the dual-wall dashboard is similar to the technology used to keep drinks hot or cold.

"This innovation is very similar in theory to an insulated thermos or mug," said Lewis. "The multiple layers of a mug keep unwanted ambient temperatures out, while the multiple layers of this dashboard keep unwanted noise out of the vehicle cabin."

Keeping wind and road noise out is key to creating a quieter cabin that passengers can

ing how that noise gets in in the first place is just as important.

Just like the multiple layers of the new dual-wall dashboard, Explorer's windshield and front side windows have not just one layer of glass, but two, said Lewis, adding that the layers are separated by a sheet of clear plastic, creating layers that serve as a buffer between the interior and the outside world.

As new powertrain technology finds its way into today's vehicles, it can make for unique sound experiences for passengers, said Lewis, so the root cause of noise is not limited to that created by propulsion, wind or the road. He noted that lowand mid-frequency noise can contribute to driver fatigue, while higher frequencies can inhibit the ability to hold a conversation in a moving vehicle.

Ford's solution is Active Noise Control, said Lewis, available only on Explorer Limited Hybrid, which uses strategically placed microphones throughout the cabin to listen for and pick up on unwanted frequencies that contribute to noise conditions. Once unwanted frequencies are discovered, he said, the system cancels enjoy, said Lewis, but identify- them out by producing opposing

sound waves that come through the audio system speakers.

"Think of it as thunder on a stormy night," said Lewis. "These sound waves bounce around us in a contained area, then the vehicle's audio system speakers negate the thunder, essentially silencing the environment."

Together, the dual-wall dashboard and acoustic glass work to insulate passengers from unwanted sounds, while Active Noise Control cancels them out.

He added that by establishing test parameters through decades of SUV customer feedback, an engineer can not only determine the level of quiet a buyer wants, but identify areas where the allnew Explorer can be made even quieter.

"How all those pieces and elements coming together fit, and what they are made from are critical questions for us to ensure proper assembly to reduce gaps that can allow wind noise in in the first place," said Lewis.

A new driving dynamics lab is the latest addition to Ford's suite of noise, vibration and harshness testing facilities. The lab allows engineers to test vehicle sound in different settings, including a semi-anechoic chamber with powered rollers to simulate road noise, and in temperatures ranging from minus 40 degrees to 140 degrees Fahrenheit to shrink and expand materials that may cause squeaks and rattles.

Different parts of the vehicle are tested in the lab's anechoic chamber and reverberation suite. The first provides an area free of echo and reverberation creates a pure working environment for sound, while the second is used to determine how noise permeates full components or materials, such as sheet metal.

The new 2020 Explorer is the first product to emerge from Ford's new driving dynamics lab. It's manufactured at Chicago Assembly Plant and arrives in dealer showrooms this summer.



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FEBRUARY 25, 2019 "FIRST IN THE HEART OF DETROIT SINCE 1933"

2019 FCA Student Design Contest Begins

Who says students have to wait until college before gaining the skills to be a first-class automotive designer? Not the people at FCA and the College for Creative Studies.

These two institutions have teamed up again to encourage and reward high school students to look at automotive designing as a potential career.

The is important because without a nudge from an art teacher, a visit to an art school or just plain luck, some of the world's top automotive designers may never have made their mark on history, said FCA spokeswoman Dianna Gutierrez.

Mark Trostle, head of Performance, Passenger Car and Utility Vehicle Design for FCA – North America, wants to change that. Seven years ago, he revived a contest he won as a high school student that helped drive him to where he is today, leading the design efforts for some of the most desired vehicles on the road. Gutierrez said.

The 2019 Drive for Design contest challenges U.S. high school students in grades 10-12 to design the ultimate status vehicle using any FCA brand. Just like in the professional world, there is a level of urgency - entries are due by April 27. Three students will be named winners from all valid entries received, Gutierrez said.

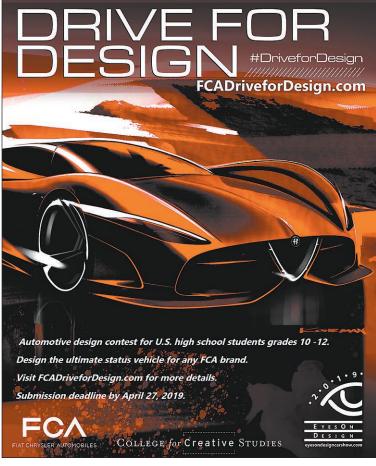
Today's automotive designers not only sketch cars, they create some of the most advanced user experience systems available, work with 3D technology, research color trends and create interior spaces that are multifunctional and beautiful," said Trostle.

"As the field of automotive design grows, it's vital that we increase awareness and educate students and parents about the good-paying opportunities available. Many of today's designers had no idea that automotive design could be a career option and we want to change that.'

This year, the FCA US design team includes guest judge Josh Welton, writer, artist and owner of Brown Dog Welding LLC fabrication and art studio in Detroit, Gutierrez said.

Welton is an accomplished welder, fabricator, teacher, artist, writer, social media influencer, podcast host, entrepreneur and automotive enthusiast. He writes for a variety of outlets, including DodgeGarage.com, and shares his artistic creations on social media. Welton will help review submitted sketches and select this year's winners.

To kick off this year's competition, Trostle and Head of Jeep Exterior Design Mark Allen participated in an "Ask Me Anything" Facebook LIVE broadcast hosted by Josh Welton on Feb. 20.



FCA, CCS and EvesOn Design brochure offers info to young designers.

North America social channels

for regular posts to educate and

inform followers about careers in

automotive design. Weekly up-

dates will be posted on the Drive

for Design Facebook page.

Viewers submitted questions ents can also follow the FCA via the Drive for Design Facebook page (Facebook.com/Drive-ForDesign), the FCA US Facebook page, the FCA US Twitter (@FiatChrysler_NA) and FCA US Instagram (@FiatChrysler_NA) handles using #DriveForDesign, Gutierrez said.

Three winners receive an exclusive, behind-the-scenes tour of the FCA US Product Design studios in Auburn Hills, and the opportunity to spend one-on-one time with leading automotive de-

The winners also receive a scholarship to attend the Precollege Summer Experience Transportation Design program at College for Creative Studies. The summer program curriculum includes the fundamentals of gestural sketching, perspective for both interior and exterior automotive concepts and how to translate designs into 3D mod-

Drive for Design winners receive their awards on Friday. June 14, at EyesOn Design's "Vision Honored" Black Tie and Silent Auction and will serve as junior judges at the prestigious EyesOn Design Car Show, held every Father's Day weekend at the historic Edsel and Eleanor Ford House in Grosse Pointe Shores, Gutierrez said.

For detailed contest rules and information on how to submit sketches, visit www.FCAdrivefordesign.com. Students and par-

Ram 1500 Top of Edmunds **List for Best Pickup Truck**

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

for the Ram 1500 has been reduced by 225 pounds, the frame using advanced materials and engineering to eliminate 100 pounds while increasing stiffness and durability for 12,750 pounds of towing capability and 2,300 pounds of payload.

"A mild hybrid engine assist technology called eTorque appears on this new Ram," they wrote. "Not a hybrid technology in the traditional sense of a gaselectric car, eTorque stores electricity in a lithium battery and helps the automatic engine stopstart system work more smoothly. It also provides a bit of extra power in short bursts. For now, the Ram's previously available 3.0-liter diesel V6 isn't offered, but it could show up in the 2020

They also liked that "inside, the Ram delivers new technology, highlighted by an optional infotainment system with a massive 12-inch touchscreen display, Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, and multiple USB ports. (Ironically, a single CD player is optional only on higher trim levels.)

model."

"The new Ram's predecessor was one of the older designs among American half-ton pickups, but no more. Sharpened new design, additional technology, and increased capability vault the 2019 Ram 1500 back to its place as one of the top achievers in its class."

The new Uconnect 4C with a massive 12-inch touchscreen leads the pickup world with technology, featuring split-screen capability, 360-degree camera views and exclusive content from SiriusXM with 360L, Cappa said, adding that active safety and security systems join the technology onslaught with adaptive cruise control, automatic emergency braking and blindspot monitoring.

Edmunds guides car shoppers online from research to purchase with in-depth reviews of every new vehicle, shopping tips from an in-house team of experts, plus a wealth of consumer and automotive market insights, said Cappa. Edmunds, he said, helps millions of shoppers each month select, price and buy a car with confidence.

Regarded as one of America's best workplaces by Fortune and Great Place to Work, Edmunds is based in Santa Monica, Calif., and has a satellite office in De-

In 2009, the Ram Truck brand launched as a stand-alone division, focused on meeting the demands of truck buyers and delivering benchmark-quality vehicles, Cappa said, noting that that focus leads Ram to design the industry's most innovative, awardwinning trucks.





GM's Using Its Newest EV Tech to Build Better Boat

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

spected names in the marine industry with engines for their stern-drive and inboard watercrafts."

He said GM's success in the marine industry comes, in part, from leveraging the company's engineering expertise and manufacturing infrastructure. And that's something to build on, he said.

"We decided that it's time to look at blending our proven marine product capability with our other strengths and taking it all to the next level with something that fits precisely within the General Motors vision," Nicholson said.

To that end, GM created and unveiled its prototype all-electric boat at the Miami show. Nicholson said its name is Forward Marine FIRST.

"Our expertise in automotive electrification has supported the introductions in the last few years of some of the industry's best EVs," Nicholson said.

"We believe the time is right to begin exploring and leveraging General Motors engineering expertise, our economy of scale, and over half a century of marine industry expertise to do something other manufacturers cannot."

And that is exactly what GM boating experience.

has done, Nicholson said, with the prototype 24-foot all-electric pontoon boat, the Forward Marine FIRST. The all-aluminum prototype tri-hull pontoon boat is powered by a proven automotive grade propulsion system.

The proprietary hull is designed to maximize power and range and is made of one-eighth-inch aluminum alloy.

The propulsion system is strategically positioned and integrated with a mid-ship-mounted battery pack and drive unit, which provides power to the outdrive through a drive shaft.

"At the heart of this boat is a 60kWh battery that can provide over 10 hours of cruising, a top speed of over 20 mph, and can be recharged using standard 110V outlet or a 220V SAE charge station," Nicholson said.

"Think about it – minimal maintenance, no refueling, no mess, no extra fuel costs, and virtually silent operation. This is the boat that will make relaxation more relaxing.

"Imagine having the ability to enjoy drinks straight from the onboard refrigerator, make some food on an electric grill, watch the onboard TV, and keep all your favorite electronics charged all day on this beautiful boat."

GM is currently exploring how this prototype improves the boating experience.

Navigator Finds Itself on Top of Best List

The 2018 Lincoln Navigator is an SUV that best delivers on performance and luxury, at least according to the people at Edmunds.com.

They named the Navigator as the best luxury SUV in the Web site's 2019 Edmunds Editors' Choice Awards.

They wrote that Lincoln's fullsize luxury SUV delivers in the categories that matter most to consumers, said Lincoln spokeswoman Anika Salceda-Wycoco. The awards are based on tests in 27 criteria, including driving and performance, comfort, interior and technology.

Lincoln Navigator sales kept their momentum all through 2018, posting a 43.6 percent gain in December on tight inventory, according to sales statistics, Salceda-Wycoco said. High-series Lincoln Black Label and Reserve Navigators represented 90 percent of the SUV's sales mix.

"Our editorial team tests more than 300 vehicles a year – that's more than a collective 17,000 hours behind the wheel," said Alistair Weaver, editor-in-chief at Edmunds. "We're going beyond what's hot and new to showcase the best of the best from all the cars on sale today. An Edmunds Editors' Choice winner represents the gold standard of automotive excellence."

Edmunds editors also called the Navigator "one of our favorite luxury SUVs. Last year's redesign enhanced the Navigator's already impressive capability to carry people and tow heavy loads. It also ushered in fresh styling and new features. This new Lincoln is at the head of the class against its American counterparts and likely earns frontrow status with valet attendants, too.

"We think the 2019 Navigator wears Lincoln's new design language well. It has both presence and style, even when parked next to SUVs from well-established marques such as Mercedes-Benz and Range Rover. Under the hood is an impressive turbocharged 3.5-liter V6 that cranks out a stout 450 horsepower and 510 pound-feet of torque. All that massive power gets to the ground via a 10-speed automatic transmission. And while 10 speeds may seem like overkill, you'll hardly notice the shifting, and the additional gearing helps improve both acceleration and fuel economy."

Editors also praised the Navigator for not ignoring the SUV's interior.

"Inside, the Navigator uses top-notch materials on every panel. There are three rows of adult-size seating, a massive amount of cargo space, and modern tech behind the prominent infotainment screen," editors wrote.

Lincoln sales statistics show more than 55 percent of Navigator sales are conquest, with buyers coming from Mercedes-Benz, Cadillac, Land Rover and other luxury brands. Navigator clients also are skewing younger than traditional Lincoln buyers, with approximately 50 percent between the ages of 34 and 54, Weaver said.



Edmunds rated the 2018 Lincoln Navigator "best luxury SUV."

Ford Safe Driving Classes Coming Soon to State

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

essential skills, gain experience and improve decision-making," said James Graham, global manager, Ford Driving Skills for Life.

"We keep a close watch on new trends that impact driving behavior and capture the attention of teens and parents with training that is not only beneficial, but interesting and fun, as it promotes safe, smart driving."

Following its 2019 launch in Houston, the Ford Driving Skills for Life tour will move on to California, Florida, Massachusetts, Michigan, Colorado, North Carolina, New York, Arizona and Puerto Rico. A summer mountain tour will visit Billings, Mont.; Cheyenne, Wyo.; and Spokane,

"We could not be more thrilled to continue our long partnership with Ford Driving Skills for Life," said Jonathan Adkins, executive director, Governors Highway Safety Association.

"The program clearly and effectively addresses the challenges faced by newly licensed drivers and their parents. We're excited to see new additions this year that will contribute to the success of the Ford Driving Skills for Life program."

The Governors Highway Safety Association reports teen drivers have crash rates three times higher per mile driven than drivers age 20 and older.

The association also notes that despite progress toward reducing teen driving deaths, drivers 16-20 years old involved in fatal crashes increased by 3.6 percent in 2016. Ford's award-winning Driving Skills for Life program pairs hands-on ride-and-drive clinics with an emphasis on the dangers of drunk, drugged and distracted driving.

"Each year, we have a new group of inexperienced drivers hitting the roads," said Graham. "Programs such as Ford Driving Skills for Life are critical to helping keep new drivers safe on the roadways. Programs like ours help save lives."

This year, Ford Driving Skills for Life is exploring new program elements, new road safety partners and the use of technology to increase awareness and engagement with drivers around the world, Frick said.

Since 2003, Ford Motor Company's signature safe driving program has provided real-world driver training in vehicles or through its online academy to more than a million newly licensed drivers.

Ford Driving Skills for Life has provided free, hands-on training in 43 countries, adapting lessons to meet specific road conditions and environments for each location, Frick said.

For more information and updates on tour locations, visit www.drivingskillsforlife.com.

Tesla's Corporate Lawyer Quits After Two Months

(AP) – Tesla's top lawyer is leaving the company after only two months on the job.

Tesla said in a prepared statement Feb. 20 that General Counsel Dane Butswinkas will return to a legal practice in Washington, D.C. He'll continue to work for Tesla as outside counsel.

No reason for the departure was given.

He'll be replaced by Jonathan Chang, an eight-year company veteran who had been vice president of legal.

Butswinkas says he has tremendous confidence in Chang and the management team.

He is the latest in a long line of top executives to depart the Palo Alto, Calif., electric car and solar panel company.

Last month, Tesla Inc. announced that Chief Financial Officer Deepak Ahuja would retire, his second attempt at doing so.



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Location: Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center (400 Renaissance Dr., Detroit, MI 48243)

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FCA Unveils 2019 Price of Ram HD Truck

The new 2019 Ram Heavy Duty pickup truck will have a starting Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) of \$33,395, plus \$1,695 destination fee.

"In launching the new 2019 Ram Heavy Duty pickups and Chassis Cab trucks, we knew it was important to offer classleading capability, features and technology. But it's also important to offer our great products at a competitive price," said Reid Bigland, head of Ram Truck Brand – FCA. "We feel that we've delivered the right mix that Ram Truck customers – across a broad spectrum – will appreciate."

The new 2019 Ram Heavy Duty is available in a wide range of offerings, from the well-equipped Ram 2500 Tradesman regular cab 4x2's \$33,395 MSRP to the technology-leading Ram 3500 Limited Mega Cab 4x4 with 12-inch Uconnect 4C touchscreen at \$67,050 plus destination.

Pricing of all models reflects the standard 6.4-liter Hemi V8 engine with 8-speed automatic transmission. The optional 6.7-liter Cummins Turbo Diesel with 6-speed automatic transmission is \$9,100, while the optional 1,000 lb.-ft. of torque Cummins High Output (3500 only), mated to the Aisin 6-speed transmission, is \$11,795.

The new Ram Heavy Duty made its worldwide debut at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit in January where its class-leading capability with the segment's highest torque ratings, highest towing at 35,100 lbs. and highest payload at 7,680 lbs. wrote the headlines, said FCA spokesman Nick Cappa.

The 2019 Ram Heavy Duty will deliver new features and technologies that make hitching trailers easier and will provide confidence while towing, Cappa said. New features include adaptive cruise control and Forward Collision Warning, both with full stop while towing, 360-degree surround-view camera, trailer reverse guidance, cargo-view camera with dynamic gridlines, auxiliary cameras and bed-lowering mode.

The new 2019 Ram 3500, 4500 and 5500 Chassis Cab commercial trucks also recently made their debut at the Chicago Auto Show earlier this month. The Chassis Cab lineup will have a starting MSRP of \$34,750, plus \$1,695 destination fee, Cappa said

European OEMs Report Drop In Car Sales

MILAN (AP) – The European carmakers' association says new passenger car sales in the region dropped by 4.6 percent in January, weighed down by big declines in Spain and Italy.

Despite the drop, the association said on Feb. 15 that the 1.2 million cars sold last month in the European Union marked the second-best January since 2009. It compared with 1.25 million a year earlier.

German manufacturer Volkswagen registered a 6.5 percent decline in sales, but maintained its dominant 24 percent market

Italian-American carmaker Fiat Chrysler Automobiles saw sales decline 15 percent.

French carmakers PSA and Renault limited their drops to 2 percent and 0.7 percent respectively. Luxury carmaker Daimler saw sales fall 1.3 percent while BMW slid by 2.7 percent.

Demand dropped off by 7.5 percent in Italy and 8 percent in Spain.





Chevy's New App Helps Keeping in Touch

Keeping track of loved ones just got a little easier for Chevy

The myChevrolet mobile app recently received a new feature that will help ease loved ones' worries and make the process of checking-in more convenient.

The feature is called Vehicle Locate and it allows Chevy owners to send automated text alerts to friends and family when their connected vehicle enters or leaves a designated boundary area, or arrives at or departs from an address, said GM spokesman Stefan Cross.

Owners can also use the feature to pinpoint the location of their connected vehicle at any given time.

The new mobile app update replaces the Family Link service, which was solely webbased.

When setting up Vehicle Locate, users can create boundary areas, as wide as a 20-mile radius or as small as a specific address.

Users can then select who should receive alerts when their vehicle either enters or leaves that designated area. Up to 10 people can receive a specific boundary alert, and each party has to opt-in.

"At Chevrolet, we aim to make our drivers' lives easier through smart and purposeful technologies," said Alejandra Gonzalez, Chevrolet's product manager of Remote Services.

"Vehicle Locate provides both drivers and their loved ones with peace of mind in a variety of different drive-related scenar-

Chevrolet has identified a handful of different scenarios where Vehicle Locate makes it easier to stay connected:

• The Connected Commuter – A working professional who

regularly notifies family or friends once they have left work or are nearing home. Vehicle Locate eliminates the need to send a text by automatically sending out a notification.

- The Concerned Parent -When teenagers start driving, it can be a constant point of worry for any parent. To help minimize worry, parents can work with their new drivers to receive automatic alerts when the vehicle arrives at school or when it leaves a designated radius.
- The Modern Dater Blind and online dates can be exciting, but the idea of meet ing up with a stranger can also be somewhat concerning. Instead of regularly texting friends and family members updates on whereabouts, daters can have their

vehicle automatically send out a text once it has left the planned restaurant or once the vehicle has arrived back at home.

• The Helpful Truck Owner -Truck owners often get requests to let friends borrow their vehicle to help move or transport large items. Vehicle Locate can help the owner keep tabs on the truck and anticipate its return.

Vehicle Locate is available to owners of eligible 2012 model year or newer Chevrolet vehicles in the United States, Canada and Mexico.

The service is part of the Remote Access Plan, which also provides mobile apps features like remote key fob services to remotely start, stop, lock and unlock properly equipped General Motors vehicles, and on-demand diagnostics troubleshoot common issues.

BMW, Daimler Join Forces

AG are pooling their mobility services to create a new global player providing sustainable urban mobility for customers.

The two companies are investing more than a billion euros in total to develop and more closely intermesh their offerings for car-sharing, ride-hailing, parking, charging and multimodal transport, said Daimler spokesman Hendrik Sackmann.

The cooperation comprises five joint ventures: REACH NOW multimodal services. CHARGE NOW for charging, FREE NOW for taxi ride-hailing, PARK NOW for parking and SHARE NOW for car-sharing.

"Our mobility services have developed a strong customer base and we are now taking the

The BMW Group and Daimler next strategic step. We are pooling the strength and expertise of 14 successful brands and investing more than €1 billion (\$1.13B) to establish a new player in the fast-growing market for urban mobility," said Dieter Zetsche, chairman of the Board of Management of Daimler AG and head of Mercedes-Benz Cars.

> "By creating an intelligent network of joint ventures, we will be able to shape current and future urban mobility and draw maximum benefit from the opportunities opened up by digitalization, shared services and the increasing mobility needs of our customers. Further cooperations with other providers, including stakes in startups and established players, are also a possible option.

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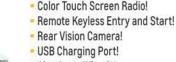
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