

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

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JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2005

SEMA Show Highlights

*Cutting edge technology and design and
outrageous automotive foolishness in Las Vegas*



VEHICLES • EQUIPMENT • SAFETY • PERFORMANCE • MAINTENANCE • MOTORSPORTS • EVENTS • DESTINATIONS • ATTRACTIONS

SEMA—the Specialty Equipment Market Association—has grown from a small collection of aftermarket suppliers in Southern California to being synonymous with the SEMA Show, each November in Las Vegas. This is one of the most significant venues worldwide for the launch of a few new models, but more than anything to push beyond the cutting edge with new ideas, technologies, styles and forecasts, not only for the aftermarket and supporting industries, but increasingly for vehicle manufacturers themselves. Whether displaying, announcing and revealing or not, everyone shows up for this one. This is the supreme “idea show,” and it’s also a really good time. Be prepared to walk many miles per day just within the exhibition halls. And don’t forget to grab an autographed poster from the Pirelli girls.

Las Vegas is right on the fly/drive cusp from metro Phoenix, but of course we always drive. It’s a chance to see sunset reflected on the Aquarius Mountains or sunrise on the Hualapai Mountains along US 93 between Wickenburg and Kingman, and now we’re watching progress on the impressive new Colorado River Bridge, which will bring travelers high above the Colorado River just to the south of Hoover Dam. We even can appreciate the slow crawl across the dam, knowing that soon most traffic will be blowing right by this Western travel classic.

When the SEMA show has come and gone, what goes on in Vegas does not stay there—the impact is felt far and wide. Check it out.



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ARIZONA DRIVER

MAGAZINE

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1. How fast does the new 2005 Chevrolet Corvette C6 accelerate from 0 to 60 mph?
 - a. 3.8 seconds
 - b. 4.2 seconds
 - c. 4.5 seconds
 - d. 4.9 seconds
2. What other kind of automotive system was recently introduced by famous audio system innovator Bose?
 - a. automatic tinting windows
 - b. an electronic suspension
 - c. a navigation system
 - d. a system to make a car cabin quiet
3. How many Mini Cooper owners are men?
 - a. 38 percent
 - b. 51 percent
 - c. 62 percent
 - d. 75 percent
4. Car owners from which part of the country are most likely to perform, or have performed, general maintenance on their vehicle at least once every month to help protect their automotive investment?
 - a. South
 - b. Northeast
 - c. North Central
 - d. West
5. How much tax deduction can buyers of gasoline-electric hybrid vehicles take?
 - a. None
 - b. \$1,000
 - c. \$2,000
 - d. \$4,000
6. In August 2003 a Japanese group set a world record for what mileage per gallon?
 - a. 155 mpg
 - b. 477 mpg
 - c. 1,452 mpg
 - d. 11,193 mpg
7. How many Americans use seatbelts?
 - a. 59 percent
 - b. 71 percent
 - c. 80 percent
 - d. 88 percent
8. When was the first Nissan (then Datsun) pickup sold in the United States?
 - a. 1959
 - b. 1964
 - c. 1969
 - d. 1973
9. When was the first CVT (continuously variable transmission) offered in a production car?
 - a. 1958
 - b. 1975

- c. 1990
 - d. 2002
10. Land Rover is replacing the Discovery with the new more upscale LR3, which is larger and 850 pounds heavier. What will the difference in price be?
 - a. LR3 is about \$2,000 less
 - b. LR3 is about the same price
 - c. LR3 is about \$5,000 more
 - d. LR3 is about \$10,000 more
 11. Which company has paid the largest total fines for Corporate Average Fuel Economy violations since the 1983 model year?
 - a. BMW
 - b. Jaguar
 - c. Mercedes-Benz
 - d. Volvo
 12. How many different small vehicle nameplates (e.g. Chevy Aerieo, Dodge Neon, Ford Focus, etc.) were sold in the US last year?
 - a. 17 brands
 - b. 29 brands
 - c. 41 brands
 - d. 65 brands
 13. How old is automotive legend Lee Iacocca?
 - a. 70 years old
 - b. 75 years old
 - c. 80 years old
 - d. 85 years old
 14. Which tire maker is the world's largest based on 2003 sales?
 - a. Bridgestone
 - b. Continental
 - c. Goodyear
 - d. Michelin
 15. Short supplies and rising demand have forced steel prices up by 15 to 20 percent. How much will that add to the cost of each new vehicle?
 - a. about \$40
 - b. about \$85
 - c. about \$120
 - d. about \$195
 16. What percentage of vehicles, crashed in 2004, will be totaled?
 - a. 7 percent
 - b. 12 percent
 - c. 16 percent
 - d. 22 percent
 17. When did NASCAR start the Craftsman Truck Series races?
 - a. 1993
 - b. 1995
 - c. 1997
 - d. 1999
 18. When did the NHTSA (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration) start doing the crash testing of new vehicles?
 - a. 1975
 - b. 1979
 - c. 1984
 - d. 1989
 19. Which of the following cars is listed as having the most horsepower for a production car sold in the United States?
 - a. Porsche Carrera GT
 - b. Mercedes-Benz CL65 AMG
 - c. Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren
 - d. Mercedes-Benz SL65 AMG

20. How old is the average Hummer H2 buyer?

- a. 35 years old
 - b. 40 years old
 - c. 47 years old
 - d. 53 years old
21. What is the new Honda pickup going to be called?
 - a. Ridgemark
 - b. Affinity
 - c. Companion
 - d. Ridgeline
 22. The Big 3 (GM, Ford and Chrysler Group) automakers hold what percentage of total US sales after 10 months of 2004 model year?
 - a. 37.2 percent
 - b. 45.9 percent
 - c. 58.9 percent
 - d. 64.1 percent
 23. California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger is driving a hydrogen-powered Hummer H2H fitted with three tanks that hold a total of 12 pounds of gaseous hydrogen. How far can the H2H go on that 12 pounds?
 - a. 50 miles
 - b. 150 miles
 - c. 250 miles
 - d. 350 miles
 24. Which car is the most expensive to buy?
 - a. Rolls-Royce Phantom
 - b. Porsche Carrera GT
 - c. Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren
 - d. Maybach 62
 25. The warranty was the biggest reason for consumers to buy which of the following?
 - a. Suzuki
 - b. Kia
 - c. Hyundai
 - d. Mitsubishi
 26. How much is spent annually on aftermarket auto parts?
 - a. \$2 billion
 - b. \$10 billion
 - c. \$30 billion
 - d. \$50 billion
 27. When was the displacement of the small block Chevrolet V-8 engine increased from 265 cubic-inches to 283 cubic inches?
 - a. 1956
 - b. 1957
 - c. 1958
 - d. 1959
 28. What is the estimated cost to build the infrastructure to convert the country over to hydrogen fueling equipment?
 - a. \$100 billion
 - b. \$250 billion
 - c. \$400 billion
 - d. \$750 billion
 29. What percentage of vehicles tested in the front-end crash tests by the NHTSA (National Highway Safety Administration) received either four or five star ratings in 2003?
 - a. 36 percent
 - b. 52 percent
 - c. 69 percent
 - d. 88 percent
 30. What percentage all the Porsche 911s sold in the US are still on the road?
 - a. 52 percent
 - b. 61 percent
 - c. 70 percent
 - d. 82 percent

ANSWERS ON PAGE 8 >>

>> ANSWERS (quiz on page 7) >>

1. Answer: b. The new 2005 Chevrolet Corvette accelerates from 0 to 60 mph in a mere 4.2 seconds. That is the same as both the Porsche 911 Turbo and Lamborghini Gallardo.
2. Answer: b. Famed sound system maker Bose has developed a totally different kind of suspension system that uses linear electrometric motors with magnets and wire coils mounted on each wheel to improve handling and ride quality.
3. Answer: c. 62 percent of Mini Cooper owners are men.
4. Answer: a. According to a recent Shell Oil V-Power Consumer Car Care Survey, 49 percent of the people from the South are likely to perform or have someone else perform general maintenance on their vehicle monthly. Northeast – 39 percent. North Central – 38 percent. West – 37 percent.
5. Answer: c. Gasoline-electric hybrid buyers are still eligible for a \$2,000 tax deduction for two more years thanks to a bill passed by Congress in September 2004. The clean-fuel deduction had been scheduled to be phased out, prior to this congressional action.
6. Answer: d. During the Super Mileage Car Contest held in August 2003 in Hiroshima, Japan, Team Fancy Carol from Japan achieved a record fuel efficiency of 11,193 miles per gallon. While the high fuel economy sounds great, most consumers would find the car less than desirable due to the top speed just over 15 miles per hour, the cramped position of the driver, and the lack of amenities such as a radio, air conditioning, or roll-down windows.
7. Answer: c. According to a 2003 study by the US

Department of Transportation, 80 percent of Americans wear a seatbelt while driving or riding in a motor vehicle.

8. Answer: a. The first Nissan pickup (then the Datsun 1000) was sold in the US in 1959.
9. Answer: a. According to thefreedictionary.com Hub van Doorne developed the CVT transmission and used it first in the Dutch-built DAF in 1958. The patent was later sold to Volvo and it was used in the 1970s in the Volvo 340 CVT model.
10. Answer: d. The new Land Rover LR3 is moving much more upscale than the Discovery it replaces. The wheelbase is 13.6 inches longer, it's 5.7 inches longer and weighs about 850 pounds more and is priced about \$10,000 more than the Discovery making it in the same league as vehicles like the Lexus GX 470, VW Touareg and BMW X5.
11. Answer: c. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration Mercedes-Benz has paid fines of \$224.46 million since 1983 for exceeding Corporate Average Fuel Economy levels. (BMW \$210.68 million. Volvo \$56.41 million. Jaguar \$40.07 million.) The Volvo and Jaguar penalties were prior to being acquired by Ford. Ford has a policy of not being fined, while some other companies think the fines are a part of doing business to provide the types of vehicles consumers want.
12. Answer: c. According to CSM Worldwide, there were 41 small vehicle nameplates sold in the US last years, but they expect that number to go up to 65 by 2009, indicating small cars could be the up-and-coming automotive segment. Reasons listed for the popularity are rising gasoline prices, more stylish vehicles, roomy tall wagons and relatively inexpensive vehicles.
13. Answer: c. Automotive icon Lee Iacocca turned 80 years old on October 15, 2004.

14. Answer: d. With sales of \$16.2 billion in 2003, Michelin is the world's largest tire maker. (Bridgestone \$14.8 billion. Goodyear \$13.6 billion. Continental \$5.6 billion.)
15. Answer: c. According to *Automotive News*, the 15 to 20 percent increase in steel prices will add about \$120 in costs per vehicle.
16. Answer: c. According to the industry trade publication *Collision Repair Industry Insight*, 16 percent of the crashed vehicles will be totaled in 2004. The number was seven percent in 1995.
17. Answer: b. The NASCAR Craftsman Truck Series started in 1995.
18. Answer: b. NHTSA started crash testing new vehicles and rating the result with one to five stars in 1979.
19. Answer: c. The four cars listed have the most powerful production engines available in the US market. Tops is the Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren with 617 horsepower. (Porsche 605 hp. Mercedes-Benz CL65 604 hp. Mercedes-Benz SL65 604 hp.)
20. Answer: b. The average age of a Hummer H2 buyer is 40 years old with an average household income of \$175,000.
21. Answer: d. The new Honda pickup will be called the Ridgeline.
22. Answer: c. After the first 10 months of US sales, the Big 3 US automakers have a 58.9 percent market share. That compares with 60.2 percent at the same time in 2003.
23. Answer: a. Governor Schwazenegger's experimental hydrogen-powered Hummer H2H needs to be refilled about every 50 miles.
24. Answer: b. According to Road & Track magazine the Porsche Carrera GT is the most expensive production car with a price of \$440,000. (Mercedes-Benz SLR McLaren est. \$430,000. Maybach 62 est. \$360,000. Rolls Phantom \$328,750.)
25. Answer: c. According to a recent Strategic Vision survey, 80 percent of Hyundai buyers said the warranty coverage was the most important reason for their choice. (Kia 73 percent. Suzuki 54 percent. Mitsubishi 53 percent.)
26. Answer: c. According to Joseph Coker of the Specialty Equipment Marketing Association, \$30 billion is spent annually on aftermarket parts for vehicles
27. Answer: b. The 265 cubic inch Chevy small-block V-8 went to 283 cubic inches in 1957 and remained that size until the 327 was introduced in 1964.
28. Answer: c. According to General Motors, it will cost at least \$400 billion to outfit the nation's gasoline stations with hydrogen fueling equipment.
29. Answer: d. The NHTSA says 88 percent of the vehicles they currently test receive a four or five star rating. In 1979 when the tests started only 30 percent of the vehicles received those ratings. As a result, the government organization is considering retiring or changing the test.
30. Answer: c. Porsche officials claim that 70 percent of the Porsche 911s sold in the US are still on the road. ■

The Car Smarts quiz includes news and trivia from industry sources, trade journals and consumer magazines compiled for *Arizona Driver* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.



VOLKSWAGEN WILL BUILD CONCEPT ROADSTER

Volkswagen officials have given strong indications that they will build the Concept R roadster that was first seen at the Frankfurt auto show last September. Although the actual details of the car are still unknown, it's expected to use the suspension components from the VW Polo and Golf. Engine choices for the mid-engine configuration are likely to be a 148-hp 2.0-liter four-cylinder, a turbocharged 197-hp four-cylinder and a 280-hp V-6. Transmissions would be a six-speed manual or optional direct shift automatic with wheel-mounted shifting. According to AutoWeek magazine the stylish roadster, which is expected to be a low price competitor to the Porsche Boxster is expected to reach VW dealerships late in 2007.

Volkswagen Concept R



Smart ForTwo

The Smart ForTwo is downright startling in America at this point, but get used to it. These diminutive but safety-conscious vehicles are all over Europe.

SMART PREPARING FOR US ASSULT

▲ Smart USA, an operating unit of DaimlerChrysler AG, is recruiting as many as 80 dealers for its first sales effort in the US market. According to Automotive News Smart requires the new dealers to have exclusive showrooms or stand-alone stores. The first product coming to the US will be the ForMore, a small SUV, which is due here in September 2006. The ForMore will debut at the Detroit auto show in January. Smart has been selling vehicles in Europe since 1998 and currently offers a coupe, roadster and four-seater, however no announcement has been made about which other models will come to the U.S or when.

FORD & LINCOLN ANTI-ROLL SYSTEM

Several Ford and Lincoln sport utilities will get the benefit of Volvo's safety technology for 2005. With Ford owning safety-obsessed Volvo, Ford is able to pickup some of the high tech safety equipment, like the RSC (Rollover Stability Control) that was developed originally for the Volvo XC90 SUV. The system monitors angle of roll in addition to monitoring skids. When it senses that the wheels might leave the ground the throttle is retarded and individual brakes are applied to keep the vehicle upright. The system

was optional on the Lincoln Navigator and Aviator for 2004, but becomes standard equipment in 2005. The Ford Explorer and Mercury Mountaineer also get the RSC as standard equipment.

NEW GM POWERTRAINS IN WORKS

General Motors has plans to introduce more than 50 new engine and transmission variants around the world by the end of the decade. Among the engines will be a front-wheel drive Gen IV V-8 with displacement on demand and a 2.8-liter V-6 turbo with all-aluminum construction, dual overhead cams, variable valve timing and a host of other new technology and refinements. There will also be 10 new six-speed automatic transmission variants introduced in the next five years. The first of the new engines, a turbo V-6 producing 250 hp, will be in the 2006 model year Saab 9-3. That engine will be produced at the Holden plant in Port Melbourne, Australia.

FORD HAS BIG V-8 IN THE PIPELINE

Ford is planning to compete with Chrysler's wildly successful Hemi engine with a new 6.2-liter V-8. The engine will be launched first in the F-series pickup, but could also be used in the Ford Crown Victoria, Mercury Grand Marquis, Lincoln

Town Car and, according to Motor Trend, possibly even the Mustang. The engine is still in the design phase and no decision has been made about whether to make it an overhead cam or pushrod design. The engine will have a cylinder deactivation system like the Hemi.

BMW MAY COME SHRINK-WRAPPED

BMW is experimenting with shrink-wrapping on some of its new vehicles before they are transported. The new tight-fitting plastic fabric is called Transshield. Most manufacturers use wax to protect the vehicles, but the Transshield has the advantage of being easy to remove and the vehicles can be fueled and driven without removing the wrap by using the zippers around the driver's door and fuel cap. Because the material fits snugly against the vehicle it doesn't move causing potential rubbing and scratches. The Transshield wrapping fabric, which is produced by Tenmark's Automotive Division, costs about \$61 per vehicle. It is being used in a limited basis on Rolls-Royces, Volkswagen Phaetons, Bentleys, Lamborghinis and Audis, but BMW is the only manufacturer using it on large numbers of vehicles for the tests.

KEEP RIGHT >>

PORSCHE ADDS OPTIONS FOR SUV DOMINANCE

Porsche wants to insure high performance SUV dominance by offering an aftermarket Tequipment performance package for the Cayenne Turbo. Starting in December they will offer an upgrade that increases the turbo horsepower from 450-hp to a whopping 500-hp with an increase in torque up 55 lb.ft to 515 lb.ft. The finished product should cut the 0 to 60 mph times to about 4.9 seconds. The Tequipment package also includes larger brakes and upgraded suspension, which requires 19-inch or larger wheels. The price for the extra performance is \$18,500 plus dealer installation or total \$109,200 including the original price of the Cayenne. Other options available in December are a panoramic roof system for \$3,900 and a \$1,680 backup camera. ▼

Porsche Cayenne Turbo



Nissan Frontier

Nissan's pickups have come a long way since the first little Datsuns hit California, or even the thousands of Datsuns and Nissans trucks that followed.

>> AUTO NEWS UPDATE - cont'd

They are currently wrapping about half of the 100,000 BMW X5 SUVs it produces at the Spartanburg, S.C. plant.

CHRYSLER WON'T ADD YOUTH BRAND

Rather than following the lead of companies that are offering a special youth brand, like Toyota's Scion, for example, Chrysler has decided to target younger buyers with special new Jeep and Dodge vehicles. At the Paris Auto Show, Chrysler group CEO Dieter Zetsche said that after considering a new brand they "came to the conclusion that we don't need that." Zetsche continued "With our current brands, we have very good coverage of the total market, including the potential youth market, which in the first place is a pricing issue and then a product issue, but not a brand issue." He said the 16-to-22-year-olds are looking for functionality, flexibility and engine power, but price is the key issue. He said Chrysler group is considering derivatives of North American vehicles like a Jeep-based vehicle and a Dodge hatchback based on the next-generation Neon and Stratus platforms. Expect prices in the \$10,000 to \$15,000 range.

NISSAN FRONTIER MOVES TO MIDSIZE

▲ As one of the last compact pickups to move up in size to the midsize range, the Nissan Frontier takes other elements from its new full-size brother the Titan. First, the Frontier will be built on a downsized Titan chassis using the same fully boxed steel frame rails as the Titan along with some of its suspension parts. The wheel base is 10 inches longer, now 125.9 inches and is 205.5 inches long or 211.1 inches for the Crew Cab. It's also wider and taller than the previous model. Towing capacity is increased to 6500 pounds. The primary engine is a 4.0-liter DOHC V-6 producing 265-hp that comes with either a six-speed manual or five-speed automatic transmission. There is a four-cylinder engine available, with five-speed manual or four-speed automatic, available only on the two-wheel drive version of the King Cab. Like most trucks the Frontier comes in two- or four-wheel drive, but the four-wheel drive is offered with Hill Descent Control and electronic locking rear differential. All models come with four-wheel disc brakes.

BMW I-DRIVE OPTION ON 1 & 3 SERIES

BMW will test the popularity of the controversial i-Drive system that controls audio, climate and various other elec-

tronic features, when it makes the system an option on the new 3 series and on the upcoming 1 series due to debut in North America in 2007. Both models will be available with two different instrument panels, one with i-Drive and one without. Models with the i-Drive will have telematics and a sophisticated navigation system. The i-Drive in both of these models will be a simpler system with a four-way control knob rather than the eight-way knob used on the 5, 6 and 7 series cars.

TWO NEW IN-LINE SIXES FOR BMW

BMW has developed two all-new 3.0-liter in-line six-cylinder engines. The first is a revolutionary gasoline engine that will be used in the new 330i when it debuts next year. The engine is the first six-cylinder to have butterfly-free Valve-tronic infinitely adjustable valve timing and aluminum Vanos butterflies. It also has a magnesium/aluminum composite crankcase, hydroformed cams and electric water pump in addition to several other lightweight magnesium, aluminum and composite parts. The R6 engine is rated at 258 horsepower with 221 lb.ft. of torque at 6650 rpms. BMW

KEEP RIGHT >>

HUMMER H3 ARRIVES

The biggest news for Hummer is the introduction of the H3 in the spring of 2005. Based on the mid-size Chevrolet Colorado underpinnings, the H3 will be 11 inches shorter and six inches narrower than the H2. The power for the 4,700-lb off-roader comes from a small in-line five-cylinder rated at 220-hp and 225 lb.ft. of torque. But with its locking rear end, BorgWarner transfer case and 69-to-1 crawl ratio it should almost climb trees when equipped with all the rock-crawling options. Prices have not been announced, but are expected to fall somewhere in the \$30,000 to \$45,000 range. ▼



Hummer H3



Mercedes-Benz CLS55 AMG

Mercedes' stylists have done well on the CLS, making it look big and mean, and lean and trim, at the same time, also like both a sedan and a coupe.

>> AUTO NEWS UPDATE - cont'd

claims the 355-pound engine is the world's lightest six-cylinder. The other engine is the RD6, an in-line six-cylinder twin-turbo diesel. The smaller turbo works at low engine speeds to develop 391 lb.ft. of torque at 1500 rpms, while the larger turbo acts as a pre-compressor. At higher speeds the turbo control valve distributes exhaust pressure to both turbos with the torque maxing out at 413 lb. ft. at 2000 rpms and 272 horsepower. The diesel will be used in the European 5 series, but has not been planned for the US, yet.

TOYOTA WORKING ON SUPERCAR

Toyota has been seen testing some type of new supercar. It is not known if it will be called a Toyota Supra (with a possible TXS badge) or if it will be a high-end sports car for Lexus. The car caught testing was believed to be an early engineering mule with a 500-hp V-10 engine. The car allegedly weighs less than 3,000 pounds and will have a top speed of about 190 mph. Sources say it may be introduced at the 2005 Tokyo Motor Show and will go on sale in late 2006 or early 2007 at a price somewhere over \$100,000.

MERCEDES CLS IS MORE THAN STYLE

▲ The new Mercedes-Benz CLS is not only one of the sexiest new cars coming to market, but it's also loaded with a new level of state-of-the-art technology. There's a new seven-speed automatic transmission that improves shift responsiveness and performance. Optional multi-contour front seats constantly adapt bolsters to support the front seat passengers better in corners. It also has an air suspension, the Airmatic DC, on all four corners that can be adjusted by a button on the center console.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT THINKS FOR YOU

If a new technology being developed by Toyota, Denso and some other companies comes to fruition it will be impossible for a driver to enter a school zone going above the legal speed or to fail to brake for a stop sign. The Intelligent Transport System displayed recently in Japan would confirm the presence of a school zone on the vehicle's navigation system and by scanning the area with a car-mounted camera. When a school zone is confirmed the system overrides the driver and limits the speed of the car. It will also slam on the brakes when it confirms the driver is not stopping at a stop sign.

Another system being developed scans

ahead with a low-level laser to monitor other cars, objects and people. When an obstacle is identified the system sounds an alarm and applies the brakes. These systems are still about 10 years away.

STORE-BOUGHT 220 MPH STREET TIRE

One of the weak links in having a super fast streetcar is the ability of the tires to handle the 200 mph plus speeds. Now Continental Tire North America, Inc. has developed the world's first road tire approved for speeds up to 220 mph. The ContiSport Contract 2 Vmax was developed especially for the ultra high-speed cars like Porsche and Ferrari. Continental engineers incorporated more tread grooves to attain maximum cooling even at the highest speeds. The resulting tire also provides better handling on wet roads due to the increased portion of negative tread. The new tire is available in four sizes: 245/35ZR19, 275/30ZR19, 235/35ZR19 and 315/25ZR19.

SAAB GETS A CADILLAC V-6 ENGINE

Saab has inherited a new V-6 engine from Cadillac. In its naturally aspired version the 2.8-liter DOHC V-6 will power the base CTS model, but for the Saab 9-3

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>> AUTO NEWS UPDATE - cont'd

there will be an all-new turbocharged version, which is expected to produce at least 280 horsepower. The turbocharged Saab 9-3 version debuts next summer in the sedan and convertible as well as a 9-3 Sporthatch wagon that's due out about the same time. Currently the hottest Saab 9-3 has a 210-hp 2.0-liter turbocharged four-cylinder.

GM SUV STABILITY CONTROL STANDARD

In an effort to make their SUVs even safer, General Motors has become the first automaker to offer a stability control system (GM's version is called StabiliTrak) as standard equipment on about 1.3 million SUVs. Electronic stability control helps a driver maintain vehicle control during certain difficult driving conditions, such as ice, snow, gravel, wet pavement and uneven road surfaces, as well as in emergency lane changes or avoidance maneuvers. It uses sensors on the accelerator, brake and steering wheel to interpret the driver's desired path as compared with where the vehicle is actually going and helps compensate by applying the appropriate brakes to bring the vehicle back into the driver's control. The system will be added starting with some 2005 models and phased into others through 2006. Models included in the program are full and mid-size SUVs produced by Cadillac, Chevrolet, GMC, Buick, Hummer and Saab.

SUBARU 7-PASSENGER SPORT WAGON

Subaru will debut a new seven-passenger sport wagon at the Detroit Auto show in January that will preview the new look for the entire brand. The B9X, like all Subarus sold in the US, will be all-wheel drive. Automotive News says the wagon will have a 3.0-liter horizontally opposed "boxer" six-cylinder engine. The B9X is designed to compete with vehicles like the Acura MDX, Nissan Murano and entry-level BMW X5. Highlights of the new design feature a new bold grille and center intake flanked by two wings, which represent Subaru's heritage as an aircraft builder. The wagon is expected to go on sale in the summer of 2005 as a 2006 model with a price tag around \$40,000 GM will also produce a spin-off to the B9X for Saab.

ALL NEW S-CLASS IN 2006

Due in 2006, the next generation of the Mercedes-Benz S-Class will be much larger—nearly as large as the 1991-1998 models. The styling is said to have a resemblance to the Maybach ultra luxury sedan. As with all Mercedes models, there will be a long list of high-tech gadgets and features. Most notable are radar cruise control that works in slow traffic and detects pedestrians, intelligent airbags and night-vision lighting. Wheel sizes will be as large as 20 inches. Engine choices will range from a 3.0-liter V-6 up to a 5.4-liter V-8. The AMG version is expected to get a 6.3-liter V-8 rated a more than 600 horsepower. The new Mercedes seven-speed transmission will be standard on all models.

HYUNDAI SANTA FE BACK LOADED

After a two-model year hiatus Hyundai will be bringing back the Santa Fe sport utility vehicle in the spring of 2006 as a 2007 model. The all-new Santa Fe will have seating for seven, standard stability control along with a long list of new features. Although the new Santa Fe will be larger, it won't be quite as large as a Ford Explorer. Hyundai also plans to take on the larger SUV market a year or two later with another sport wagon, plus there are rumors of a Dodge Caravan-sized minivan in the works. The new Hyundai trucks will be built at the company's new plant currently under construction in Alabama.

PONTIAC V-8 BACK INTO GRAND PRIX

After an 18-year absence Pontiac will again offer a V-8 powered Grand Prix in the 2005 GXP model. The engine will be the new 5300 5.3-liter V-8 rated at 290 horsepower and 325 lb.ft. of torque. The engine has General Motor's new Displacement on Demand (DOD) technology that cuts off four cylinders during low-load conditions, like highway cruising. The DOD is expected to increase fuel economy by about 12 percent. The GXP gets a full load of suspension upgrades, a lower ride height and cross-drilled brakes from the Corvette. ■

Auto News Update includes a summary of auto news from industry sources, trade journals and consumer magazines compiled for *Arizona Driver* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.

ARIZONA DRIVER

DESTINATION DIRECTORY

Arizona

ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

Chiricahua State Park
HCR 2, Box 6500 • Willcox AZ 85643
520-824-3560

Grand Canyon National Park
PO Box 129 • Grand Canyon AZ 86023
923-638-7888 Visitor Info Recorded Message

Lake Havasu State Park
699 London Bridge Dr. • Lake Havasu AZ 86403
928-855-2784

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument
10 Organ Pipe Drive • Ajo AZ 85321-9626
520-387-6849 Visitor Information

Petrified Forest National Park
PO Box 2217
Petrified Forest National Park AZ 86028
928-524-66228 Visitor Information

Saguaro National Park
3693 South Old Spanish Trail
520-733-5153 Visitor Info Rincon Mtn District

Sport Compact Drag Racing
Every thursday at Firebird Raceway
www.dragracing.com/phx

Wupatki National Monument
Flagstaff Area National Monuments
6400 N. Hwy 89 • Flagstaff AZ 86004
928-679-2365 Visitor Information
928-526-1157 Visitor Information, HQ

California

ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

Palm Desert Visitor Information Center
72-990 Highway 111 • Palm Desert CA 92260
800-873-2428 • www.palm-desert.org

MOTOR MUSEUMS

Petersen Automotive Museum
6060 Wilshire Blvd. (at Fairfax) • LA CA 90036
323-930-CARS • www.petersen.org

Colorado

ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

Colorado Activity Centers, Inc.
737 N. Tenmile Drive - Suite 35
PO Box 129 • Frisco CO 80443
800-777-8642 - www.coloradoinfo.com

MOTOR MUSEUMS

Shelby American Collection
5020 Chaparral Court
PO Box 19228 • Boulder CO 80308-2228
www.shelbyamericancollection.org
303-516-9565

Nevada

ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

Las Vegas Tourism Bureau
6120 W. Tropicana Ave. • Las Vegas NV
www.lasvegastourism.com

MOTOR MUSEUMS

Imperial Palace Auto Collections
Fifth floor parking facility of Imperial Palace.
702-794-3174
www.imperialpalace.com/auto.html

National Automobile Museum
The Harrah Collection
10 Lake Street South • Reno NV 89501
775-333-9300 • www.automuseum.org

New Mexico

ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

New Mexico Department of Tourism
800-733-6396 x 0643 • www.newmexico.org

Santa Fe Chamber of Commerce
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8380 Cerrillos Rd. Suite 302 • Santa Fe NM 87507
505-983-7317 • www.santafechamber.com

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800-530-3040 • www.VacationTaos.com

Inn on the Alameda
303 East Alameda • Santa Fe NM 87501
505-984-21221 • www.innonthealameda.com

Utah

ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

San Juan County Tourism
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800-574-4386 • www.southeastutah.org

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888-404-8687 • www.utahscenictours.com

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888-475-7673 • www.DesertRoseInn.com

Mexico

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Puerto Peñasco Mexico Online
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ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

Baja California State Tourism Office
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CP 22400 Tijuana BC
(66) 81-9492

Chihuahua State Tourism Office
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Edificio Agustin Melgar, 1er Piso
CP 31000 Chihuahua, Chihuahua
(14) 29-3421

Sinaloa State Tourism Office
Av. Camarón Sabalo esq. Tiburon
Edificio Banrural 4 Piso
CP 82100 Mazatlán, Sinaloa
(69) 16-5160

Sonora State Tourism Office
Centro de Gobierno
Edificio Estatal Norte 3er Nivel
Comonfort y Paseo Río
CP 83280 Hermosillo, Sonora
(62) 17-0076

Of national interest

MOTOR MUSEUMS

Henry Ford Museum & Greenfield Village
20900 Oakwood Blvd. • Dearborn MI 48124
www.hfmgv.com • 313-271-1620

Imperial Palace Auto Collections
(see Nevada listings)

Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum
Pickerington OH 43147
www.motorcyclemuseum.org • 614-856-2222

National Automobile Museum
(see Nevada listings)

National Corvette Museum
350 Corvette Drive • Bowling Green KY 42101
www.corvettemuseum.com • 800-53VETTE

Petersen Automotive Museum
(see California listings)

Shelby American Collection
(see Colorado listings)



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480-898-0559 • www.azsbk.com

Motorcycle Manufacturers

Aprilia Motorcycles - Scooters

www.apriliausa.com

Dan Gurney Alligator Motorcycles, Inc.

Dan Gurney's All American Racers, Inc.
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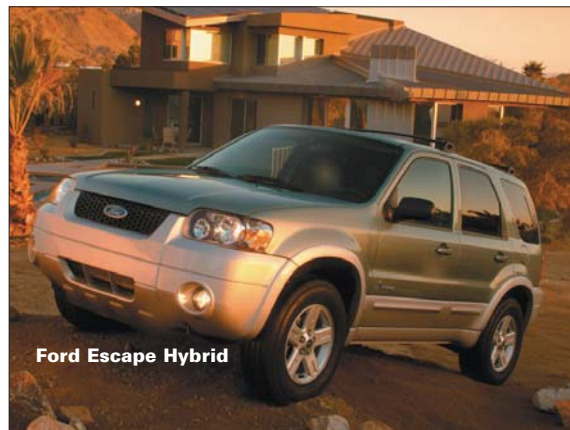


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THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS

■ **Ferrari** has plans to build 500 roadsters based on the 575 Maranello. The company unveiled an unnamed mockup of the car at a special showing to customers and collectors at the August Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance in Monterey, California. The car has a folding hardtop that lies on top of the trunk, rather than inside, so cargo capacity is not reduced when the top is lowered.

■ **Ford** has received such a great early response to the new Escape Hybrid that they are planning to build more than four



Ford Escape Hybrid

times the original planned volume. Ford had planned to build about 4,000 of the new Hybrids, but after receiving more than 30,000 requests for information, Ford planners believe they can sell all the Hybrids they can build this year, which is about 17,000. The biggest concern was battery supply, but the battery pack supplier, Sanyo says there will be no delay in battery production.

■ **Nissan** plans to build a heavy-duty diesel powered Titan pickup for North America according to Automotive News. Nissan Motor Executive Vice President of Product Planning Patrick Pelata said the Titan would not have to be redesigned to make it a heavy duty truck, but it would need a "big American V-6 or V-8" diesel engine to have sufficient torque. He said Nissan would not build the engine itself, but rather would look for a partner to buy the engine from or develop a new one with. No timing was discussed.

■ **Ford** is planning to produce several niche versions of the new Mustang. The all-new coupe version arrives at dealerships in late October and the convertible is due in March. Ford has not committed to which special editions it will



Ford Mustang

produce first, but they will be along the same lines as the Machs, Bosses and Bullitts created the last few years. The high performance SVT model will be back in 2006.

■ **Dodge** will add a compact crossover sport utility starting in the 2006 model year. The small five-door SUV will be based on the next generation Mitsubishi Lancer platform, which will also be the basis for the 2006 Jeep Scout – a three-door hatchback coupe. Power will come from the new Mitsubishi/Hyundai four-cylinder engine. The SUV will be offered in front- or all-wheel drive.

■ **Pontiac** will replace the quirky Aztek sport utilities with a small SUV based on the same platform and mechanicals as the Chevrolet Equinox. The Pontiac Torrent will be sportier than Chevrolet with different cladding, wheels, grille and interior. The engine is the same 3.4-liter V-6 with a five-



Nissan Titan King Cab

speed automatic transmission and a choice of front- or all-wheel drive. The Torrent goes on sale late in 2005 as a 2006 model.

■ **Volvo** dealers are sending mechanics to customers' homes to make minor repairs on their Volvos. Their goal is to try to improve the dealerships' service and parts business and improve customer relations with its Care by Volvo program. Volvo finished 15th out of 39 brands in the last J.D. Power and Associated 2004 Customer Satisfaction Index. Currently the program runs with about 40 of the 340 US dealerships.

■ **Cadillac** will offer an entry-level CTS version of the mid-size CTS powered by a 2.8-liter, 210-hp engine. The current starter model has a 3.6-liter, 252-hp V-6. The new CTS is priced at \$30,695, while the 3.6 starts at \$32,945. Both models will have the same standard equipment.

■ Several European carmakers are looking closely at a new **Delphi** corporation compact power sliding door, which is used as the primary door on some new cars instead of traditional hinged doors. Peugeot is offering the doors on its new 2007 model plus Nissan and Volkswagen have expressed interest in the system. Sliding doors are common as the rear doors in most minivans, but no one is using the powered doors in the front. If they catch on in Europe, can the US be far behind?

■ Look for **Mercedes-Benz** to add more clean diesels to the US fleet. The next entry will be the new R-Class sport tourer with a 218-hp turbo diesel V-6 engine.

■ The next generation **Mitsubishi** Eclipse will be based on the Galant platform. The car will be similar to the Eclipse Concept-E that was shown at the 2004 Detroit auto show. However, to make it successful, Eclipse planners will need it to infuse a level of excitement like the company has received from the Lance Evolution. Expect it to get a new 3.8-liter V-6 engine producing 260-hp and 260-lb.ft of torque (that's up from the current 3.0-liter engine that is rated at 210 hp and 25 lb.ft. of torque). There will also be a more powerful four-cylinder engine than the one currently offered. The sleek



Mitsubishi Eclipse Concept-E

coupe will also get a new five-speed automatic transmission. Other new features are a 650-watt audio system and 18-inch wheels.

■ Spy photos of the new **Dodge** Charger show a four-door sedan with a coupe-like sloping rear roofline. It's based on the same platform and basic body style as the very successful Chrysler 300 but the Charger has distinctive sheet metal with features like a high shoulder that begins near the middle of the rear door and extends over the end of the deck lid. The Charger also has a shorter rear deck than the 300. It goes on sale in spring 2005.

■ **BMW** recently established a world record for hydrogen-powered cars using a hydrogen reciprocating engine above 5.0 liters. Using a car developed especially set a world record BMW reached an official two way top speed of 186.5 mph (300.190 km/h). The car was built using the Z8 sports car chassis with a slick Nemoesque shell and with power coming from a 6.0-lite V-12 engine. The engine normally produces 438 horsepower on gasoline, but drops to 282 horsepower when running on hydrogen.

■ **Suzuki** is adding an aftermarket parts division. Starting in November Suzuki dealers will be offering custom wheels, spoilers and carbon fiber trim for selected models. The parts will first be available for the Reno followed by the Aerio and Forenza. Performance parts will be offered at an undisclosed future date.

■ **Porsche** is talking to Toyota about adopting the hybrid drivetrain from the upcoming Lexus RX 400h for use in the Porsche Cayenne sport utility vehicle. By 2009, Porsche needs to meet stricter US emissions levels. Toyota is trying to spread the hybrid technology worldwide and they believe the Lexus 270 horsepower hybrid will be suitable for the Cayenne.

■ **Toyota** is exploring the possibility of building hybrid cars in the United States. On a recent trip to Japan to promote trade with California, Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger offered Toyota tax incentives to build hybrids in California. According to Jim Press, COO of Toyota Motor Sales USA, Inc. building hybrids in the US does not necessarily mean the



Toyota Prius hybrid engine

Prius would be built here. He said it would most likely mean using platforms already being built here, for example, the Corolla sedan, Matrix sport wagon and Tacoma pickup. Perhaps we'll be seeing more new Toyota hybrids in a few years.



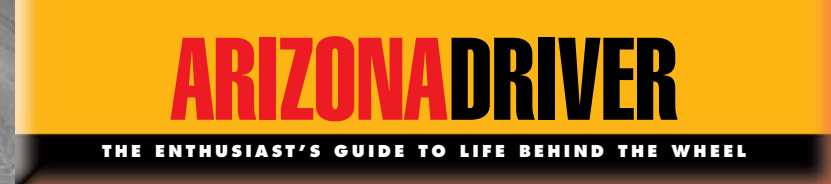
Mazda RX-8

■ **Mazda** is building an RX-8 that can be powered by gasoline or hydrogen to lease in the Japanese market. The first sports cars will be leased to government and corporate fleets to help Mazda gather data on the bi-fuel rotary engines. According to Automotive News Mazda will build a hydrogen fueling station at its Hiroshima headquarters. Mazda thinks the rotary-powered engine is well suited for the dual fuel system and will help make the transition from a gasoline to a hydrogen system.

■ **Lear** Corporation has developed a new remote keyless entry system that allows the owner to communicate more than 650 feet from their vehicle. The Car2U™ system allows the driver to start the car, set a time for it to shut off, set the interior temperature and unlock the doors at a set time. This is in addition to the normal functions of locking and unlocking doors, opening the trunk and activating the alarm. Lear has not indicated when an automaker will be using the new system but it shouldn't be too long with more buyer demand for such gadgets.

■ **General Motors** has helped late-night talk show host and car buff Jay Leno transform one of his favorite cars into a super car. The 1966 Oldsmobile Tornado uses a modified C5 Corvette chassis and suspension and the power comes from a concept 1,070 horsepower twin-turbo V-8. Leno has more than 100 cars in his collection and says this one will be a daily driver. ■

Briefs & Rumors is a summary of auto news from industry sources, trade journals and consumer magazines compiled for *Arizona Driver Magazine* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.



New Guide Helps Consumers With Bad Credit Get Their Wheels and Get Back On Track

Has your credit score been in a head-on? Have too many accounts left you in a credit crunch? Do you think that means you can't possibly get a car loan? The good news is you may be wrong. Today, thanks to rapid growth in the bad credit finance arena, just about anybody can get auto financing, according to a new guide from Consumer Affairs.Com, the country's leading consumer news and advocacy site. "Consumers with bad credit face steep interest rates, but the loans are available out there," said ConsumerAffairs.Com

editor Anne Zieger, the guide's author. "They do have options." The new ConsumerAffairs.Com guide explains how consumers with damaged credit should proceed when they're ready to buy. It explains in detail how to research consumer credit scores, track current loan interest rates by credit category, pick out an appropriate financing source and more. It also offers consumers a list of shady practices they should avoid at all costs. According to the guide, consumers with bad credit should **not**:

- ...drive off the lot with the car until they have nailed down financing
 - ...rely on verbal promises as to financing terms
 - ...accept a loan rate without researching loan rates for their credit category
 - ...agree to extras such as credit life or gap insurance
 - ...sign up for a loan with pre-calculated interest without knowing it
- Even if consumers do follow the steps outlined in the ConsumerAffairs.com guide (available at http://www.consumeraffairs.com/automotive/good_car_bad_credit01.html), they may still end up with a loan that looks lousy compared to what consumers with excellent credit can get. Zieger says these loans, however, may be a first step toward helping people rebuild a solid credit rating. "If they prove they can make their payments on time, and demonstrate that they're a good credit risk, they may be able to refinance within a year or so," she said. In the meantime, bad credit car loans may be worth a shot. "For consumers who really need a car, it's good to know that they can at least get in the door," Zieger added. "That should offer them some peace of mind." ■

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UPCOMING FEATURES

Honda Civic Hybrid



Honda takes the hottest out-of-the-mainstream idea, hybrid technology, and puts it in its most mainstream vehicle, the Civic. Could this be a big step in redefining the mainstream?

Harley-Davidson VRSCR



The once-breakthrough Harley-Davidson V-Rod has generated more VRSC iterations. Coming next is a 2006 VRSCR Street Rod with performance modifications and plenty of style.

Hyundai Tucson



Hyundai leads the charge into smaller SUV territory. We'll be driving this one for a week and find out how the Arizona-named little SUV compares with its New Mexico-named big brother.



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