

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 5 NUMBER 6
NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2006

Valley auctions on deck

• Upcoming highlights of Russo and Steele, Barrett-Jackson

Plus... • Hyundai Azera Limited and Hyundai Accent test drives

And... • Land Rover high adventure in Belize



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- Select Auction of Vehicles to follow NOON - 5:00 P.M.

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CONTENTS

NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2006

SPECIAL EVENT

Barrett-Jackson Auction preview 18

The famous Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Event runs from January 13-21, 2007 (counting everything). This event keeps growing, including automobilia auctions for years, now supplemented by rock'n'roll and other "lifestyle" items on display and up for auction. Here's the basic information on when and where things happen, how to get tickets, and a few highlighted vehicles slated for sale.

SPECIAL EVENT

Russo and Steele Auction preview 22

Russo and Steele Collector Car Auction, not just "the other" famous Scottsdale auction (now in its seventh year), but also with a very focused approach to its consignments and its event venue, arrives about the same time, January 17-21, 2007, starting with its Charity Gala on behalf of the Phoenix Children's Hospital's Emily Center. Included is information on schedule, tickets and location, as well as brief profiles of a handful of the five hundred cars they are scheduled to sell in those five days.

TEST DRIVE

Hyundai Azera Limited 27

Hyundai introduces a new flagship-level sedan, and we put it through its paces. We also marvel once again at how the Koreans seem to be advancing their product offerings and features at a pace that outstrips the rest of the competition—all at an incredible price point, all with an incredible warranty, and with safety features galore. By Barbara and Bill Schaffer

ROAD TRIP

Land Rovers in Belize 30

Sometimes Bill has all the fun—mosquitoes and snakes notwithstanding. This outing in the small Central American nation of Belize finds us pitting the Land Rover Sport, Land Rover LR3 and Range Rover against some of the nastiest conditions nature could dish out, and acquitting themselves very well indeed. By Bill Schaffer

TEST DRIVE

Hyundai Accent GLS 38

Small cars are all the rage now—or at least just about anybody can see their appeal and their potential. It's not unusual to find the Asian exporters sending us a small car, but let's find out how the upgrading and evolution are going on Hyundai's little sedan. By Barbara and Bill Schaffer

DEPARTMENTS

FROM THE PUBLISHER : START YOUR ENGINES 4

CAR SMARTS : QUIZ 7

AUTO NEWS UPDATE 10

DESTINATION DIRECTORY 26

MOTOR RESOURCES DIRECTORY 43

THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS 44

UPCOMING FEATURES 46



D

COVER: Drew Alcazar announces the Russo and Steele Auction.



Action season is coming up, when the names Barrett-Jackson, Russo and Steele, and Scottsdale, Arizona, roll off the drooling tongues of collectors, investors and afficianodos worldwide. The high-cost collector hobby is a juggernaut that shows no signs of slowing down, and our local players are the ones who set the pace. We bring you information on schedules, locations and tickets, as well as a cross-section of some hot machinery that's about to get even hotter. See you there!

As featured in our September/October issue, subcompact cars are on a roll in the US market, or at least due to be on a roll, increasingly. Last issue, we drove the Honda Fit and Toyota Yaris, and took a quick look at the Nissan Versa. This time, we check out what Hyundai has in this niche, test driving their latest Accent, as usual a very full-featured vehicle for its segment, its price and its warranty.

Hyundai is not just heading smaller, as we also test their new flagship Azera Limited sedan. Hyundai is a very large company, but their product development is very agile and moving along at quite a clip, as are their sales. This new offering takes on some of the industry's real giants—and, as with their smallest car, offers an incredibly lot for a very low price. For anybody who remembers what it was like to buy Japanese when most people hadn't caught on and the prices were low, this seems like another time to hop on a bargain.

To round things out, we leave the state and cross the border to the south, then another border, into Belize. Why? Land Rover has assembled the LR3, Sport and



Range Rover, so we can put them to the test in the jungles and mud and floods of this small nation state. And indeed they are put to the test. Read how well they do, inside. Enjoy the drive!

Joe Sage
Publisher/Executive Editor

ARIZONA DRIVER

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QUIZ : CAR SMARTS



1. What percentage of new vehicles sold in the US January-May 2006 were imports?
a. 38.1 percent b. 44.7 percent
c. 48.4 percent d. 52.9 percent

2. Which automaker will build seven-passenger jets to be marketed by Piper?
a. Hyundai b. Fuji (Subaru)
c. Toyota d. Honda

3. What is the average fuel economy rating for all light-duty 2006 model year vehicles?
a. 19 mpg b. 21 mpg
c. 23 mpg d. 25 mpg

4. What is average 2006 vehicle weight?
a. 3,142 pounds b. 3,542 pounds
c. 4,142 pounds d. 4,542 pounds

5. What are monthly payments on a \$1.3 million Bugatti Veyron with \$400,000 down?
a. \$4,595 /month b. \$9,595 /month
c. \$16,595 /month d. \$23,595 /month

6. As a general guideline, how often should tires be rotated?
a. every 1,000 to 4,000 miles
b. every 5,000 to 8,000 miles
c. every 14,000 to 17,000 miles
d. never

7. How many 2006 passenger vehicle models offer electronic stability control standard?
a. 20 percent b. 30 percent
c. 40 percent d. 50 percent

8. How much have 0 to 60 mph acceleration characteristics increased for light-duty vehicles since 1975?
a. 11 percent b. 21 percent
c. 31 percent d. 41 percent

9. How many automotive accidents occur in the rain each year?
a. 250,000 accidents happen in the rain
b. 500,000 accidents happen in the rain
c. 1 million accidents happen in the rain

d. 2 million accidents happen in the rain

10. How much longer is the tread life of tires filled with nitrogen gas rather than air?
a. 10 percent better tread life
b. 20 percent better tread life
c. 30 percent better tread life
d. 40 percent better tread life

11. What percentage of new vehicles have a manual transmission?
a. 8 percent b. 15 percent
c. 22 percent d. 29 percent

12. What kind of cars was the Cougar Ace cargo vessel carrying when it tipped over off the coast of Alaska in July 2006?
a. Hyundai b. Subaru
c. Toyota d. Mazda

13. What car did Kowalski (actor Barry Newman) drive in 1971's "Vanishing Point"?
a. Ford Mustang
b. Chevrolet Corvette
c. Plymouth Barracuda
d. Dodge Challenger

14. Which vehicle brand has the best loyalty with buyers trading into other vehicles in the same corporate family?
a. MINI trading to MINI & BMW
b. Saturn trading to other GM brands
c. Scion trading to Scion, Toyota or Lexus
d. Volkswagen trading to VW or Audi

15. When was the first drive up gas station opened in the US?
a. 1900 b. 1905
c. 1910 d. 1915

16. When did the first gas station offer self-service?
a. 1937 b. 1947
c. 1957 d. 1967

17. When did self-service gas stations start using credit card readers at the pump?
a. 1966 b. 1976
c. 1986 d. 1996

18. What was Toyota's automotive market share in California during the first six months of 2006?
a. 9.9 percent b. 19.3 percent
c. 26.7 percent d. 36.1 percent

19. What is the world's first car to have an eight-speed automatic transmission?
a. Audi A8 b. BMW 7 series
c. Lexus LS d. Mercedes-Benz S-Class

20. How many 2007 vehicles will offer a jack or plug-in for an iPod or other MP3 player?
a. 40 percent b. 55 percent

c. 70 percent d. 85 percent

21. Combined, how many miles do Americans drive annually?
a. 200 billion b. 500 billion
c. 1 trillion d. 3 trillion

22. What percentage of vehicles sold in the European Union are powered by diesel?
a. 34.2 percent b. 49.8 percent
c. 57.1 percent d. 65.6 percent

23. California, Maine, Massachusetts and New York have environmental regulations that currently prohibit the sale of new diesel powered cars; what fifth state also does?
a. Nevada b. Vermont
c. Connecticut d. Oregon

24. What safety device is the government planning to make mandatory on US vehicles in a few years?
a. side airbags
b. traction control
c. electronic stability control
d. four-point safety belts

25. What percentage of 18 year olds have a driver's license?
a. 56.8 percent b. 61.3 percent
c. 72.0 percent d. 79.4 percent

26. What is the average age of the buyers of the new Toyota FJ Cruiser?
a. 28-years old b. 37-years old
c. 43-years old d. 49-years old

27. When was the Monroney sticker first required on a new vehicle?
a. 1958 b. 1963
c. 1968 d. 1975

28. What percentage of Americans have a cell phone?
a. 56.1 percent b. 66.3 percent
c. 76.5 percent d. 83.8 percent

29. What is the base price of the new limited edition high performance MazdaSpeed3?
a. \$18,835 b. \$20,835
c. \$22,835 d. \$24,835

30. Which of the following convertibles is not available with a retractable hard top?
a. Volkswagen EOS b. Pontiac G6
c. Chrysler Crossfire d. Mazda Miata

31. What percentage of consumers say they will consider a hybrid or alternative fuel vehicle for their next purchase?
a. 30 percent b. 45 percent
c. 60 percent d. 75 percent

ANSWERS ON PAGE 8 >>

>> ANSWERS (quiz on page 7) >>

1. Answer: d. According to R.L. Polk & Co. data, foreign-based (import) auto brands surpassed domestic brands in sales for the first time. During the first five months of 2006 import sales were 52.9% of the market.
2. Answer: d. Honda will build seven-passenger microjets that will be sold and serviced by Piper (the aircraft company). Piper will start taking orders on the lightweight jets, with a base price of about \$4 million, this year and deliveries will start in three to four years once the FAA certifications are completed. The Honda jet was developed mostly in the US and will be built at a yet to be disclosed US location.
3. Answer: b. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) the average fuel economy rating for 2006 model year light-duty vehicles is 21.0 mpg.
4. Answer: c. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the average 2006 model vehicle weighs 4,142 pounds or nearly 500 pounds more than the average vehicle from 1996.
5. Answer: d. Putnam Leasing is offering a lease on the \$1.3 million Bugatti Veyron. After the \$400,000 down payment, monthly payments are \$23,595 per month, plus taxes.
6. Answer: b. According to Firestone's "Know your M.A.R.I.O.S" (Mario Andretti's Real Information on Safety) program, tires should be rotated every 5,000 to 8,000 miles.
2. Answer: c. According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, 40 percent of the 2006 passenger vehicle models have standard electronic stability

control systems designed to help prevent the vehicle from spinning out.

8. Answer: c. According to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), 0 to 60 mph acceleration times have improved from a characteristic 14.1 seconds in 1975 to 9.7 seconds in 2006, that's about 31 percent.
9. Answer: c. According to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration statistics, approximately 1 million traffic accidents occur in the rain annually.
10. Answer: c. According to NitroFill, a company that produces generators in conjunction with Pneumatek Inc., scientific testing has shown that tires running 95 percent pure nitrogen get 30 percent longer tread life, are 50 percent less likely to experience failure and are 30 to 40 percent less likely to need refilling. The company is the sole provider of the tire fill product used by the US Air Force in the nation's fleet of B-2 bombers.
11. Answer: a. According to EPA estimates, 8 percent of the new vehicles sold have a manual transmission. In 1975 23 percent had manual transmissions.
12. Answer: d. The Singapore-flagged cargo ship, Cougar Ace, tipped over off the coast of Alaska on July 27. The ship was carrying 4,700 Mazda's at the time. Mazda said 60 percent of the cars were Mazda3's and 30 percent were the new CX-7 crossover SUV.
13. Answer: d. Actor Barry Newman, playing the part of Kowalski, in the 1971 movie "Vanishing Point," drove a supercharged 1970 Dodge Challenger R/T.
14. Answer: c. As Scion owners have traded their cars, 50.3 percent have bought other Toyota brands. (Volkswagen 25.8 percent. Saturn 24.5 percent. MINI 24.1 percent.)

15. Answer: b. The first drive-up gasoline station opened in Saint Louis in 1905.

16. Answer: b. A Los Angeles gas station offered people a 5-cent discount for pumping their own gas in 1947, thereby starting the trend toward self-service pumps.
17. Answer: c. Pay-at-the-pump service stations started accepting credit cards at the pump starting in 1986.
18. Answer: c. Toyota (Toyota, Lexus and Scion) dominated the California new car sales during the first six months of 2006 with 26.7 percent of the market. (GM 14.4 percent. Honda 14.1 percent. Ford 9.9 percent. Nissan 8.5 percent. Chrysler 7.1 percent. All others 19.3 percent.)
19. Answer: c. The new Lexus LS luxury sedan has the world's first eight-speed automatic transmission.
20. Answer: c. According to Apple Computer, maker of the iPod, 70 percent of 2007 vehicles will offer a way to plug an iPod or MP3 player into the audio system.
21. Answer: d. According to the US Department of Transportation, Americans drive nearly 3 trillion miles annually.
22. Answer: b. According to the European Automobile Manufacturers Association, 49.8 percent of the vehicles sold in Europe in 2005 were diesel powered.
23. Answer: b. In addition to California Maine, Massachusetts and New York, Vermont is currently one of the five states that have emission standards prohibiting the sale of new diesel-powered cars.

24. Answer: c. The US Government is planning to make electronic stability control mandatory on all new vehicles sold in the US in the future. The systems are lauded for their ability to prevent vehicles from spinning out of control and rolling over.

25. Answer: c. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 72.0 percent of 18-year-olds have a driver's license.

26. Answer: c. According to the Power Information Network, the average age of the Toyota FJ Cruiser buyer is 43 years old.

27. Answer: a. In 1958 Oklahoma Senator Michael Monroney, Chairman of the Senate Subcommittee on Automobile Marketing Practices, proposed a bill that would take the mystery out of new car prices. The sticker has since been referred to as the "Monroney."

28. Answer: c. According to eMarketer.com, 76.5 percent of Americans currently have a cell phone. That number is expected to grow to 95.4 percent by 2010.

29. Answer: c. The new MazdaSpeed3 has a base price of \$22,835. The four-door hatchback sports a 2.3-liter 263-hp turbocharged four-cylinder engine and is capable of a 5.9 second 0 to 60 mph run. Only 5,000 will be imported into the US.

30. Answer: c. The Chrysler Crossfire is the only convertible listed that does not use one of the new retractable hardtops.

31. Answer: d. According to the a new study by J.D. Power and Associates, 75 percent of people interviewed say they will consider a hybrid or alternative fuel vehicle as their next purchase. ■

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*.



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MITSUBISHI TOYING WITH SMALL i CONCEPT

Mitsubishi has been showing a very cool concept called i. The long wheelbase four door is a perfect commuter size and is expected to get over 40 mpg on the highway. The engine is a 660-cc 64-hp 3-cylinder engine with a turbocharger. The i has a unique aerodynamic styling with practically no hood, followed by a large steeply raked windshield. It will be available with front- or all-wheel drive with a long list of standard equipment like xenon headlights, power windows, keyless entry and a hard-disc-based navigation system. It should sell for about \$11,000 if it makes it to market. ▼



Mitsubishi i concept

Mercedes-Benz ML 420 CDI Diesel



With diesel fuel cleaning up its act in the US, manufacturers are starting to generate diesel products in volume. Europe buys 50% diesel vehicles.

MERCEDES OFFERS DIESEL SUVs

▲ Mercedes-Benz will begin offering diesel-powered versions of three of their SUV-style vehicles this fall. Initially the M- and R-Class vehicles will get the 3.0-liter turbodiesel engine. Then in January 2007, the new larger GL seven-passenger SUV will get the same engine option. The V-6 diesel, which gets a 320 CDI designation, is rated at 224 horsepower with an abundant 376-lb.ft. of torque. As a comparison, the gasoline powered 450 V-8 engine is rated at 335-hp and 339-lb.ft. of torque. The diesel engine is certified to be sold in 45 states, but will not be offered in California, New York, New Jersey, Vermont and Pennsylvania. The engine is amazingly quiet and very strong with only a slight turbo lag. It will be mated with the Mercedes 7-speed automatic transmission. Mercedes claims a 0 to 60 mph time of 9.5 seconds for the GL and fuel economy of about 24 mpg. The ML 420 is also already available as a CDI diesel in Europe and should soon reach our shores.

DAIMLERCHRYSLER V-6 PROGRAM

DaimlerChrysler has a program to develop new "modular" V-6 engines for Mercedes-Benz and Chrysler vehicles. The Phoenix (the internal name) engine

will be developed in both basic and high-performance applications in three US plants, at an estimated cost of \$2 billion. The engines will be built on flexible manufacturing lines that can build multiple types of engines in any sequence. The modular engines will allow Chrysler to reduce their V-6 engines from five types to one. The new engines will be under the hoods of 2010 models.

ONSTAR ADDS NEW LEVELS OF SERVICE

General Motors is phasing new information into the OnStar communications system. Designed to help maintain GM vehicles at peak operating efficiency, the new information will be reported to owners through personalized vehicle operating system checks that are and emailed to participating owners monthly. The new features include tire pressure monitoring with suggestions to make small adjustments to improve fuel economy and E85 compatibility to remind drivers if their vehicle is E85 ethanol compatible and to help them find the nearest station selling the E85 fuel. The new features also include detailed emissions data and oil-life monitoring. OnStar subscribers can enroll in the Vehicle Diagnostics program at no

additional cost when they press their blue OnStar button and ask to be enrolled, or by visiting www.onstar.com.

RUMORS OF THE NEXT BMW 5 SERIES

Drawings and details are already starting to leak out about the next generation BMW 5 Series, which is due in 2009. Expect a "toned-down" design, with more of an elegant look. It will be wider and longer to provide more interior space and even better handling. Watch for a full menu of gas engines along with diesel offerings. Transmissions will include a new quick shifting automatic, revised sequential manual gearbox and dual clutch automatic like Volkswagen's DSG. Innovations will include an active rear suspension, next-generation electronic damper control and a plethora of weight saving designs.

HCCI ENGINE: GAS & DIESEL BENEFITS

Most major auto companies are working on an engine technology called HCCI, or homogeneous charge compression ignition. The HCCI process can deliver about 80 percent of the efficiency of a diesel engine but at a cost around 80 percent

KEEP RIGHT >>



Tesla Electric Roadster

TESLA: THE FUTURE OF ELECTRIC CARS?

An upstart company based in San Carlos, California, has captured the imagination of car enthusiasts and environmentalists alike. The Tesla electric roadster gets its power from 6,831 rechargeable lithium-ion batteries and they provide nearly unbelievable numbers: 0 to 60 mph in about 4 seconds, top speed 130 mph, range 250 miles and charge time of 3.5 hours. The only downside of the two-seater, so far, is the \$100,000 price tag. Creator Martin Eberhard has spent the last three years developing the Tesla with the financial support of some big name Internet people, like PayPal cofounder Elon Musk and Google's Larry Page. The batteries, which are similar to those used in a laptop computer, run the Tesla for about 1 to 2 cents per mile. The sporty body design and platform comes from Lotus in England and the motor comes from Taiwan. The first batch of cars is sold out and they have started production on the next 100 cars. Work has also started on a future four-door sedan. For more information go to the Tesla website at <http://www.teslamotors.com>. ▼



Mitsubishi X concept

Power, all-wheel-drive handling, a ten-generation heritage... add looks that could kill, and the new Mitsubishi Evo X is bound to take 'em by storm.

>> AUTO NEWS UPDATE - cont'd

less than the difference in price between a gas and diesel engine. The system can work on both gasoline and diesel engines, but that doesn't mean the engines can use either fuel. Using the HCCI, a gasoline engine will ignite its fuel by compression, instead of using a sparkplug like a diesel does. A diesel engine might be used to ignite the fuel much in the same manner a sparkplug ignites the fuel in a gasoline powered engine. The engines will only run in the HCCI mode when the vehicle is cruising at a set speed. One of the obstacles engineers need to overcome is making a seamless transition from the regular mode to HCCI. If engineers can successfully work through development challenges, the HCCI will increase fuel economy levels while lowering the emissions of oxides of nitrogen. Look for the earliest applications by 2011.

FORD'S CAPLESS FUEL FILLER

Ford put the first capless fuel filler on the exotic Ford GT supercar in 2005 and now plans to expand the fueling system across the company's product lineup. Starting with the 2008 Lincoln MKS, Ford says the capless system is a "tangible

example of how Ford is developing innovative product solutions to satisfy the unmet needs of consumers." The capless system eliminates the need to put a gas cap back on after fueling and saves the time needed to unscrew and replace the fuel cap. It's also environmentally friendly because no gas fumes escape during refueling. It probably won't be long before other manufacturers will develop their own variations of the capless fuel filler.

MITSUBISHI EVOLUTION X DUE IN 2008

▲ Mitsubishi's next generation Evolution rally car won't be ready until 2008, but it should be worth the wait. The Evo X (ten) will be almost exactly like the concept that debuted last year at the Tokyo auto show, but with regular taillights and a simpler interior. It will be powered by the same 2.0-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine, but with more than 300-hp to leap frog the Subaru WRX STI (unless Subaru jumps their power first). Mitsubishi says a new four-wheel drive system called S-AWC (Super All-Wheel Control) will rival the Honda SH-AWD system. It also features active steering, active yaw control and many other electronic sensors.

SMALLER MAYBACHS IN THE WORKS?

Mercedes-Benz is thinking of a smaller Maybach to compete with cars like the Bentley Continental Flying Spur. It will be named the 51, to reflect the 5.1-meter (or 200.8 inch) length; the other Maybach models are the 57 and 62. The styling will be similar to the larger models. Engine options will likely be the Mercedes-Benz AMG V-8 and twin-turbo V-12, each with 500 to 600 horsepower. A coupe version is also in the planning stages. The 51 would be a step up from the Mercedes S-Class sedan and CL coupe. If the project reaches fruition, prices should be in the \$150,000 to \$200,000 range.

TRAFFIC.COM EXPANDS TO ARTERIALS

Traffic.com has expanded to include detailed coverage of arterial roadways and side streets. The Internet-based service provides real-time traffic conditions in 50 major markets in the US. The service allows users to custom select routes and it then displays the information on a computer map or by calling a toll free number and getting an audio report about any of the custom routes. Users only have to listen to a short ad to

KEEP RIGHT >>

CHEVROLET CONFIRMS SUPER Z06

After months of rumors, GM has confirmed that Chevrolet will add a super-Z06 Corvette to the sport car lineup, possibly with an SS tag or even bringing back the Stingray name. The ultra-high performance two-seater will be powered by a supercharged version of the 7.0-liter V-8 producing more than 600-horsepower. It's likely to be trimmed down to 2,900 pounds (that's about the same weight as the new Pontiac Solstice). The result should be one of the top performing cars available at any price and probably be faster than the Ford GT, Ferrari 599 GTB and Porsche 911 Turbo. This photo suggests it might be thought of as the wild offspring of the routinely super-potent Z06 and the outrageously-potent Corvette C6R Race Car. ▼



Corvette Z06 and C6R Race Car



Ford Expedition

The totally redesigned Ford Expedition is shown here in standard length. The EL version is instantly identifiable by its rear doors clearing the wheelwell.

>> AUTO NEWS UPDATE - cont'd

access the free service. Traffic.com is the same company that provides the traffic reports for XM Satellite Radio and many television stations. Registered users (free) can also get traffic congestion alerts by email and phone. For more information, see www.Traffic.com.

FORD EXPEDITION; ALL NEW FOR 2007

▲ The redesigned Ford Expedition gets more standard safety features for 2007, but with a price that has been reduced an average \$4,300. Standard safety equipment includes SafetyCanopy™ three-row side air curtains, AdvanceTrac® with RSC® (Roll Stability Control) at a starting price of under \$30,000 including destination charges. A 300-hp, 5.4-liter Triton® V-8 engine with a new 6-speed automatic transmission drives the Expedition. It is the first full-size SUV to have independent rear suspension, fold-flat seats with available power-folding third row along with the new safety equipment. It also comes in a new longer version called the EL (Extended Length) with a nearly 15-inch longer wheelbase and 24 cubic feet more space behind the third row. All Expedition models are available in rear-

and four-wheel drive.

V-8 AXED IN NEXT LINCOLN FLAGSHIP

The original plans for the new flagship Lincoln MKS called for a 4.4-liter V-8 engine from the Volvo XC90 crossover, however that appears to have been scrapped due to the higher cost of the V-8 engine. Instead, the MKS is scheduled to be powered by a 3.5-liter V-6 engine. Other Ford V-8's that might be used are too large for the engine compartment. The Lincoln V-6 will be modified to produce more horsepower than the similar engines that will go into the Ford Five Hundred and Mercury Montego sedans.

GM TO OFFER \$100 NAV SYSTEM

General Motors expects to have a new OnStar based navigation system in more than 2 million 2007 model GM vehicles. The new OnStar Turn-by-Turn Navigation allows a consumer to talk to a live advisor, who in turn sends complete step-by-step directions to the customer's vehicle through their OnStar system. Audio directions are then automatically played through the vehicle's stereo system as needed, triggered by the system's GPS capabilities. After pressing the blue OnStar button all commands are done verbally.

The system will even detect when a wrong turn is made and offer updated directions. It will also give the driver access to information on 10 million points of interest and businesses. The navigation system will be standard equipment the first year on nearly all Buicks and Cadillacs and available as a \$100 optional OnStar package upgrade during the initial year of service. After the first year, customers can continue the service by renewing their package for \$299 per year, which also includes OnStar's suite of safety, security and communications services.

STOP DRAIN WITH "BATTERY BRAIN"

If you keep finding the good battery on your vehicle dead, then you need the "Battery Brain". This innovative device connects to a car's battery and automatically cuts off power to anything draining the battery, allowing enough power to start the vehicle. When it's time to use the vehicle again, the driver only needs to push a button on the brain and the system is reconnected, allowing the vehicle to start. The brain is available in three types including two remote control models that allow the system to be reset

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>> AUTO NEWS UPDATE - cont'd

without opening the hood. The top model, the Type III, can be used as an anti-theft system by allowing the driver to disconnect or reconnect the battery by a remote control button. The system works great for stored or recreational vehicles and equipment. It's available at automotive accessory stores or on line from www.batterybrain.com. The basic unit is priced at \$39.95, while the Type III sells for \$69.95.

HD RADIO CONVERTERS AVAILABLE

Starting as you read this (in November), after-market High-Definition (HD) radio converters will be available for vehicles. This will allow consumers to access the growing number of HD radio stations without having to buy a new radio. The converters sell for \$199 or less plus installation. To date, high definition broadcasting technology is available in 80 percent of the US market and is expected to be in the top 100 markets and more than 700 stations by March 2007.

The HD Digital Radio Alliance says there will be at least nine automakers offering the HD radios as factory options. Unlike satellite radio systems, HD radio is free and offers listeners significantly improved sound quality for AM and FM broadcasts, plus the radio stations will be able to multicast (add multiple content streams) on the same frequency. It also displays details about the music being played along with weather and traffic alerts.

GM MEN CROSS-DRESS TO LEARN

To see what female drivers go through to drive trucks and SUVs, about 100 male General Motors employees dressed in garbage bag skirts, donned high heels and installed long fingernails to get first hand experience. The exercise took place at the Milford Proving Grounds west of Detroit. The idea was to give the men working on the design of the next generation full-size trucks a woman's perspective.

BMW REAL TIME TRAFFIC INFO

BMW is offering Real Time Traffic Information (RTTI) for the first time on any production vehicle sold in the US. The system uses Clear Channel Radio's

broadcast network to update traffic information from a variety of sources including FM radio stations, highway-embedded sensors, video monitors on bridges and roadways and local traffic monitoring centers. Traffic data is then streamed to a dedicated tuner in the car's radio and is transferred directly to the navigation system. This allows customers to receive traffic updates 24/7 even if the radio is turned off or the customer is listening to another audio source like CDs or iPod. The nav system then calculates the best route considering traffic incidents and potential delays. If a delay is more than 5 minutes, the system will offer an alternative route around the congestion either automatically or at the choice of the driver. RTTI requires no monthly fees and no recurring cost for four years, its part of the cost of the navigation system. It is available on X5, M5, M6 and 3, 5 and 6 series cars.

NASCAR NOW: SECOND EDITION

Authors Timothy Miller and Steve Milton have done a great job putting America's second largest sport on paper with their new book *NASCAR Now: Second Edition*. The 176-page paperback book is filled with 150 full-color photos of action, top drivers and all the color that makes the sport so popular. The book features up-to-date profiles on the top-20 drivers and the young emerging stars. There are also stories on NASCAR legends, histories of the top-10 racing teams, the day in the life of a pit crewmember and details on how a track is prepared for race day along with other racing details. The large format book published by Firefly Books is \$24.95. For more information go to www.fireflybooks.com.

FORD PERFECTING 4-POINT SEATBELTS

In a process that started at the beginning of this decade, Ford safety engineers have been developing a four-point seatbelt system. Using two shoulder straps integrated into the seat frame and worn like suspenders, the device buckles together at the center of the waist. It's designed evenly to spread crash force across the body. The seat belts have been tested in consumer clinics and 75 to 80 percent of the participants claim they prefer the four-point system. Also in



www.gmperformanceparts.com

Hats, hoodies, clocks, coolers... you'll find a range of merchandise at GM Performance Parts online, but the new emphasis is on performance engines.

development, Ford has an inflatable belt system for rear-seat passengers. The belt deploys at the same time as an airbag to spread crash forces across a broader section of the body and to control the motion of the head and neck. Both systems will likely first appear in 2010 model Ford products.

GM PERFORMANCE PARTS WEBSITE

▲ Making GM cars go faster just got easier at the all-new GM Performance Parts website (www.gmperformanceparts.com). The site is being rolled out in two phases, starting with a home page that breaks down into three sections. It offers engine builders the ability to dream an engine, build an engine from their parts and race it with professional advice. Phase One also includes a "parts finder" tool to find parts by the number or description. There's also an engine showcase with crate engines from small- to big-blocks including racing engines and the LS V-8 performance engines. Phase Two will have an engine configurator that allows you to select an engine, pick and choose various dress-up accessories and watch

them "fly" on and off the engine. A dyno configurator will allow visitors to select performance upgrades on the engine of their choice and then run it on a virtual dyno, which will graph the results displaying horsepower and torque increases.

NISSAN IMPROVES TOP V-6 FOR 2007

Nissan has modified its award winning "VQ" V-6 engines for 2007. They claim the new versions will offer 10 percent better fuel economy while increasing performance. The changes are mostly due to reduced friction, improved intake and exhaust systems. The V-6 used in the 2007 Infiniti G35 will have at least 300 horsepower at just under 7,000 rpms – that's nearly 1,000 rpms higher than the previous generation. The red line has also been raised to 7,500 rpms. Officials say the new engine will drop 0 to 60 mph times for the G35 to about 5 seconds, which is about one second faster than the previous engine. ■

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*.



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Radio
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Barrett-Jackson will conduct their 36th annual auction January 13-21, 2007, in Scottsdale. For over three decades, this auction has been a barometer for the collector car industry. While the company's auctions have evolved into automotive lifestyle events, each sale has become an indicator of trends for enthusiasts and

collectors worldwide. From legendary designers to a new breed of hot rodders and custom car manufacturers, the 2007 event will bring in some of the greatest wonders of the automotive world.

2006 included record attendance, TV coverage and total sales for Barrett-Jackson. Helping overall sales reach an all-

time high of \$100 million was a Harley Earl-designed 1950 General Motors Futurliner concept bus that garnered \$4,320,000.

In addition to dazzling classics crossing the auction block, the 2007 event will include a Rock 'N' Roll Memorabilia Auction on January 15, 2007.

The event will take place over nine days of special events, displays and activities. The auction will feature more than 1,100 collector and special interest automobiles from all years being auctioned at No Reserve, as well as daily automobilia auctions with an array of rare and one-of-a-kind automotive collectibles. Attended by 250,000 collectors and enthusiasts from around the globe, the collector car auction includes over 350 vendors and exhibitors. SPEED will broadcast 40 hours of live auction coverage over six days.

SCHEDULE HIGHLIGHTS:

- ▼ Saturday, January 13, 2007
ChildHelp USA® Drive the Dream Gala
- ▼ Sunday, January 14, 2007
Auction Participant Preview Day
Opening Night Gala, invitation only
- ▼ Monday, January 15, 2007
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
Family Values Day, gates open at 8am
Rock 'N' Roll Memorabilia Auction
- ▼ Tuesday-Sunday, January 16-21, 2007
36th Annual Barrett-Jackson Event
Gates open at 8am
- ▼ Tuesday-Thursday, January 16-18, 2007
Happy Auction Hours, 5pm-10pm
- ▼ Thursday-Sunday, January 18-21, 2007
Lifestyle Pavilion, 10am-8pm

LOCATION: WestWorld, Northeast of Loop 101 and Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd.

TICKETS: At the gate, Barrett-Jackson Showroom or www.barrett-jackson.com. Senior, child, military, student and early purchase discounts are offered.

World's fastest 'Cuda

A 1971 Plymouth Barracuda, the fastest Hemi 'Cuda in the world, will be sold at No Reserve. Lot #1290, owned by Bob Johnson and built by Alan Johnson at Johnson's Hot Rod Shop, blends modern technology and performance with the raw, street-hungry look of an early 1970's Mopar.

The 'Cuda has been clocked at speeds in excess of 200 mph and has been tested by championship racer Scott Pruitt. Speed and power are this street machine's soul with a 572ci all aluminum Hemi that produces 870hp, a one-off Hogan EFI and a two stage Holley direct port nitrous oxide system.

The one-off chassis transfers power to the pavement with milled engine plates and a 6-speed transaxle. Johnson's 'Cuda also possesses modern handling at high speeds while sitting on 20" rear and 19" front Colorado Custom wheels while Red Devil ceramic coated titanium brakes bring it to a rest. One-off lights, grill and front and rear bumpers add contemporary accents to the 'Cuda's classic style.

The interior includes numerous one-off features including silver and charcoal-faced gauges with brushed aluminum bezels. The graphite leather surface instills a feeling of luxury during the high-speed experience.

The 'Cuda will cross the block with numerous awards earned, including Goodguy's 2006 Street Machine of the Year, Shades of the Past 2006 Car of the Year and 2005 Daimler Chrysler Design Excellence Award at SEMA.

One-off 1930 Duesenberg Model J

A one-off 1930 Duesenberg Model J, lot No. 1311, will be sold at No Reserve. Introduced in December 1928, the Duesenberg Model J emerged from the Great Depression as a sign of reform and prosperity and was dubbed "the world's finest motor car."

The Model J to be auctioned is a one-off Arlington style, with a long wheelbase body by Derham. This classic's body, engine, frame and all components are original, and it runs and drives exceptionally well. The vintage cream color exterior complements the smooth wood grain and brown carpet interior.

The beauty approaches the auction block with numerous awards under her hood. These include the 2004 Grand Classic award and National First Senior Badge from the

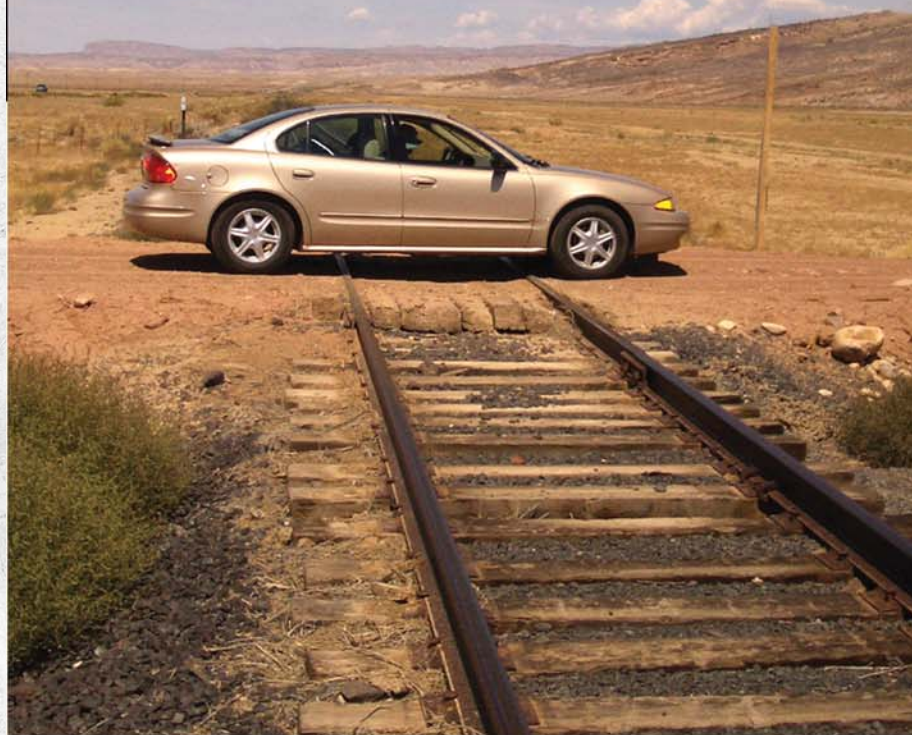


The 36th Annual Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Event

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Following post-WWI recession, Fred Duesenberg teamed up with American transport pioneer Errett Lobban Cord and the Cord Corporation to create the Duesenberg Model J, the highlight of Cord's model lineup. Built not only to compete with Cadillac and Packard, the Model J equaled the style, comfort and performance of Rolls-Royce and Bugatti. It was introduced on December 1, 1928, at the New York Auto Salon, and captured automotive headlines throughout the world. Duesenberg's stamp on the automotive world could not be ignored, as his line prompted the popular phrase, "she's a real Duesie."

Carroll Shelby's personal Cobra— only surviving dual supercharged factory Cobra

Carroll Shelby's personal 1966 Shelby Cobra 427 Supersnake (Lot #1301), which was designed and built solely for the racing legend, will be sold at No Reserve.

"When I built this dual supercharged 427 Cobra in 1966, I wanted it to be the fastest, meanest car on the road," said Shelby. "Forty years later, it will still kick the tail of just about anything in the world. It's the fastest street legal Cobra I've ever owned."

Shelby plucked CSX3015 from a line of 19 production Competition Cobras and molded it into one of the most impressive automobiles ever built. It has a monstrous 427cid, 800hp twin Paxton supercharged V8 with a super three-speed automatic transmission.

In addition to use as his personal automobile, Shelby drove the Cobra in a running of the "Turismos Visitadores" in Nevada. In February 1968, *Road & Track* referred to CSX3015 as "The Cobra to End All Cobras."

Shelby built a similar twin Paxton-enhanced 427 Cobra (CSX3303) for close friend and famed comedian Bill Cosby. CSX3303 was later wrecked, leaving CSX3015 as the only one of its kind in the world.

"CSX3015 speaks volumes about the genius in Carroll Shelby," said Harley E. Cluxton III, owner of CSX3015. "This Cobra is the benchmark that defines the American Muscle car. His baby does it all, and without the help of ASR, ESP, ABS, engine management ECU's, carbon fiber or titanium." ■

RUSSO AND STEELE

COLLECTOR AUTOMOBILE AUCTIONS



7TH ANNUAL COLLECTOR AUTOMOBILE AUCTION
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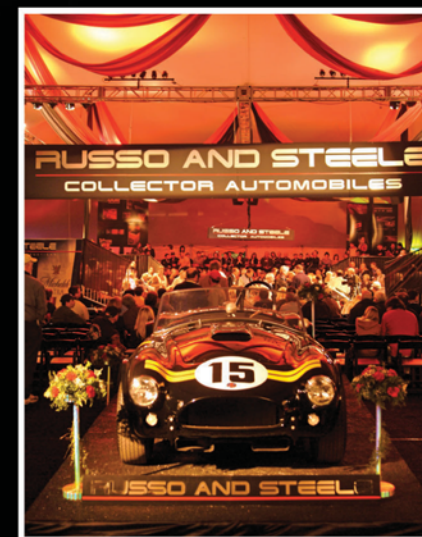


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RUSSO AND STEELE COLLECTOR AUTOMOBILES

The 7th Annual Russo and Steele Collector Automobile Auction roars into north Scottsdale January 18-21, 2007. Experience 500 European sports cars, American muscle cars, hot rods and customs and see why Russo and Steele has cemented itself as one of the Big Three Collector Automobile Auctions in the US.

Russo and Steele was created to provide a highly targeted alternative in the world of collector car auctions. Specializing in European sports cars, American muscle

cars, hot rods and customs, Russo and Steele was launched in Scottsdale in 2001. CEO Drew Alcazar had a very clear vision of what he wanted to deliver—a unique, highly personal and visceral experience in an intimate environment. His objective was an auction that was exclusive and boutique in style, focusing primarily on the specific needs of the buyers and sellers of high quality collector automobiles.

The site, at Scottsdale Road and the Loop 101 Freeway in north Scottsdale,

offers newly paved entry roads, plus expanded covered tent space to include all the consigned vehicles—over 140,000 square feet! Regardless of weather or time of day, attendees and clients will enjoy an all-encompassing environment including an expanded Vendor Midway and plenty of concessions for all tastes.

Inside the auction tent, complimentary hospitality for bidders, consignors and their guests, with catered food and beverage, has been extended to service the entire day.

But the highlight is the exciting, visceral, interactive format that is the signature of this high line event—live “Auction in the Round” returns, giving all spectators a great view of the auction block action. Dubbed by some media as a “night club – prize fight arena,” this unique presentation by Russo and Steele lets everyone be part of the action, experience it, live it, and be part of the epicenter of action.

Continuing to contribute over \$100,000 to benefit the Phoenix Children’s Hospital’s

Emily Center, a new addition this year has everyone buzzing—in addition to the notoriously “sold out” Martini Lounge themed Preview Gala on Wednesday, January 17th, the Emily Center is raffling off a 1965 Ford Mustang Convertible. Stunning in blue on blue livery, the 289 cubic inch Ford V8 and factory four-speed transmission will have the lucky winner motoring in style with top down! Each raffle ticket will cost \$100 and the number of tickets is limited to only 500.

SCHEDULE HIGHLIGHTS:

- ▼ Wednesday-Sunday, January 18-21, 2007
On-site bidders’ registration
Gates open at 10am
- ▼ Wednesday Evening, January 17, 2007
Charity Preview Gala, 6:30pm
RSVP Required. Tickets: \$175 per person
Benefiting the Phoenix Children’s Hospital Emily Center
- ▼ Thursday, January 18, 2007
Gates open for preview at 10am
Memorabilia auction begins at 4pm
Auction of vehicles 5-10pm
- ▼ Friday-Saturday, January 19-20, 2007
Gates open for preview at 10am
Memorabilia auction begins at 12 noon
Auction of vehicles 1-11pm
- ▼ Sunday, January 21, 2007
Gates open for preview at 10am
Champagne Brunch at 11am (bidders, consignors and their guests)
Memorabilia auction begins at 12 noon
Select auction of vehicles 1-5pm

LOCATION: 18601 North Scottsdale Road, just south of the Loop 101 Freeway, in north Scottsdale. Look for the big white tents on the east side of Scottsdale Road.

TICKETS: General gate admission for access to the car preview area is \$15. Bidder registration is \$100, bidder guest \$50.

INFORMATION: www.russoandsteele.com

This year’s Charity Gala is titled “Russo and Steele’s Martini Lounge” and will include food stations, hosted bars and a great band. Proceeds benefit Phoenix Children’s Hospital’s Emily Center, a pediatric health library where parents can get answers to questions and learn what they need to know to fully participate in their child’s health care.

Some 500 select cars will be auctioned in a unique auction-in-the-round format. Registered bidders and consignors, along with their guests, have access to the auction arena. The general public is invited to enjoy the Car Midway.

What’s New in 2007

This year an additional evening has been added, offering five days and five hundred collector automobiles. All automobiles can be viewed in a new enhanced perfect-bound Russo and Steele catalog. Not only does this catalog give every detail about each

THE 7TH ANNUAL RUSSO AND STEELE COLLECTOR AUTOMOBILE AUCTION

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consigned automobile, but it will definitely become a collector's memorabilia piece perfect for the coffee table.

Russo and Steele has implemented a new shipping program, providing free shipping to the winner bidders. For details, please visit www.russoandsteele.com. Russo and Steele also offers a complimentary fourteen-day full coverage insurance binder to ensure that all sold automobiles have safe delivery to their new owners.

Site improvements, tent and hospitality improvements and an expanded Charity Gala with Mustang raffle are mentioned above. The inviting auction-in-the-round format gives all of the spectators a great view of the auction block action, complete with pulsating music and a dramatic light show.

Russo and Steele welcomes a new sponsor for the "Sports and Muscle in Scottsdale" this January. System One polish is a new concept in polishing paint that works with one product to remove color sand scratches at the body shop, and the same product to produce a perfect shine on any surface in all detailing shops or on any polishable surface including wood and plastic. System One will offer seminars on site to get better acquainted with their product.

The Russo and Steele concept

CEO Drew Alcazar, along with his partner and wife Josephine, decided to buck tradition and not name the company after themselves. To maintain some type of anonymity and to create an organization that empowers their employees, they conceived the Russo and Steele Collector Automobile Auction. The name Russo and Steele was born from the cars they love: Russo representing the European Sports Cars and derived from the name Russo Rubino—the dark red of vintage Ferraris. The name Steele represents "Detroit Iron" of the American Muscle Cars.

Embracing decades of experience in collector car restoration, and harboring a true passion for quality cars, Drew had a very specific design for of the type of auction experience he wanted Russo and Steele to embody. Not only does the auction limit the number and kind of cars allowed into the sale, the attendees inside the "big tent" are regulated to bidders, consignors, and their guests. To create and keep Russo and Steele in an exclusive format for car enthusiasts, only registered bidders, consignors and their guests are allowed into the main auction tent where the cars cross the auction block in a

high energy arena, all coupled with dinner and cocktails. Meanwhile, the general public may enjoy the outdoor staging areas where hundreds of cars are readying for their moment in the spotlight.

Russo and Steele developed a layout that has never been created before or since, the "Auction in the Round" concept. This allows for a very interactive auction block that generates excitement with a sense of urgency and personal emotion that live auction events are all about. The buyers are right on the floor with the cars. No cars on stages, no separation. With a ground level auction "arena" and elevated platform seating 360 degrees around the stage, a virtual "boxing ring" or "coliseum" effect funnels buyers to the epicenter of the action!

Since their inaugural event in Scottsdale, Russo and Steele has grown steadily, earning a loyal following of some of the nation's most critical buyers and sellers. That support has allowed the auction to offer additional nights and cars at both its flagship Scottsdale auction, and at its event in Monterey, California, each August. At the January 2006 event, sales topped \$22 million; nearly doubling the previous year's success. In January 2007, Russo and Steele is embarking on its first five-day event.

Want to be a bidder?

Drew Alcazar was a celebrated collector automobile restoration expert in the 1980s and '90s in California and has owned the Phoenix-based Russo and Steele Collector Automobiles with his wife Josephine for the last seven years.

New to collector car auctions? "Don't go to a gunfight armed with a pocket knife," advises Alcazar. The moral of that story is: do your homework. For novice enthusiasts, Alcazar suggests reading car publications, attending a few auctions and tracking the results of the cars in which you're most interested. Define what category of car really makes your heart race and study it carefully.

"Don't buy what you haven't seen," said Alcazar. Some people go to auctions, get caught up in the excitement and buy a car on the block they haven't even inspected, having no idea how well the car has been maintained. "Before the auction starts, hang out by the car, but stand back and listen to what the more experienced people are saying about it." Newcomers also benefit by striking up relationships with other enthusiasts who can help with the education process.

Why are auctions so popular? "It's the visceral buzz, an adrenaline rush," gleams Alcazar. "After all, emotion is what it's all about! Nowhere else can you genuinely feel the excitement than on the hot auction block." Alcazar continues, "No other medium exists where you can physically participate in the purchase or sale of our passions than the powerful energy created by a live auction".

"Collecting cars is a hobby. If you've bought the car correctly you can enjoy it, feed it gas, insure it, and then down the road sell it and do it all over again. If you're not doing it for the sheer enjoyment of owning or driving the car, then don't jump in."

A sampling of consignments to date

It couldn't be much more difficult to give you just a quick cross-sectional sampling of what's consigned at Russo and Steele 2007—their standards of acceptance are very high, for quality on every level, and for what can legitimately be called unique characteristics, appeal and collector value. Here are a few of the entries to date:

1971 Pontiac GTO Judge convertible - This is one of seventeen Judge convertibles built in 1971 and one of only seven 455 HO Judge convertibles fully accounted for. It has full Pontiac Historical Society documentation with build sheet, window sticker, and cowl tag. All matching numbers and correct color combo, only 228 miles since restoration.

1972 Pontiac TA Mitchell - 32,700 original miles and all PHS documentation!! This was a design study car, built for Bill Mitchell, then GM's Vice President of Design. Mitchell liked to get first-hand public reaction to his design projects, disdaining focus groups dictating car design. He took this Trans Am to the Elkhart Lake Races on a few occasions to gauge the public's interest. While it was in the studio he got internal reactions to the new design features such as the small "screamin' chicken" hood decal.

1969 Pontiac Trans Am R/A III - The first year for the Pontiac Trans Am. This car is equipped with the 400/345 HP RAM AIR III engine with a TH400 automatic transmission, power steering, power disc brakes, and factory A/C. Only 29 cars were built with this specification.

1971 Plymouth "Hemi" Cuda - This black "Hemi" Cuda is documented with the original broadcast sheet, original fender tag, original title, owner history, and a detailed history of the car's life. Also, this is an original mile Hemi with 24,670 miles.

1955 Pontiac StarChief - Built on the first day of production (October 4, 1954), car number 164 is believed to be the only solid red convertible produced, ordered by Pontiac for the show car circuit, and shown in the book titled "Pontiac 1926-1986. As near perfect as any car we've ever seen, and ready to win show trophies at the highest level.

1967 Chevy Corvette 427 - This red/red 1967 427/435 convertible is known as The Music Car. It survives today with 8,014 actual documented miles. Optioned with power brakes, factory side exhaust, tinted glass, telescopic steering, F41 special suspension, 3.55 positraction, shoulder harness, Bolt-on wheels and Redline tires. Original non-DOT tires and is as close to a perfect restoration as you can find. It actually has the original Bolt-on wheels and original Redline tires.

1939 Ford Coupe - This Ford features a 514 cubic inch, 630 HP engine from Ford racing connected to a Ford automatic overdrive with 3500 RPM stall converter and transmission brake. This engine has one off fuel injection with custom velocity stacks. The rear end is a Dutchman quick change supported by a Pete and Jake 4 bar rear suspension. Air ride by Air Ride Technology's on all four corners. The chassis is custom built with Morrison upper and lower control arms. The stopping is done by 13 inch Baer disc brakes. Much more.

1970 Ferrari 365 GT - One of the first to be equipped with fully independent suspension, concentric Koni telescopic shocks and coiling springs all around, coupled with a Koni and Ferrari-developed self-leveling rear suspension, which provided a quieter interior.

1955 Buick Century - Fully equipped, power steering, power brakes, power windows, power leather seats, wonderbar radio, power antenna, with Kelsey Hayes wire wheels, a factory option. Professional restoration. Painted Dover White and Cherokee Red with a black top, numerous awards. Verified by BCA in their 2005 membership roster.

1966 Shelby GT 350 - A rotisserie restoration was just completed on the 66 Shelby 350 # 1702. Total GT 350 production was 2,378 in 1966. This particular car is a 4-speed and carries the original underride traction bars and original engine and drive train. #1702 is documented and listed in the Shelby Registry. Outstanding condition and performance!

This small sampling, out of five hundred or so cars already consigned, gives you a feel for the high level of entry juried and accepted by Russo and Steele. Clearly, the best thing to do is show up in January and see them all. ■

Arizona

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

National Park Service - Arizona
http://www.nps.gov/state/az

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520-387-6849 Visitor Information

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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

Wupatki National Monument
Flagstaff Area National Monuments
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PARKS AND OUTDOORS

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Lake Havasu State Park
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800-359-6205 • www.sandiego.org/nav/Visitors

AUTOMOTIVE

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New Mexico

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Southern Utah Scenic Tours
PO Box 1113 • Cedar City UT 84720
888-404-8687 • www.utahscenicstours.com

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Desert Rose Inn & Cabins
701 W. Highway 191 • Bluff UT 84512
888-475-7673 • www.DesertRoseInn.com

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TOURISM - ATTRACTIONS - EVENTS

Colorado Activity Centers, Inc.
PO Box 129 • Frisco CO 80443
800-777-8642 • www.coloradoinfo.com

AUTOMOTIVE

Shelby American Collection
5020 Chaparral Court • Boulder CO 80308
303-516-9565 • .shelbyamericancollection.org

Mexico

RESORTS AND LODGING

Puerto Peñasco Mexico Online
Beachfront home rentals in Rocky Point.
623-935-0507 • www.puerto-penasco.com

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Baja California State Tourism Office
Blvd. Diaz Ordaz s/n
Edificio Plaza Patria Nivel 3
CP 22400 Tijuana BC • (66) 81-9492

Chihuahua State Tourism Office
Calle Libertad No. 1300
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

AUTOMOTIVE

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

Imperial Palace Auto Collections (see Nev.)

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

National Automobile Museum (see Nev.)

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

Petersen Automotive Museum (see Calif.)

Shelby American Collection (see Colorado)

TEST DRIVE : 2007 HYUNDAI AZERA LIMITED

Hyundai Azera moves into flagship spot

by Barbara and Bill Schaffer
photos by Joe Sage

The Hyundai Azera offers a lot of safety features, especially given its price. This sedan has a total of eight airbags—including advanced dual front airbags, front and rear seat-mounted side-impact airbags and roof-mounted side curtain airbags for both front and rear outboard seat occupants.

Hyundai never ceases to amaze us. (We say the same thing every time we drive one.) This time they have replaced the more than acceptable XG350 with the incredible Azera. This new full-size four-door sedan offers high-end styling, a spacious interior, quality materials and luxurious appointments—at a price as amazing as the vehicle itself.

In the animal world, when people talk about “dog years,” one year of a dog’s life is the equivalent of seven years in the life of a human. In the automotive industry, there is a similar equation developing, which we will call “Hyundai years.”

It works this way: for every one year of the auto industry, Hyundai progresses two years. Since the Korean automaker started selling cars in the US 20 years ago, they have progressed from the relatively primitive Excel to the sophisticated and competitive Azera. Most other auto companies have taken 40 years to advance that same distance. Each new Hyundai we’ve driven over the last four or five years has been dramatically better than the previous one we drove, whether it is the entry level Accent, the Santa Fe SUV or the large Azera.

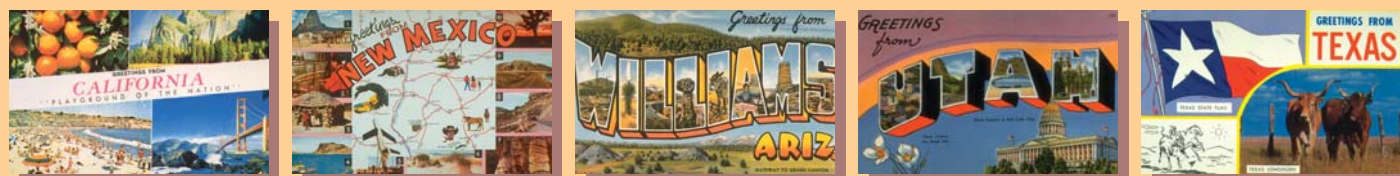
The Azera has a sleek modern design

with European styling cues, but it won’t stand out in the crowd. It is aerodynamically efficient to reduce wind noise and maximize stability.

The interior is as spacious as the Mercedes S-Class and Toyota Avalon, and offers features and appointments that rival many of the premium brands.

The two-tone instrument panel is made of high quality vinyl. It’s topped by a darker color and is separated from the lighter color front panel by a simple dark woodgrain strip. To make the cockpit feel

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Information is derived from a variety of sources and may not be final or accurate; check all info. Listings do not necessarily represent any specific affiliation with nor endorsement by Arizona Driver magazine.



even more spacious, the dash fits close to the windshield. Instruments are conveniently mounted high on the center console so the driver doesn't have to look down to control audio or climate functions. The console is finished in a metallic look.

The most impressive change from the

XG350 was the all-new, all-aluminum 3.8-liter engine. The DOHC V-6 produces 263 horsepower and 255-lb.ft. of torque using a Continuously Variable Valve Timing and Variable Intake System. The transmission for the front-wheel-drive sedan is a five-speed automatic with Shiftronic® manual

control for those, like us, who like to manually shift their automatic transmissions from time to time.

Hyundai's flagship Azera comes in two well-equipped models—the SE and Limited. The SE comes standard with dual auto temp control, AM/FM stereo with CD and

MP3, 16-inch alloy wheels, cruise control, all the power equipment associated with higher-level cars, keyless entry, and manual tilt and telescoping steering column—all for \$24,995 including destination charges.

The Limited model adds leather upholstery, woodgrain steering wheel, power electric rear sunshade, electronic stability control, power tilt and telescoping steering wheel, 17-inch alloy wheels, plus additional features for \$27,495. Some of our favorite options include power sunroof with shade, AM/FM/Cassette/6-disc CD changer and MP3, memory system for driver's seat/outside mirrors/power steering column.

The Ultimate Package (\$2,495) adds driver's memory system, power folding outside mirrors, adjustable pedals, power tilt and telescoping wheel, rain-sensing wipers, heated front seats, moonroof, 6-disc CD changer and Infinity speakers. Fully loaded, the Limited tips the scale at \$30,000. We told you it was incredible.

Benchmarking the best cars in this category, Hyundai engineers built the flagship Azera from a rigid unibody platform, attaching it to the ground with four-wheel independent suspension. The combination produced a solid feel with smooth, quiet ride. The handling was very good, with an acceptable level of body lean and softness commensurate with a vehicle in this class.

For a vehicle in this price range, it's pretty well equipped with safety features,

including front seat passenger and driver advanced airbags, front and rear seat side airbags, roof-mounted side curtain airbags, active head restraints, electronic stability control plus four-wheel anti-lock brakes and front seat belts with adjustable shoulder belt height.

The Azera's acceleration is an amazing 6.5 second, from 0 to 60 mph, and it has a top speed of 145 mph. Acceleration is very well behaved, too: there is no torque steer and only a little chirp from the tires during hard acceleration, thanks to the traction control.

We recorded 78 mph in our unofficial acceleration test, which we run from where we pull onto the main highway and accelerate full-throttle to a landmark in about one-eighth mile.

The EPA rates the Azera's fuel economy at 19 mpg for city driving and 28 mpg on the highway. We averaged 22.2 mpg during our week of mixed driving.

This vehicle is like a good movie, you just want everyone to see it. It's everything most of us want in a full-size sedan and maybe even more, plus it's an incredible value.

The Hyundai is an amazing value and an enjoyable car to drive. Fuel economy was a little weaker than we expected, but we imagine it would improve with a little more responsible driving on our part. The decisive factor, though, has to be the outstanding 5-year/60,000-mile bumper-to-bumper warranty and 10-year/100,000-mile powertrain warranty. ■

Hyundai Azera Limited

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Electronic stability control; Traction control, Active head restraints; 17-Inch alloy wheels; Remote keyless entry and alarm; Heated seats; Power rear sunshade; AM/FM audio with CD & MP3 player; Power windows, locks and keyless entry; Cruise; Woodgrain steering wheel.

Base Price \$26,835
Options: Premium package (sunroof, Infinity audio and 6-disc in-dash CD changer) \$1,500
Total Options \$1,500
Freight \$660
Price as Tested \$28,995

DIMENSIONS

EPA Size Large car
Weight 3,629 lb.
Wheelbase 109.4 in.
Length 192.7 in.
Width 72.8 in.
Height 58.7 in.
Fuel Capacity 19.8 gal.
Cargo Capacity 16.6 cu. ft.

MECHANICAL

Engine 3.8L DOHC V-6
Horsepower 263@6000
Torque 255@4500
Transmission 5-Spd. Auto
Drive Front wheel
Brakes Disc ABS
Tires 235/55R17

PERFORMANCE

0 to 60 mph 6.5 sec.
Speed to 1/8 mile 78 mph
Top speed 145 mph
EPA economy rating 19/28 mpg
Our actual fuel economy 22.2 mpg

COMPETITORS

Buick Lucerne, Chevrolet Impala, Chrysler 300, Dodge Charger, Ford Crown Victoria, Hyundai Sonata, Kia Amanti, Mercury Grand Marquis, Toyota Avalon. ■

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Not being the rugged outdoor type, I had a certain degree of apprehension about traveling to Central America to drive Land Rovers through the jungles and savannahs of Belize. From the communications, I wasn't sure where we would be staying and I got the impression we may be camping in rustic huts. I envisioned snakes, spiders and who knows what other dangers. I read warnings about not drinking the water, the recommendation

to get anti-malaria pills and maybe even a shot for Hepatitis A.

Then there was the email assuring me that, although Guatemalan bandits had been operating in the area we would be go through, they had taken precautions to protect the group of journalists.

Was this really a trip I wanted to take?

It was only three nights...so I figured, how bad could it be?

I packed lightweight clothes, sunscreen, DEET insect repellent and my camera and

headed for the airport.

I arrived in the afternoon at Belize City where I met up with 15 other journalists, a few from automotive publications and most from lifestyle media. When everyone arrived, we boarded smaller planes for a short flight to a remote dirt landing near the central Guatemalan border. As we flew a few thousand feet above the thick carpet of trees, we saw occasional settlements, a few roads and a terrain that transitioned from flat to rather hilly.

We later discovered that several of the "hills" we had passed over were actually Mayan ruins that had been swallowed up by the jungle.

Night one, the accommodations were at the Five Sisters Lodge, just a short drive from our dirt landing strip. The mountain lodge was perched on the edge of a valley overlooking the Five Sisters Falls. My thatched roof cabana looked primitive but had hardwood floors, screened windows with shutters, a small indoor bathroom

and a screened porch with hammock. It had two beds with mosquito nets and a fan mounted in the rafters. Our group dinner was at the base of the falls, 291 steps down from the lodge or a ride of several minutes in a rudimentary two-person cable car.

After a few drinks and a "Belize barbecue" of fish, pork and chicken, I retired to my room to see what might land on my mosquito net. The symphony of jungle sounds quickly put me to sleep,

and I had a restful night. The next morning I discovered a dead two-inch-long beetle in my shower. The prize for the most exciting night, however, went to the guy from Los Angeles who had a small snake fall from the ceiling of his cabana with a stranglehold on a gecko.

In the morning, the reasons for coming to Belize were parked in front of the Five Sisters Lodge—a group of Land Rovers, including several each of the Range Rover, Sport and LR3.

KEEP RIGHT >>

Central American Adventure—Land Rover Style

by Bill Schaffer



Five Sisters Falls, Belize



Five-mile shortcut

Based on the first 18 hours in the lush jungled country, it looked like the trip would be a drive in a beautiful park.

The morning drive was on a narrow dirt road to the Mayan ruins at Caracol. This was one of more than 200 Mayan cities throughout Central America, some dating back to 1500 BC, and it is the largest Mayan archaeological site in Belize. In 650 AD, the urban area of Caracol had a radius of approximately 6 miles and a population of more than 140,000 people. As a contrast, the entire country of Belize currently has only 280,000 inhabitants. These Mayans had an immense agricultural field system, elaborate city planning and they were highly respected for their war prowess.

After spending several hours touring Caracol and the pyramids, and enjoying a lunch with the people working at the ruins, we moved on.

Five miles out of Caracol, we left the

civilized dirt roads and dropped off into the jungle. It was a shortcut to our resort for night two: a five-mile logging trail through the dense, tall jungle.

As we progressed, the trail got muddier and muddier and muddier. This was no ordinary mud; it was thick clay that filled tire treads making them nearly useless. Each vehicle had two journalists—who alternated driving—and a professional Land Rover driving instructor, who coached us through each challenge. Through this section we would go a few hundred yards and one of the vehicles would get buried in the mud. The Land Rover team, now wearing tall boots and waterproof gear, would pile out of the vehicles and walk ahead, or behind, to push, pull, dig or winch the incapacitated vehicle out of the mud. We'd go a little further, and then repeat the process. The

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Mayan ruins at Caracol

five miles took four hours, before we pulled out of the jungle onto an improved dirt road.

I was driving the new Land Rover Sport, which is lauded for its excellent performance and on-road handling. I didn't expect it to be such an impressive off-road vehicle, too. Thanks to the excellent traction of the Sport, adjustable suspension, and the good coaching, I didn't get stuck once.

An hour later, we pulled up to the gates of the Lodge at Chaa Creek Adventure

Centre, Rainforest Reserve and Spa. The 340-acre retreat is made up of 26 timber-decked cottages with traditional thatched roofs. The simple elegant huts were filled with handcrafted furnishings and fine antiques from Mexico and Guatemala. This was very different from the "roughing it" I had envisioned. As I returned to my cottage after a wonderful dinner, the rain started to fall.

Thatched roofs don't make a sound when rain falls on them, but I could hear the rain falling all night. By morning, the

clouds broke, with sunshine occasionally striking the wet ground.

My driving partner, Robert from New York, and I climbed into a Range Rover for the second day of driving. As we left Chaa Creek, it soon became obvious that a large amount of rain had fallen during the last 12 hours. Water was flowing over the roads in the low areas, and in some places, we pushed water more than half way up the radiator. I was amazed we didn't flood the Land Rovers. Later we were told the overnight rainfall totaled 7 inches.

Our morning drive was scheduled to take us on a trail winding through the savannah to the Peccary Park Adventure Center where we were to tour limestone caves that had been used by the Mayans. As we caravanned around the trees, through lakes of standing water, the vehicles toward the rear of the pack started to break through the top crust, dropping into saturated sand beneath, which was now acting like quicksand. The vehicles were being stuck, one after another. We would get one out, and the

next one would fall in deeper. Finally, after a couple of hours of repeatedly getting stuck and unstuck, we decided to turn around. This meant we had to go the long, long way to our final destination, the Chan Chich Lodge.

The detour roads had been in good condition a few days earlier and posed no problem...at first. However, the 7 inches of rain was running out of the mountains and getting deeper and deeper. Robert and I were now driving the lead vehicle, and still about 30 miles from our desti-

nation, when the creek water started running over the bridges, sometimes by more than a foot.

Because bandits from Guatemala had been operating in the areas we were in, Land Rover arranged for a military escort that included a military Land Rover Discovery with three armed soldiers in it and two more armed soldiers riding in the chase vehicle. The diesel-powered Discovery sat higher than the models we were driving, so they were able to test the water depths before we started through.

KEEP RIGHT >>





The Lodge at Chaa Creek

Because we were driving the lead journalist vehicle we followed the military vehicle into the unknown depths.

The last major body of water we had to cross was more than one half mile wide. The water was flowing fast across the road, traveling through the trees and brush. As we started through the water, it got deeper and deeper. The technique used for going through deep water involves going fast enough to create a wave in front of the vehicle (see photo, opening spread). If you can stay a foot or two behind that wave the water is less deep. If it gets too deep, the water could flood the electrical system or worse enter the air intake for the engine, which will immediately stall the engine and perhaps ruin it.

Robert was driving this section and we were all sweating the crossing. He got behind the wave, but the water kept rising to the point where it crested over

the hood. Finally we started out the other side, safely. Amazingly, the eight Land Rovers following us also made it though safely.

We arrive at the Chan Chich Lodge about three hours behind schedule. The lodge is located on a 130,000-acre private nature reserve in the heart of "La Selva May"—the most extensive moist tropical forest in Central America. The resort is actually situated in the plaza of an unexcavated ancient Mayan city. The 12 cabanas and single villa are surrounded by temple mounds still overgrown by the jungle.

The Chan Chich Lodge at Gallon Jug Estate in the Orange Walk District of Belize has the kind of facilities you would expect at a five-star resort. As one of the journalists said, "It's the only thatched hut I've ever stayed in that had a bidet."

After drinks and a wonderful dinner, I climbed into bed hoping to hear the screams of the local monkeys, but they

were quiet that night. There are more sightings of jaguars at this resort than in any other area of Belize. At 6 am, a few of us got up for a nature walk in the surrounding ruins, hoping to get to see a Jaguar, monkey, colorful parrot or some of the other wildlife. All I got to see was a wild turkey with a bright blue head.

Later that morning we flew from an airfield near the resort back to Belize City to catch flights back to the US.

Belize is a remarkable country filled with natural beauty and friendly people who all spoke English. I can't wait to go back. The Land Rovers were equally impressive. I was amazed at how well they took us through all the mud and water in such luxury. The next time I see one of the movies with the Land Rovers going through the jungle, I'll understand what it's all about.

If you'd like to make a similar trip, visit <http://travelbelize.org> ■



The Accent is on value and safety

by Barbara and Bill Schaffer
photos by Joe Sage

The bottom of the automotive pecking order is the lowly entry-level sedan. This was traditionally the car an automotive journalist might get right after testing an \$80,000 luxury sedan—the car that slammed us back into the real world.

But like everything else automotive, these smaller sedans are getting a bit bigger and significantly better. We recently drove the latest version of the

smallest Hyundai, the Accent, and came away once again impressed with its high value and quality.

Are the \$70 fill-ups starting to put a strain on your MasterCard or Visa? Are you looking to move down the automotive pecking order? Then, think about the entry-level Hyundai Accent GLS.

Here's a nice four-door sedan that gets double the fuel economy of your SUV, is loaded with safety equipment, has the

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Whether your teen has never been behind the wheel, has driving experience or has their driver's license, DrivingMBA is the only driving school with a driver training program to meet their specific needs. Don't let your teen get their driver training through trial and error. The errors are costly. They not only cost you in insurance rate increases, vehicle damage, but the most significant cost, the loss of life. Whether it is you, your teen, friends or family, even someone you don't know, a car collision can change lives forever. Make sure your teen is prepared to handle all types of driving situations.

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Hyundai Accent GLS

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Four-speed automatic transmission; Anti-lock brakes; Tilt wheel; Driver's folding armrest; Tinted glass; Rear window defrost; AM/FM/CD audio with six-speakers; 60/40 Split folding rear seat.

Base Price \$13,305

Options: Premium Sport Package (Air conditioning, Power windows, Power heated mirrors, Power door locks, Remote keyless entry with alarm and panic alert, 15-Inch alloy wheels) — \$1,500; Carpeted floor mats — \$65

Total Options \$1,565

Freight \$540

Price as Tested \$15,410

DIMENSIONS

EPA Size Compact

Weight 2,403 lb.

Wheelbase 98.4 in.

Length 168.5 in.

Width 66.7 in.

Height 57.9 in.

Fuel Capacity 11.9 gal.

Cargo Capacity 12.4 cu. ft.

MECHANICAL

Engine 1.6L DOHC 4-Cyl.

Horsepower 110@6000

Torque 106@4500

Transmission 4-Spd. Auto

Drive Front wheel

Brakes Disc ABS

Tires 195/55R15

PERFORMANCE

0 to 60 mph 9.1 sec.

Speed to 1/8 mile 7.0 mph

Top speed 112 mph

EPA economy rating 28/36 mpg

Our actual fuel economy 32.8 mpg

COMPETITORS

Chevrolet Aveo, Chevrolet Cobalt, Ford Focus, Honda Civic, Kia Rio, Mazda3, Nissan Versa, Saturn Ion, Scion xA, Suzuki Aerio, Suzuki Forenza, Suzuki Reno, Toyota Yaris ■



best warranty in the business—and you can probably even *buy* it with your MasterCard, if your gas purchases haven't pushed your card to the limit.

None of the entry-level cars are going to win any prizes for great design, but the Accent is good looking, with a clean European flair and large windows for good visibility. The inside has an upscale two-tone design with high quality materials and very good fit and finish. The audio system with AM/FM/CD is mounted in a center pod, high on the center section of the dash, while lesser-used climate controls are mounted lower. The instrument panel has two large round dials with metallic accents; one houses a tachometer and temperature indicator, the other the speedometer and fuel gauge.

Hyundai says the Accent is 39 percent stiffer than the previous version and we'll have to take their word for that. It feels very stiff and solid, and that translates to a smooth ride and good handling, with only a hint of body roll when cornering at speed. The front suspension is MacPherson strut based with coil springs and gas shock absorbers. The rear is a torsion beam with coil springs. Rack-and-pinion steering assist is based on engine speed,

giving more boost for maneuvering around town and less at highway speeds.

The Accent has one of the best braking systems we've seen on a small car: four-wheel disc brakes with anti-lock and electronic brake force distribution.

The small Hyundai sedan only comes with one trim level, the GLS. For \$12,995, including destination charge, standard equipment includes a five-speed manual transmission, tilt wheel, driver's seat folding armrest and a bunch of minor convenience features. There are only four options, other than colors. A four-speed automatic transmission adds \$850, carpeted floor mats \$65, air conditioning \$800—or there's the premium sport package (\$1,500) which includes air conditioning, power windows, powered heated outside mirrors, power door locks, remote keyless entry with alarm and 15-inch alloy wheels. The most you can spend for a new Accent is \$15,410.

The Accent is propelled by a 1.6-liter DOHC in-line four-cylinder with a CVT (Continuously Variable Valve Timing). Horsepower peaks at 110 and the torque is 106-lb.ft. at 4,600 rpms. The automatic

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transmission gets an EPA fuel economy rating of 28 mpg for city driving and 36 mpg on the highway. The manual gets 30/35. Our fuel economy for the week averaged 32.8 mpg.

The standard safety equipment roster is very impressive for a car in this price range. In addition to the four-wheel disc brake system, the Accent has six airbags including dual front bags, front seat-mounted side impact bags and roof-mounted side-curtain airbags covering front and rear seats. It also has front seatbelt pretensioners to tighten seatbelts prior to a collision and load limiters not to over-tighten the belts.

Probably the weakest attribute of the new Accent is its acceleration. We've seen reports of a 0-to-60 mph time between 9 and 10 seconds, making it one of the slower of the entry-level economy cars. We recorded 70 mph in an informal acceleration test, in which we run from where we pull onto the highway and accelerate for about one-eighth mile.

We've said this repeatedly: if the Hyundai had a Toyota or Honda nameplate on it, the price would be several

thousand dollars more. The Accent is not different. It's impressive with its excellent value, good build quality and great warranty. If you're thinking of downsizing or going for a more economical car, the Hyundai Accent should be on your shopping list.

We enjoy these entry-level cars because they are fun to drive, offer a great value and make so much sense. Hyundai's latest Accent has industry leading safety equipment and a very impressive interior.

The all-new 2006 Hyundai Accent is protected by the Hyundai Advantage, America's Best Warranty™, which includes five-year/60,000-mile bumper-to-bumper protection, 10-year/100,000-mile limited powertrain warranty, and seven-year/unlimited mileage anti-perforation coverage. In addition, Accent buyers receive 24-hour roadside assistance coverage at no extra charge for five years (no mileage limit) and that service includes emergency towing, lockout service and limited coverage for trip-interruption expenses. There is no deductible on any of these coverages. It doesn't get any better than that. ■

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THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS



Toyota FT-SX concept

■ **Toyota** is expected to drop the Solara coupe and convertible after the 2007 or 2008 model year and replace it with a four-door crossover. The crossover previewed as the FT-SX concept at the Detroit show in 2005. The crossover is designed for active empty nesters and middle-age suburbanites.

■ **Alfa Romeo** will return to the US market late in 2008 with three models: Spider, 159 and Brera. All three will have a base 2.2-liter four-cylinder engine and front-wheel drive or 260-hp 3.2-liter V-6 and all wheel drive. Both engines were developed when General Motors was involved with Alfa. Transmissions are a six-speed manual or six-speed automatic. Plans call for a slow ramp-up using Maserati's 47 US dealers. It's too early for talk about prices.

■ Unconfirmed rumors have **Ford** dropping the 6.0-liter Power Stroke diesel from its Super Duty trucks at the end of 2006 and replacing it with a 6.4-liter diesel producing a rumored 350-hp and 650 lb.ft. of torque.

■ Watch for auto manufacturers to start offering **halogen headlights** that turn to illuminate the area the direction that the vehicle is turning. The halogen light systems that turn are considerably cheaper to produce than the Xenon and other high-intensity discharge lights being produced.

■ **Audi** is working with Austrian motorcycle manufacturer, KTM, to build a lightweight two-seat roadster to compete with the Lotus Elise. The target weight is 1,650 pounds using carbon fiber and alloy in the chassis and body. The engine will be just behind the front axle for

better weight distribution. Mechanical possibilities include all-wheel drive, a 1.4-liter Twincharger (170-hp) four-cylinder or 2.0-liter (200-hp) FSI turbo.

■ The next generation **Audi A4**, which is scheduled to launch near the end of 2007, will be an entirely new architecture than the existing model and it will be the basis for at least an SUV, coupe and possibly a crossover. The platform pushes the wheels significantly toward the corners allowing front axle to be mounted four inches farther forward to provide a better weight distribution and sportier handling.

■ **Saturn** is planning to rebadge and import the next generation Opel Vectra wagon starting in 2008 or 2009. The midsize front-wheel drive wagon will require little alteration for the US market because the Vectra is built on a global architecture used for vehicles to be sold in



Opel Vectra wagon

Europe, the US and other countries. Currently the Saab 9-3, Pontiac G6 and Saturn Aura use the same platform.

■ **Lotus** will offer a supercharged version of the Exige roadster. Supercharging the 190-hp, 1.8-liter four-cylinder engine will boost the power to 220-hp. That doesn't sound like much, but in a 2,100-pound car it makes a big difference taking 0 to 60 mph acceleration times to 4.1 seconds and to a top speed of 148



Lotus Exige

mph. The car will be called the Exige S and it will be priced at \$56,990 when a few make it to dealers late this year.

■ **Alfa Romeo's** initial re-entry into the US market in 2008 is likely to include a limited-edition 8C Competizione coupe. The \$200,000 flagship coupe is based on a shortened version of the Maserati coupe and is powered by the same Maserati 4.2-liter, 400-hp V-8 engine. A convertible version will be offered in 2009.

■ **Porsche** plans to skip the 2007 model year for the Cayenne SUV because sales levels have dropped and dealers still have an abundance of 2006 models unsold. Rather than confusing customers with a small production 2007 model, Porsche is asking dealers to sell out the 2006 models and wait for a new version scheduled to debut in 2007 as a 2008 model, which will debut at the Detroit auto show in January.

■ **Honda** officials have confirmed that they are working on a diesel for the US market. It will likely be a four-cylinder turbocharged version for the Civic, Accord or CR-V. The Odyssey minivan, Pilot SUV and Ridgeline pickup are considered too large for a four-cylinder diesel. The 2.2-liter engine will have an estimated 200 horsepower and about 220 lb.ft. of torque.



Volkswagen Touareg

■ The **Volkswagen** Touareg V-6 engine gets enlarged from 3.2- to 3.6-liters for 2007. That increases the horsepower from 240 to 276 and the torque to 266-lb.ft. It also gets a new direct fuel injection system that keeps the fuel economy about the same 16/21 mpg.

■ **Volkswagen** has plans for a 7-seat crossover based on the platform of the new Audi Q7 SUV. The more upscale vehicle will take advantage of current VW drivetrains, electrical and interior appointments. Watch for it to go on sale in 2009.

■ **Dodge** will get a "new concept crossover" by the first of 2008 based on the new Chrysler Sebring sedan platform and a Chrysler version is possible about two years later. Still under wraps, the crossover is expected to have a starting price of about \$20,000. It will be built at the companies Toluca, Mexico factory and is expected to compete against vehicles like the upcoming Ford Edge and Toyota Highlander.

■ **Mercedes-Benz** will offer specialized xenon headlight systems that will brighten as the speed moves above 55 mph and 68 mph. The systems developed by Hella, use a moving drum to change the light pattern. The system will be offered on the E-Class sedan for about \$2,000.

■ **Ford** is working on a coupe version of the Fusion. The design will be close to that of the sedan with only modest sheetmetal and specification changes. Lincoln should get a version of the coupe with a MKZ nameplate and a new 3.5-liter V-6 engine. There is no indication if Mercury will get a Milan coupe.

■ **Porsche** has filed patent documents in Germany for a seven-speed double-clutch gearbox that will be used in all the Porsche cars from the Boxster to the 911 and the mid-engine GT1 racecar. According to AutoWeek magazine the engine was planned for the summer of 2006 for use in the 911 Turbo, but was delayed. No announcement date or vehicle

has been indicated yet.

■ **Cadillac** has a small crossover in the works, which will likely get a BRX moniker. The five-passenger may start with the same architecture as the Chevrolet Equinox, but with a front end from the Epsilon 2 architecture that has room enough for a V-6 engine. It's not known if we'll see the BRX in 2009 or possibly as far out as 2011.

■ **Hummer** news: The Hummer H3 is likely to get a 5.3-liter V-8 engine for the 2007 model year and a crew cab model for 2009. The H2 and H2 SUT gets restyled and reengineered for 2010 and will be built on the new full size Chevy truck platform. There is also talk of a smaller H4, closer in size to Jeep's Wrangler, however, that will have to wait until they get a platform that size.

■ **Chevrolet's** entry-level Aveo gets a makeover for 2007 and a longer list of



Chevrolet Aveo

standard equipment. Prices start at \$9,995 for the five-door or hatchback model making the Korean-built Aveo one of the best values on the market. The top-of-the-line sedan starts at \$12,395, including destination charge and tops out at \$13,925. It also carries a five-year or 70,000-mile powertrain warranty.

■ First, there was the Q7 SUV, to be followed by the Q5 and now **Audi** is developing the Q3, a compact crossover SUV of a two-door variety...at least at first. Due in 2010, the Q3 will commingle parts from the Golf including a transversely mounted engine, a DSG transmission and front- or all-wheel drive. Engine choices will include both gas and diesel. There is likely a Q3S coming, too with horsepower pushing 280.

■ The new **Lexus** LS 460 has an optional Advanced Parking Guidance System that will parallel-park the car (to the left or the right) or back into a tight parking space by itself. The system uses 12 sonar sensors to determine if there is



Lexus LS 460

enough room as the car approaches. The driver doesn't touch the wheel during the process and all the driver needs to do is brake as necessary. The only problem with the system is that it moves very slowly, which in many cities may cause the cars behind to get horn happy. The option price has yet to be set.

■ **Volvo** has officially announced it will sell the C30 in the US by the 2008 model year. Aimed at younger buyers the C30 uses the now trademark Volvo broad shoulders design on the compact muscular look. The C30 will have the same 218-hp turbocharged five-cylinder engine that is used in the S40 sedan, but it will be 8.5 inches shorter than the S40. To appeal to younger buyers, it will have an optional high performance Alpine audio system with 10 Dynaudio® speakers. ■

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*.

UPCOMING FEATURES

Audi S4, RS4, S4 Avant, S4 Cabriolet, S6 and S8



An opportunity to drive the Audi S4, RS4, S4 Avant, S4 Cabriolet, S6 and S8 performance cars all in one day? We will be seizing it! And we'll report back to you next issue.

Ford Expedition Tailgate Tour - Ford Edge



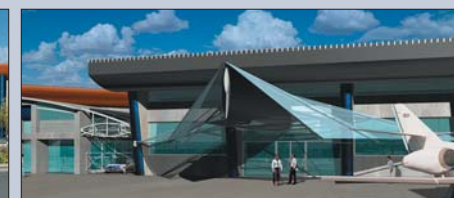
The all-new Ford Expedition came to Cardinals Stadium for us to drive. And the new Edge combines street mannered convenience and rugged utility. We'll be reporting on both.

Auto Show Season



The whimsical Nissan Urge concept car (left) and the more likely prescient Acura Advanced Sports Concept (above) both appeared at last year's shows. Let's see what's next!

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