

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 7 NUMBER 5
SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2008

Green Tech NEW FUEL TECHNOLOGIES

- 2009 CADILLAC ESCALADE HYBRID
- 2009 MERCEDES-BENZ BLUETEC SUVs
- ALTERNATIVE FUELS & VEHICLES NATIONAL CONFERENCE & EXPO 2008 LAS VEGAS
- FORD ECOBOOST • HEMI® HYBRIDS



ALSO... CINDY McCAIN AND MOTORSPORTS

- PLUS... CADILLAC PLATINUM EDITION
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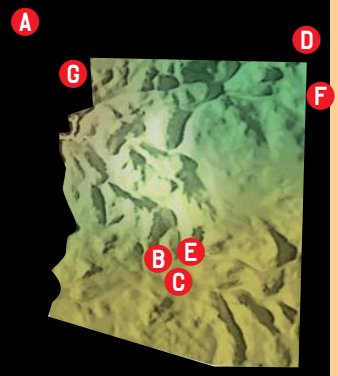
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COVER: Cadillac Escalade Hybrid. Photo by Randall Bohl.

This has been a period of considerable angst and great adjustment for anyone who pulls up to a pump, as well as for vehicle manufacturers. Only a few months ago, everyone was incredulous that a gallon of gas might top three bucks. Four came in no time at all. Just during the cycle of this issue, the price of oil per barrel has raced past \$100 and approached \$150, driving pump prices significantly higher, then has gone back down toward \$115/bbl at press time, easing pump prices back down, well, a couple of dimes' worth. It's an election year, so we'll see what promises may be made, which may be kept, how long they may take to implement and how wise they will still be as time marches on. Fortunately there are many developments afoot.

It's partly happenstance and partly inherent news currency that brings an array of alternative fuels items to this issue. The Alternative Fuels Conference in Las Vegas is an annual event, long scheduled. Mercedes-Benz has had BlueTEC diesels in the market for years and is now proudly expanding the lineup. GM announced a five-prong bet-hedging approach to fuels a couple of years ago (which has turned out to be a good approach), so the Escalade Hybrid is to be expected as an element of their mix. Ford EcoBoost is a recombination and branding effort as much as an engineering breakthrough, bringing essentially what some of the Germans have done for years to a wider market. Chrysler, always nimble, may have planned the Hemi® Hybrids for a long time or acted fast. With IndyCar, alternative fuels is a longstanding bonus, and Watkins Glen's wind power announcement just happened to coincide with the rest. As it turns out, our racetrack



interview with Cindy McCain also inherently took a few green turns, as you can read inside.

We also bring you plenty of opportunities to put the pedal to the metal. Enjoy the ride.

Joe Sage
Publisher/ Executive Editor

ARIZONA DRIVER

MAGAZINE

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DESIGN & PRODUCTION: AdZone Arizona

ADVERTISING SALES: 480-948-0200

ARIZONA DRIVER MAGAZINE

PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY BY ADZONE ARIZONA LLC
Arizona Driver Magazine
PO Box 13387 - Scottsdale AZ 85267
www.arizonadrivermagazine.com
letters@azdrivermag.com

Arizona Driver Magazine, Arizona Rider Magazine, Arizona Flyer Magazine and Arizona Boater Magazine are registered tradenames of AdZone Arizona LLC.

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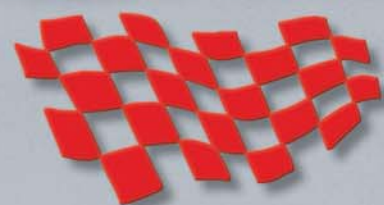
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The ultimate answer to the rhetorical question:
Are you experienced?



- Based at Audi Forum Sonoma in Northern California
- Half-day program added to test all new Audi "S" models
- Designed and executed with strategic partner Emotive



Audi Sportscar Experience

Audi of America, Inc. has launched the 2008 **Audi Sportscar Experience**, based at the Audi Forum Sonoma at Infineon Raceway in California. Created by Audi and its strategic partner, Emotive, the Audi Sportscar Experience is a hands-on driving experience designed especially for perform-

ance car enthusiasts, initially featuring the new Audi R8 supercar and the Audi RS 4 high-performance sedan.

The Audi Sportscar Experience now also features a special half-day program allowing drivers to experience the performance of Audi's newest "S" models—the sporty S4, the powerful new S5 coupe,

and the luxurious and commanding 450-horsepower S8. Participants will also have access to highly-acclaimed, limited-volume new products from Audi.

Scott Keogh, chief marketing officer, Audi of America, says, "The Audi Sports-

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Featured cars parked and waiting for action at the Audi Forum Sonoma, at Infineon Raceway. Left to right are the RS 4 Cabriolet, the R8 and the new S5 coupe.

car Experience allows participants to test and sharpen their driving skills and push our cars in a controlled environment. There is no better way to demonstrate the foundation of this company than behind the wheel and on the track."

The Audi Sportscar Experience operates year-round from the Audi Forum Sonoma, located trackside at Turn 1 of Infineon Raceway in beautiful Sonoma Valley. Using a variety of vehicles from the Audi R, RS, and S model lines, the Audi Sportscar Experience takes drivers through a rigorous, behind-the-wheel instructional driving program at one of the most exciting racing circuits in the world.

With its 160-foot elevation changes, challenging corners and breathtaking scenery, the 2.5-mile Infineon course has been aptly described as a small Nurburgring.

Chip Pankow, president of Emotive Group, says, "We'll help drivers develop the skills necessary to extract optimal performance from these exceptionally engineered vehicles on a real speedway - all set in the beautiful locale of Sonoma's world-class wine country."

The Audi Sportscar Experience includes these one- and two-day programs:

RS 4 One-Day Program

Bred from motorsport dominance, the 2008 Audi RS 4 delivers a blend of luxury and pulse-pounding performance. The one-day program is designed to develop driving fundamentals, including braking, accident avoidance, car control and slalom. Drivers develop their skills in a controlled manner and put themselves to the test on the slalom course. (\$1,295)

RS 4 Two-Day Program

Building on the foundation of the one-day program, the two-day program adds track lapping on Infineon Raceway. Drivers will test the remarkable capabilities of the RS 4 while racing on one of the most exciting tracks in the world—just like a pro driver. (\$2,495)

R8 One-Day Program

The amazing Audi R8 sports car was named the 2008 World Performance Car of the Year at the New York Auto Show. The race-ready R8 epitomizes Audi's quest for perfection and is an industry leader in innovation, technology, design and performance. Drivers will utilize the R8 to hone their driving skills on the paddock and then take the R8 where it really wants to be—on the 2.52-mile road racing

course at Infineon Raceway. (\$1,895)

If everyone's schedules hold, we will be heading to Infineon Raceway to drive in the R8 One-Day Program, and we'll report back to you in the next issue.

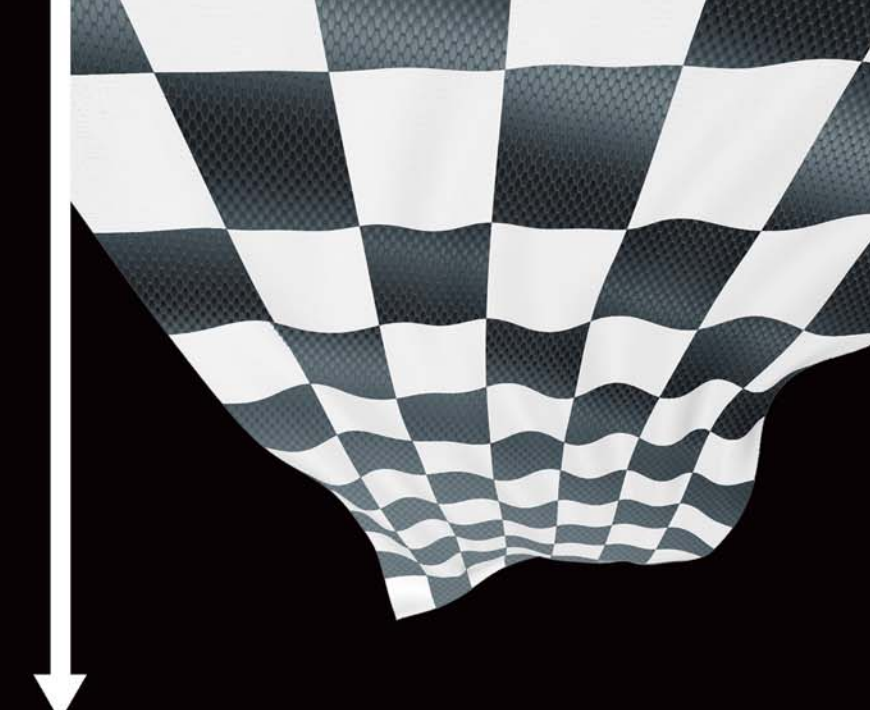
R8 Two-Day Program

This program builds on the essentials of the one-day program and incorporates more Infineon Raceway track time. Progressive sessions ensure that drivers will responsibly approach the limits of the R8. Drivers will enjoy ample seat time and instruction from professional drivers who are experts in their fields. (\$3,495)

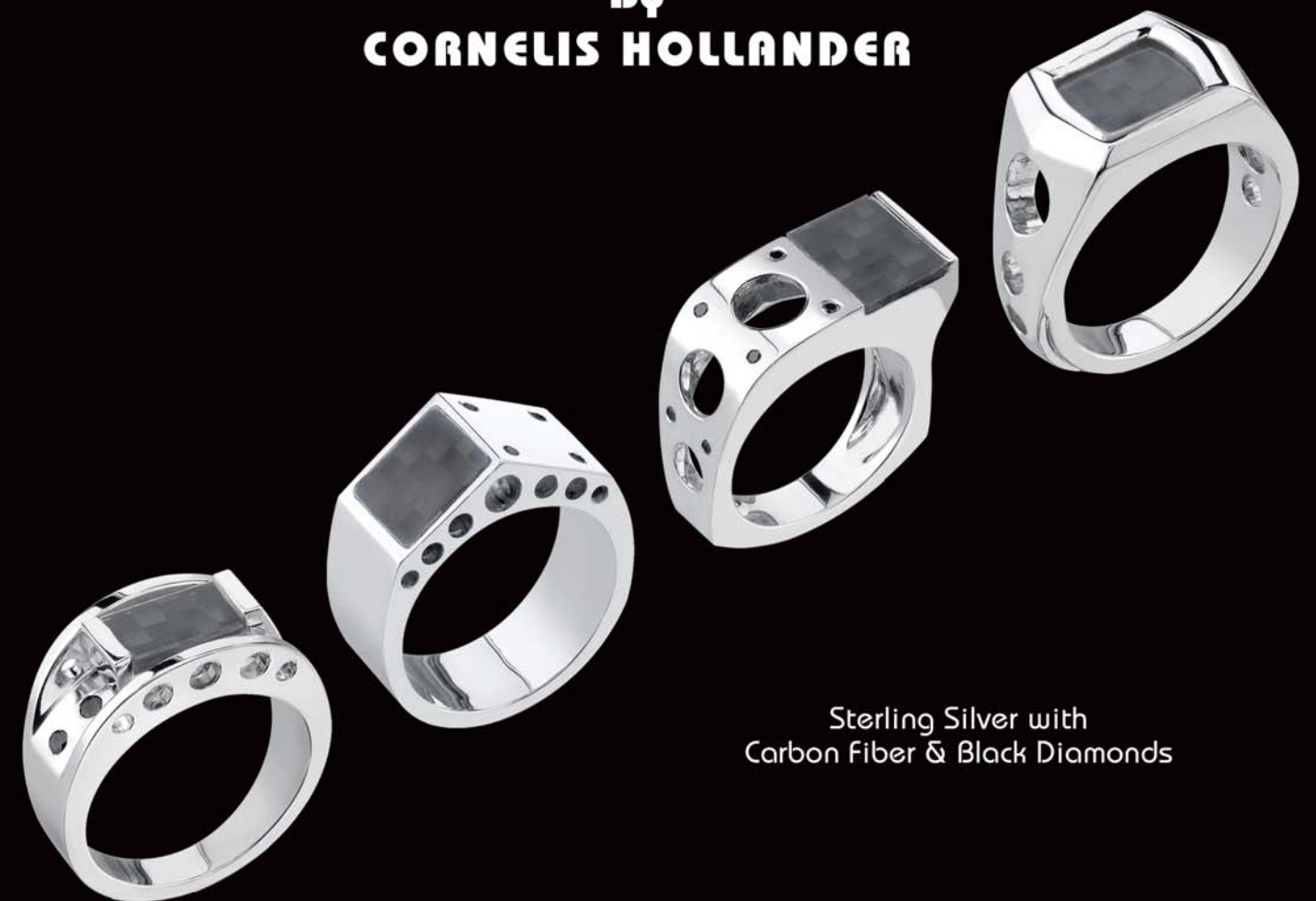
S Model Half-Day Introductory Program

"S" denotes sport in the world of Audi. In the S-Model Half-Day Introductory Program, drivers will get a taste for racing in the S4, the new 354-bhp S5, and the 450-bhp S8. This program covers the fundamentals of driving followed by laps on the speedway. The experience culminates in a handling course competition where drivers can compete in the team category and for individual best time. (\$695)

A complete schedule can be found at www.audidrivingexperience.com. ■



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MERCEDES-BENZ SLR OUT, SL65 AMG BLACK SERIES IN

Mercedes-Benz is replacing the McLaren-built SLR with a SL65 Black Series, built by the Mercedes in-house tuner, AMG. The similarity to the standard SL ends with the name and the basic shape; beyond that, the AMG model becomes a state of the art demonstration of AMG performance technology. Plans call for a limited edition of 350 of the supercars to be built during the 2009 calendar year with all the features yet to be divulged. Rumors mention carbon-fiber body construction and a fixed roof replacing the standard folding hardtop on the other SLs. The engine is a 6.0-liter, 661-hp twin turbo V-12 with 5-speed automatic transmission. Performance numbers mentioned are 0 to 62 mph in less than 3.9 seconds, 0 to 124 mph in about 10 seconds and 0 to 186 mph in less than 30 seconds. Top speed is limited to 199 mph, but the car should be capable of 220 mph ungoverned. The price: \$320,000. ▼



Mercedes-Benz SL65 AMG Black Series



Mazda6

The Mazda6 has been somewhat overlooked, unduly, for quite awhile in its category. This upsized head-turner could be their game-changing model.

NEXT GENERATION MAZDA6 ARRIVES

▲ Mazda is mainlining the new generation Mazda6 arriving at dealerships in August. With eight more inches in length, the mid-size Mazda will be the real thing, rather than a slightly scaled down version when compared to cars like the Honda Accord and Toyota Camry. Engine choices include a standard 170-hp 2.5-liter 4-cylinder or the optional 272-hp, 3.7-liter. The 6 is a head turner with RX-8 fender flares and a sleek new styling that embraces the trendy coupe roofline. Initially, there will be no wagon or hatchback versions in the US. Pricing should be close to that of the current models, which have MSRPs from \$19,000 to \$28,000. Fuel economy should be in 21 mpg city to 29 mpg highway range for the 4-cylinder.

MAZDA FUEL ECONOMY TO BE UP 30%

Using new engine technology and lighter materials, Mazda plans to increase fuel efficiency of its vehicles by 30 percent over the next seven years. By 2015, Mazda says its entire range of vehicles will be roughly 220-pounds lighter by using a new three-layer wet paint system along with more innovative materials, including carbon neutral bioplastics all due to arrive

in 2013. The engine technology changes will involve a new proprietary Smart Idle Stop System (SISS) that will be introduced on one model in 2009. Unlike other systems, the Mazda SISS injects fuel directly into the cylinder after the engine has shut down and then ignites the fuel to force the piston down making a smoother, faster and quieter restart along with improving fuel economy by 7 to 8 percent.

FORD'S NEW DIESEL STRATEGY

Ford will offer a diesel option for many of its pickups, vans and SUVs starting in 2010. According to information from a recent Ford Dealer meeting in Las Vegas, the engine will be a 4.4-liter turbocharged V-8. The engine is said to be closely related to the 3.6-liter turbo diesel engines used in European Land Rovers and Jaguars. The diesel delivers nine percent more power than the 5.4-liter gasoline engine and 14 percent more torque than the engine currently used in the Ford trucks. It produces about the same 0 to 60 mph acceleration times as the current gas engine, but gets about 20 percent better fuel economy. Dealers present at the meeting also indicated the engine would be used in the Super Duty Ford F-Series

trucks, the Lincoln Navigator and the E-Series vans.

HYUNDAI FLAGSHIP GENESIS ARRIVING

Hyundai enters a tough new market with the introduction of its new Genesis sport sedan. Designed to emulate Infiniti G35 and BMW 3 Series cars, the high performance and rear-wheel drive Hyundais will also be looking for conquest customers shopping for the Lexus EX, Chrysler 300 and Cadillac CTS. The two available models are differentiated by their engines, a 3.8-liter, 290-hp V-6 engine and 4.6-liter 375-hp V-8. Both have 6-speed automatic transmissions, leather seating and all the convenience, comfort and safety equipment consistent with cars at this level. Genesis 3.8 pricing starts at \$33,000, including the destination charge and \$38,000 for the 4.6 version.

HYUNDAI SONATA EARLY MAKEOVER

Hyundai did a major freshening on the Sonata a year or two ahead of schedule. The mid-cycle changes allowed Hyundai to update the engines with more power and better fuel economy, just three years after

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THE SOLAR TREE™ BY ENVISION SOLAR TURNS PARKING LOTS INTO "FORESTED" POWER PLANTS

Envision Solar, a La Jolla, California based firm, is determined to improve the parking experience by providing shade, and by foresting parking lots with Solar Trees™. Envision Solar CEO Robert Noble is an architect responsible for the design of the Kyocera Solar Grove™, an employee parking lot for solar panel manufacturer Kyocera that was transformed into an attractive Solar Grove™ that produces 431,000 kilowatt hours of clean power each year while providing shaded vehicle parking. The design of the Solar Tree™ was inspired by the way natural trees provide shade and beauty. These trees can also be fitted with electric vehicle charging stations to provide parking lot infrastructure for PHEV. Envision Solar has also launched a residential version called the LlifeTree™, a 1 kilowatt solar system that can be "planted" in a residential backyard. Learn more at www.envisionsolar.com ▼



Solar Grove™ by Envision Solar

Photo: Envision Solar



Suzuki Kizashi 3 concept

Suzuki, long high on motorcyclists' radar and moving up on auto buyers' radar, should generate quite a blip with a production version of this concept.

the last major revision. The exterior has a new grille, bumpers, lights and wheels. Standard equipment now includes stability control and antilock brakes. A navigation option will be offered on the top of the line Limited. The interior has a new center console and instrument panel in addition to larger seats, front and rear. A 5-speed automatic transmission replaced the 4-speed on the 4-cylinder engine to get a 22 mpg city and 34 mpg highway EPA fuel economy rating. The V-6 engine was tweaked to 249 hp and earns a 19/29 mpg rating.

SUZUKI MOVING INTO TOUGH MARKET

▲ Suzuki is planning on taking on the big names with an all-new sedan based on the Kizashi 3 concept. Taking direct aim at names like Accord, Camry and Malibu, the handsome, Suzuki Kizashi is planned for sale in Japan in 2009 and in the US sometime early in 2010. Kizashi, which stands for "preview" in Japanese, will likely get a name change before it arrives at dealerships. It will be offered with a 2.5-liter 4-cylinder or 3.6-liter DOHC V-6 (about 260-hp) engine in front- and all-wheel drive configurations. Prices are expected to range from \$21,000 to \$28,000. Other possible related models

could include a wagon version for the European market and a large crossover SUV possibly to replace the current XL-7.

NISSAN ELECTRIC VEHICLE PLANS

Nissan CEO Carlos Ghosn told the press at the company's Nissan 360 event, a display of the entire world's Nissan product lineup, that they plan to plunge into the electric car business. Ghosn sees a potential 10 million global market for electric vehicles, particularly in metropolitan areas. He said Nissan and partner Renault plan to be major players in that market by introducing multiple electric vehicles. Plans call for fleet vehicles for the government and utilities starting in 2010 and for consumers by 2012.

STEVE SALEEN'S CHALLENGER

After Steve Saleen sold and then eventually left the company that bears his name, he went into the Chinese car business for a short time. Now Saleen has popped up again with a new company called SMS producing aftermarket versions of the new Dodge Challenger. The company's first project is to build a limited number of SMS 570 and SMS 570X Challengers by the fourth quarter of 2008. Based on the

Challenger R/T, the 570 is a supercharged version producing more than 500 hp, while the 570X, also supercharged, will be about 700 hp. In addition to engine modifications, the cars will get a reworked drivetrain and chassis along with wheel and interior upgrades. Prices are expected to start in the mid-to-high \$50,000 range for the 570.

VW FUEL CELL CONCEPT

Volkswagen is showcasing a concept fuel cell vehicle called the HyMotion. Powered by hydrogen fuel, the fuel cell system is mounted in the conventional engine compartment where it produces up to 134 horsepower when combined with an electric motor. The top speed of the Tiguan HyMotion is 93 mph and it accelerates from 0 to 60 mph in about 14 seconds. A lithium ion battery with a charge capacity of 6.8 ampere-hours (Ah) serves as an auxiliary energy storage device with a maximum power output of 22 kW. The battery is charged by recovered braking energy (recuperation) or by the fuel cell. The increased functionality and efficiency does not impair the interior space of the

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NEW 2009 FORD F-150: MORE CAPABILITY, MORE CHOICE, MORE 'SMART' FEATURES

Ford has built more than 33 million F-Series pickups since 1948. They have redone the F-150 inside and out for 2009, from segment-first features to a new exterior highlighted by Ford's current signature three-bar grille, to a more spacious, flexible and refined interior and a choice of cab styles and trim levels—including a new Platinum luxury series. A new high-strength, lighter-weight chassis allows this truck to deliver more horsepower, better fuel economy and safety, plus additional towing and payload capacity. The new fully boxed frame is constructed with hydro-formed and high-strength steel side rails, with 10 percent more torsional rigidity. The new F-150 is engineered to earn top safety ratings from the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration and the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety. The new F-150 offers standard AdvanceTrac® with RSC® (Roll Stability Control) and Trailer Sway Control plus available Rearview Camera Assist as well as Integrated Trailer Brake Controller. The interior of the new 2009 F-150 SuperCrew offers more space for people and gear thanks to a 6-inch stretch. A mechanically articulated second-row seat flips up and out of the way. Combined with a truly flat load floor, this provides 57.6 cubic feet of space behind the front seats and can accommodate items up to 47.9 inches tall. With three cab styles, four box options and seven unique trim levels, the F-150 comes in 35 different configurations. Customers can choose from the no-fuss XL workhorse, to the sporty STX and off-road capable FX4, to the mid-range XLT. Ford offers the high-end Lariat and King Ranch F-150 models, and new for 2009 is the Platinum series, with satin chrome grille with fine mesh inserts, 10-way captain's chairs of top-quality leather with tuxedo stitching and embroidered logos on the seatbacks. Satin gloss Lacrosse Ash wood grain accents and real brushed aluminum panels give the dash, center console and doors an upscale look and feel. ▼



Ford F-150

Honda Fit Sport



A big part of the Honda Fit's appeal has been its diminutive stature. Although a bit larger, the new model keeps its charm, and a hybrid model is added.

vehicle. The battery system is installed in the trunk beneath the dual cargo floor. A 700 bar hydrogen tank holding up to 3.2 kilograms of hydrogen (H₂) is integrated in the area beneath the floor in the rear bench seat and cargo area.

HONDA PLANS FIT HYBRID

▲ Honda plans to make their Fit even more fuel-efficiently fit by 2015 when a hybrid version will be offered. The Fit will become the fourth Honda hybrid following the Civic and two new models due in the next year or two (a dedicated hybrid and a sporty hybrid). It is expected to appeal to a broader range of consumers with a price estimated to be only about \$2,000 more than the standard Fit. Current Fit prices start in the \$14,000 to \$16,000 range and the EPA fuel economy estimate is 34 mpg, which may go to the 45 mpg or higher range if it gets the same increase as the Civic hybrid.

HONDA'S NEW SMALL HYBRID

Honda seldom gives a glimpse of planned vehicles, but they have released general information about a new hybrid schedule for introduction early in 2009. According to John Mendel, American Honda execu-

tive vice president, "Honda has been at the forefront of hybrid development since it first introduced the American public to hybrid technology with the Insight in 1999. These new advancements in Honda's technology and production systems will result in cost reductions that will allow us to make hybrid technology available to a whole new generation of buyers." The new smaller hybrid will be lighter weight and the most affordable hybrid to date. It will be offered as a 5-door hatchback with seating for five passengers

COLLECTING: ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW

Car Collecting: Everything You Need To Know is the title of a new softcover book by Steve Linden. In 160 pages, Linden takes everyone from novice to expert through the process of choosing the perfect car, purchasing strategies and how to avoid scams and rip-offs. He also deals with how to protect your investment and the care and maintenance of your treasure. Linden, a long-time collector himself, writes in an easy-to-read style interspersing his own collecting experiences. Linden is a veteran appraiser and restorer, with the credentials to back up what he writes. The 8.25- x 10.25-inch format

book includes 214 color photos. To read more about *Car Collecting*, published by Quayside Publishing Group, go visit the publisher at www.motorbooks.com.

STANDARD NAVIGATION ON SUZUKI SX4

Suzuki plans to offer a navigation system as standard equipment on the 2009 SX4 sedan and hatchback, which went on sale this summer. With a base price of less than \$16,000, the car will be the least expensive vehicle on the market with the feature. Garmin developed the Suzuki T.R.I.P. (Travel, Real time traffic, Information and Play) system. In addition to the normal navigation functions of providing directions and maps, the system also includes traffic, weather forecasts, local events and a gasoline station locator. Using the system's Bluetooth hands-free technology, it will be able to receive and play text messages audibly, too.

360 DEGREE 3D "LANDMARK" GPS

Uniden's new TRAX Series GPS units give users a new 'fly around' perspective showing the area landmarks in a 360-degree mode. In major metropolitan areas elevat-

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ed city maps, contours and rises on the road are also represented in 3D from any angle. The GPS also includes a Text to Speech function with spoken street names. Other features include Bluetooth capabilities for hands-free mobile phone communications and high definition LCD non-reflective touch screen. In addition to the normal voice and visual guidance to streets, points of interest and lane selections, the system has a built-in early warning system that alerts drivers to fixed speed and red light cameras. The top of the line TRAX 436 also has an Integrated Traffic Monitoring Channel that receive broadcast information on accidents or delays on the programmed route and automatically diverts to a faster route.

HOW DO YOU LOOK IN THAT NEW CAR?

Cars are status symbols and to help drivers make sure they look good in their car, Chevrolet has created a way for potential buyers to check out how they look in or in front of their car. Currently being tested at London, England dealership is a curtained-off room where buyers can "try on" the car by driving it onto a turntable placed in front of three giant mirrors. A remote-control handset allows the driver to rotate the car 360-degrees to check it out from all sides, just clothing is checked out in a fitting room. If the system works, watch for the fitting room concept to be expanded.

FINAL DETAILS ON THE CORVETTE ZR1

All the details of the Chevrolet Corvette ZR1 are finally available. The biggest news is the \$105,000 price tag, making it the most expensive Corvette ever offered. However, the price is very reasonable when you look at the performance stats: 0 to 60 mph in a mere 3.4 seconds and with a top speed of 205 mph. The ZR1 is powered by a 638-hp 6.2-liter V-8 engine. It gets a full complement of features including leather seats, Bose audio and navigation all standard. The fuel economy is 14 mpg for city driving and 20 mpg on the highway.

GE AND CHRYSLER PLUG-IN HYBRID

One of the world's largest electrical companies, General Electric, is getting into the electric car business by joining forces with Chrysler to develop a dual-battery energy storage system. The dual-battery technology the pair is working on combines sev-

eral battery chemistries in a single unit. GE has already developed a 6,000-hp railroad locomotive and is working on a heavy-duty off-highway hybrid truck. They will be able to contribute extensive expertise in batteries, drivetrain and power electronic controls. Chrysler CEO, Bob Nardelli, is a former GE executive.

BOOKS: FORD MODEL T

Working with The Henry Ford Museum and pulling hundreds of period photographs for the Benson Ford Archive, Lindsay Brooke has put together a comprehensive history of the Ford Model T. *Ford Model T: The Car That Put the World on Wheels*, published by Quayside Publishing Group's Motorbook/MBI Publishing division covers the introduction of the Model T to its colorful racing history onto modern hot rodding. The 208-page hard-cover book (\$40) is available at motorbooks.com or at your local bookstore.

UPS SAVES 3.3 MILLION GALLONS

By a policy of driving mildly, making right-hand turns, shutting off the trucks when they stop and some other practices, UPS was able to save more than 3.3 million gallons of fuel in 2007. Using computers in the company headquarters in Mahwah NJ, each driver's daily route is planned between midnight and 6 am and sent to each truck for the next day to show the driver the shortest and most efficient route. UPS drivers also do a safety check on their vehicles daily. These efforts give their diesel-powered rigs an average increase of 10 to 15 mpg and the hybrid electric vehicles even better. UPS currently employs about 90,000 drivers.

LINCOLN'S NEW FLAGSHIP, THE MKS

Arriving at Lincoln dealerships now is the 2009 MKS, the all-new brand flagship. Just slightly smaller than the Cadillac DTS, the MKS is powered by a 273-hp 3.7-liter V-6 engine with 6-speed SelectShift automatic transmission and choice of front- or all-wheel drive. The MKS will not replace the Town Car, which will be produced mostly for fleet sales, but it will become the brand's reentry into the premium larger car segment. Built on the same basic platform as the Ford Taurus and Mercury Sable,

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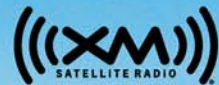
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Mustang Glass Roof

Ford Mustang is celebrating its 45th anniversary and expanding its view on the world, by offering a new panoramic glass roof option for 2009.

the MKS will feature some of Ford's advanced technologies like Sync (Ford's voice-activated communications), Sirius Travel Link and THX audio. The MKS competes with Cadillac STS, Lexus GS, Acura RL and Infiniti M35 but is priced about \$5,000 to \$10,000 less. The 2010 model will add a twin-turbocharged 3.5-liter V-6 engine producing 340-hp.

CHEVY CRUZE IN, COBALT OUT

General Motors plans to debut the Chevrolet Cobalt replacement in Paris this fall. According to GM spokesperson, Nancy Libby, the four-door is called the Cruze and is built on GM's Delta compact car architecture. A new 1.4-liter turbocharged global engine developed in Europe and built in Flint, Mich., will power the Cruze. The engine is expected to produce between 120 and 140-hp and should earn a fuel economy rating over 40 mpg. At about 15 feet long, the Cruze will be a direct competitor for the Honda Civic, Volkswagen Jetta, Mazda3 and Ford Focus when it arrives at dealerships mid-2010 as a 2011 model.

THE GLASS ROOF MUSTANG

▲ Mustang owners can now enjoy a giant panoramic glass roof on Mustangs without having to lather on the sunscreen. The new optional glass roof filters 90 percent of the sun's heat-generating infrared (IR) rays and 96 percent of burn-causing ultraviolet (UV) rays, giving occupants the same sun protection factor as an SPF 50 sunscreen. Because it filters out the IR rays, the occupants can remain comfortable while enjoying the sun. The roof does come with a retractable mesh sunshade to give the occupants more privacy and help keep the sun out the driver and passenger's eyes. The roof option is now available on both V-6 and GT models. A similar large sunroof is being offered on the new Ford Flex crossover and Lincoln MKS luxury sedan.

2010 FORD MUSTANG

Ford will cut off production of the 2009 model Mustang after seven months so they can switch to the new reskinned and reengineered 2010 model. Most of the 2009 models will likely wear 45th anni-

versary model badges. The 2010 model, which is scheduled to debut at the Los Angeles auto show in November, will probably have the same powertrain as the current model. Plans call for a new global rear-wheel drive platform for 2012, but that may change if Ford decides to drop the large RWD program. If that is the case, look for a reworked version of the current Mustang platform on the 2012 version.

POSSIBLE PORSCHE PANAMERA DIESEL

The sleek four-door Porsche Panamera may be offered with a diesel engine and targa top option. Diesel engine options may be coming from Audi, which is now partially owned by Porsche. Two possible diesel engines include the 4.2-liter V-8 and 6.0-liter V12 from the R8 TDI Le Mans concept. Porsche has reportedly shown a focus group drawings of a Panamera with a three-panel targa roof. The Panamera is due to launch in 2009 as a 2010 model. ■

Auto News Update is compiled from a variety of industry sources for *Arizona Driver Magazine* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.

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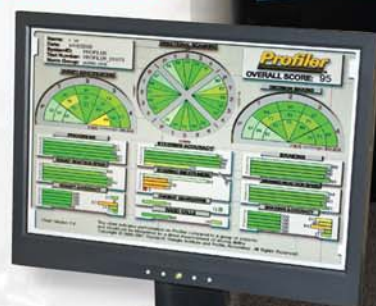
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Cycle World International Motorcycle Show

■ UNIVERSITY OF PHOENIX STADIUM
■ FRIDAY-SUNDAY, OCTOBER 31 - NOVEMBER 2, 2008

The *Cycle World* International Motorcycle Show® presented by Toyota, kicks off its 13-city nationwide series at the University of Phoenix Stadium, October 31-November 2. With gas prices on the rise, fuel efficient motorcycles and scooters are a hot trend, and this show is the perfect place to check out the latest gas-sipping rides on two wheels. This extravaganza will also feature eye-popping choppers, high-flying action, demo rides, hundreds of the latest motorcycles and more. Check out the latest sportbikes, dirt bikes, dual sports, cruisers, scooters, ATVs and more. From bikes that get more than 50 miles per gallon to the all-electric, zero emission Vectrix scooter, showgoers can learn about the latest fuel efficient options on two and three wheels. This is also the perfect place for new riders to immerse themselves in bike culture and talk to experts about getting started. The show will have interactive activities for the entire family and a Halloween costume contest.

Single day admission \$6-13, children 5 and under free. Advance tickets and information are available online at www.motorcycleshows.com or call 800-331-5706.

Arizona International Auto Show

■ PHOENIX CONVENTION CENTER
■ THURSDAY-SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27-30, 2008

Don't miss the latest vehicle trends, with more than 400 new cars, crossovers, sport-utility vehicles, trucks and more. From gas-sipping compacts to the latest alternative fuel vehicles, compare fuel-efficient options and learn more about eco-friendly transportation. There will also be one-of-a-kind concept cars, exotics, pre-production models, customized cars, interactive ride and drives and more.

Admission: \$9 adults, with specials for seniors, military and children 7-12. Children six and under free. College Two-Fer Day Friday. Kids Day Sunday, 12 and under free. Information, coupons and discounted advance e-tickets at www.AutoShowPhoenix.com.



Diesel veteran Mercedes-Benz expands high-tech BlueTEC to SUVs

By Joe Sage
Photos by Greg Jarem



Mercedes-Benz ML320 BlueTEC

Mercedes-Benz is acutely aware of their timing in the announcement of a newly expanded BlueTEC lineup, now comprising three of their most popular SUV/crossover products, the ML320, GL320 and R320. The good news is that customers are hotly seeking alternatives to the gasoline pump. The tougher news is that diesel has been running about a dollar higher per gallon than gasoline, five-plus bucks against four-plus, or a good 25% higher.

We were presented with the new-lineup recently in Manchester Village, Vermont, and the Mercedes engineers got right to the point. Bottom line: these new diesels not only run cleaner and are a technological tour de force, but they use about 30% less fuel—advantage: BlueTEC diesel. Measured purely by that pump/MPG comparison, it's a net advantage of just about 5%, less than they would have expected during most of the lineup's development, when diesel fuel generally cost less. Fuel pricing is, of course, very volatile right now (as this issue goes to press, prices are dropping again, and the diesel-to-gas gap shows signs of narrowing).

Mercedes-Benz diesel heritage

Timing can be everything, of course, but the idea that timing is a deciding factor in these new models' rollouts is pretty well blown out of the water by the fact that Mercedes has been in the diesel game for decades.

We work hard to travel light to these events (somehow achieving carry-on status with computers, cameras, press materials, driving clothes and dinner clothes), but we are always impressed by just how "heavy" Mercedes travels. They wowed us with a museum of SL history at a remote lakeside park in California this spring (see *Arizona Driver Magazine*, May/June 2008). For the BlueTEC introduction in Vermont, they brought along a full museum of diesel production, race and rally cars spanning over seven decades.

Mercedes-Benz BlueTEC diesels trace their heritage back more than 70 years to the first diesel-powered passenger car, the 1936 Mercedes-Benz 260 D. Through 1940, almost 2000 of these were built, demonstrating the longevity and economy of the diesel engine.

In 1955, Mercedes won the diesel class in the famous Mille Miglia with their 180 D. The 40hp 180 D, introduced in 1954 in the new-for-'53 Mercedes Ponton body, was upped to 43hp as the 190 D during 1955.

Mercedes introduced the Fintail in 1961, keeping the 190 D designation for the diesel version. In 1965, the car became the 200 D, in sync with the gasoline model's number, though engine displacement remained unchanged, as did its 55 horsepower (propelling the car from 0 to 62 mph in 28 seconds), but the four-cylinder's crankshaft

received five main bearings. Smooth and quiet, the 200 D found almost 160,000 customers between 1965 and 1968. A station wagon and a long-wheelbase sedan are also added. For 1963, Mercedes diesels could be ordered with an automatic transmission.

In 1978, the Mercedes-Benz C111-III racer, a five-cylinder turbocharged diesel, set nine world speed records in just twelve hours, while also achieving a record 24 mpg, and all this at over 186 mph overall.

That was the basis for the 1978 300 SD—the world's first production turbodiesel passenger car and the first luxury diesel car. This 115hp five-cylinder sedan (along with a 300 CD coupe) achieved near-cult status in America and was the basis for a long line of diesel-powered S-Class cars. In 1985, the 300 SDL sported a new six-cylinder engine and (along with the midrange 300 D) was the world's first car with diesel particulate filters.

In 1997, Mercedes introduced the C 220 CDI, a common rail diesel with direct fuel injection and advanced engine electronics, providing 10% better fuel mileage and reduced exhaust emissions, with 30% more horsepower and twice the torque.

In 2005, the first-generation V6-powered 320 CDI produced 224 hp and thirteen new FIA records for speed and endurance.

In 2006, Mercedes-Benz introduced the new E320 BlueTEC, coinciding with the introduction of ultra-low-sulfur diesel fuel. Three of these proved their mettle in the 8700-mile Paris-to-Beijing rally. The E320 BlueTEC was a success from the start, voted 2007 World Green Car of the Year (see *Arizona Driver Magazine*, September/October 2007) and comprising 13% of E-Class sales in the US.

BlueTEC engine and technology

Mercedes-Benz BlueTEC engines meet the demanding new targets both of the US BIN5 (50-state) standard and Europe's new EU6 legislation, putting BlueTEC vehicles within all diesel emissions standards worldwide.

With advantages in low-end torque, fuel economy and performance, the diesel engine has already proven itself an attractive alternative to gasoline engines in the US, a land of larger vehicles, consistent highway speeds and long cross-country distances. But in the face of increasing fuel prices and growing sensitivity towards CO₂ emissions, the US has set extremely stringent emissions legisla-

KEEP RIGHT >>





Mercedes-Benz GL320 BlueTEC

tion for diesel drivetrains. For all these reasons, Mercedes-Benz chose the US for the worldwide debut of BlueTEC technology in the E320 BlueTEC, as well as the launch of its latest BlueTEC system with AdBlue injection.

The powerful V6 turbodiesel engine under the hood of the new M-, GL- and R-Class BlueTEC models demonstrates that excellent fuel economy and the lowest emissions are within the grasp of large SUVs. This engine has an output of 210 bhp and 398 lb.ft. of torque, while boasting an estimated 23 mpg (highway) for the GL320 BlueTEC, a fuel consumption benefit of 20 to 40 percent over a comparable gasoline engine, making the Mercedes-Benz GL320 BlueTEC the most fuel-efficient full-size SUV in the US.

The six-cylinder diesel received a few modifications in the new SUVs. The piston cavity profile was reworked for an improved fuel/air mix, while its compression ratio was reduced from 17.7 to 16.5. The VNT turbocharger was optimized and reconfigured, as was the ECU. All three are all equipped with the seven-speed 7G-TRONIC automatic transmission.

An important goal was the drastic reduction of NOx emissions—the single component of diesel exhaust that remains higher than that of a gasoline engine. In the E320 BlueTEC, oxidation catalysts and particulate filters are combined with a long-life NOx storage catalyst and an additional SCR catalyst. In the new GL320 BlueTEC, ML320 BlueTEC and R320 BlueTEC, AdBlue—a harmless liquid urea solution—is injected into the exhaust. This releases ammonia, and the SCR catalyst then converts up to 88 percent of NOx emissions into harmless nitrogen gas and water.

The V6 BLUETEC engine is the only diesel powerplant among the winners of *Ward's Auto World's* Ten Best Engines, which involves two months of evaluation by six *Ward's* editors. This year, they nominated 33 engines, each powering a production vehicle with a base price of no more than \$54,000, on sale in the US no later than the first quarter of the year. The group considers power and torque output, noise, vibration and harshness (NVH) levels, technical relevance and basic comparative numbers. Mercedes powerplants have won seven times in the award's 13 years, including the previous-generation turbodiesel—the 3.2-liter in-line six.

AdBlue injection technology means that the engine no longer needs to run periodically on a rich combustion cycle to purge the NOx storage catalyst. Large sedans and SUVs with higher fuel consumption would require frequent purging, ultimately leading to more fuel consumption.

AdBlue is an aqueous urea solution, which is stored in a small, separate tank. Upon injection into the hot, pre-treated exhaust gas, the AdBlue solution breaks down into its compo-

ML320 BlueTEC rear view and interior; the BlueTEC 320 turbodiesel engine; the spacious GL320 BlueTEC rear seat; and the R320 BlueTEC interior and rear.

nent parts, water and urea. Above around 338° Fahrenheit, the urea is converted into anhydrous ammonia (NH₃), the active agent in this process. This is stored within the catalyst and reduces nitrogen oxides into harmless nitrogen gas as soon as NOx-bearing exhaust gases pass through the catalyst. The ECU manages the AdBlue injection to ensure that there is always sufficient ammonia stored.

A refill of the AdBlue tank is needed only at regular 10,000-mile maintenance intervals, even under higher consumption conditions such as towing. The customer plays no direct role in refilling the AdBlue.

Meet the new BlueTEC SUVs

Mercedes-Benz unveiled three new sport utility vehicles powered by the world's newest and cleanest diesel engines at the New York International Auto Show last winter—the ML320 BlueTEC, GL320 BlueTEC and R320 BlueTEC. All were brought to Vermont this summer for the world's press to drive. Mercedes-Benz wanted to not only demonstrate the diesel drivetrains, but also is proud of tailoring them to an extensive range in the premium SUV segment.

The M-Class has been recently restyled, more closely matching the original concept vehicle, with its curves and strong wheel arches. This is the most successful Mercedes-Benz sports utility vehicle and claims to have started the trend toward premium SUVs, quickly picked up by Lexus, BMW, Porsche and others. The M-Class is still noticeably dominant on the road in Arizona.

The GL-Class is the most conventional of the three, a solid, traditional design that's less likely to stand out in the freeway crowd, but that still fills its mainstream niche with power, style and interior appointments that run well above the segment average.

The R-Class tackles very conventional large-SUV requirements with unconventional style. By measures of capacity, power, access/egress and stowing volume, it holds its own against the largest SUVs, putting it within range of the Suburban. Anecdotal evidence suggests its capabilities are sometimes missed by potential buyers who think the R-Class has a bit of a minivan look, and that's unfortunate. They're missing a great solution. The R-Class offers exceptional comfort on long-distance journeys and a generously proportioned and flexible interior, with seating for up to seven.

Standard equipment has been expanded substantially across the M-, R- and GL-Class

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Mercedes-Benz R320 BlueTEC

ranges. All come with the PRE-SAFE predictive occupant protection system and Active Front Head Restraints. A new-gen telematics system boasts an improved user interface and a host of new functions. A hands-free system with integrated Bluetooth is standard, as is a port for your iPod or other device. An optional Universal Media Interface lets you connect an external music storage device to on-board electronics, so you can display and select track titles on the instrument cluster, center console screen and multi-function steering wheel (while charging the device's battery). Another package adds HD and SIR-IUS radio, plus optimized voice recognition.

An optional Harmon Kardon Logic7 sound system with 5.1 Dolby Digital Surround Sound and digital signal processor (DSP) promises outstanding clarity. A new rear entertainment system is available, complete with two large, dual-source, 8-inch screens and a DVD player, as well as two wireless headsets and two remote controls.

On and off the road

Our test routes included the drive from the Albany airport up to Manchester Village, through much of central and southern Vermont, and even into the northwest reaches of Massachusetts, with multi-lane highway time, smooth two-lane highways, and some unexpected two track dirt roads (comparing notes at the hotel, almost nobody trusted the GPS when it said to turn onto some of these, but after doubling back, we found great wooded rides, and the SUVs acquitted themselves very well on these).

There was a broad consensus that the GL320 BlueTEC was a favorite, offering all the amenities and comfort of the full lineup, in a very utilitarian package. This is not really at the expense of the M320 BlueTEC, as its high style and efficient layout are so attractive (and familiar), the GL was probably just more of a surprise. Our time in the R-Class was as a passenger, shuttling to a lakeside dinner, but that demonstrated its number one attribute: capacity. Although the three definitely do not share mama-papa-baby bear styling, this is the one to try first if you have a large family or other group to accommodate.

Past disadvantages of diesel were in certain emissions, primarily soot particulates and nitrogen oxides. Mercedes-Benz tackled the particulate issue in 2003, with the introduction of a maintenance-free particulate filter. NOx emissions had already been reduced by about 75 percent over the past 15 years in Mercedes diesels, and BlueTEC technology brings them down to near-negligible levels. AdBlue injection now makes the new ML320 BlueTEC, R320 BlueTEC and GL320 BlueTEC the world's cleanest diesel SUVs. ■

"It's okay; I'm a limo driver....!" The immortal words of Jim Carrey, in the classic, er, art film *Dumb and Dumber*, echo as we get picked up from our flight. Quiet, loyal, careful and diligent, event drivers are the invisible hand behind the wheel, ferrying dignitaries and press alike, from airport to hotel to dinner and back. We're here to drive, and so are they.

Life in the driver's seat: being a chauffer for Mercedes-Benz

By Justin Kupinski

Recently, someone handed me the keys to a brand new Mercedes and told me they would pay me to drive it. I've been living the dream, my friends, and it's been a crazy trip. These are some of the highlights of my time as a chauffer for Mercedes Benz!

On my first day, which was supposed to be an orientation day, I was picking up a VIP for Benz when my R350 almost was towed. Great first day, right? Well, at least that was the scariest moment of the event.

Among my favorite parts of the job was carting our customers home after a night at the open bar and buffet. Remember that spring break you took in Cancun? That was as close as you will ever get to the nightly routine of our guests. They like to have fun. From anything with wheels that goes fast, to late nights on the town, the people of Mercedes-Benz knew how best to spend their time away from work.

And my time at work? Ninety-hour weeks and little sleep became my daily routine. I had to spend that time in the driver's seat of a brand new R350, not bad. But better than that, I was able to get seat time in an S550, which was one of the fastest and most fun rides of my life.

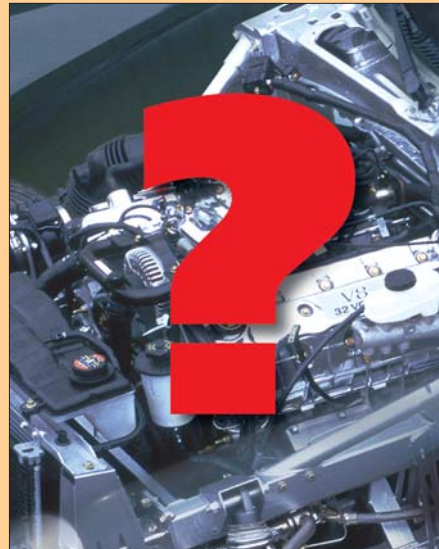
With all the activity at the event, I was able to meet a broad spectrum of people. I met big VIP's like Dr. Thomas Weber. Others I met were a little out there, such as the guest who demanded the resort pay for the rim and tire HE curb-rashed on their curb while trying to park. And others were just incredible, like the members of the press from India who insisted on standing out the roof taking pictures as I drove through Times Square.

Did I really drive the brand new Benzes I was given? Well, one night, I was driving home and passed an abandoned dog track, with its pristinely paved parking lot and access roads. I thought about it, and what a tempting thought it was. Did I go for it? Well, I'll leave that to your imagination.

It was a fast two weeks, and I have more stories than room to tell them. All I can say is: if you ever have a shot at a job like this, do it. You wont have any regrets. ■

Photo courtesy Justin Kupinski





1. For proposed NHTSA guidelines for the 2015 model year, which vehicle will have to have the highest average fuel economy to avoid paying penalties?

- a. Porsche
- b. Suzuki
- c. Subaru
- d. Volkswagen

2. Toyota has the most new vehicle retail registrations per dealer. Who is second?

- a. Nissan
- b. Honda
- c. General Motors
- d. Ford

3. What percentage of licensed drivers get into an accident annually?

- a. 2.9 percent
- b. 5.3 percent
- c. 9.1 percent
- d. 12.5 percent

4. When did Volvo move US corporate HQ from New Jersey to Southern California?

- a. 1996
- b. 1998
- c. 2001
- d. 2004

5. How much more does carbon fiber cost than steel?

- a. 10x more
- b. 20x more
- c. 30x more
- d. 40x more

6. How were US convertible sales in 2007?

- a. down 8.6%
- b. even
- c. up 5.1%
- d. up 10.9%

7. How many motor vehicles are there per 1,000 people in the United States?

- a. 535 /1000
- b. 625 /1000
- c. 760 /1000
- d. 815 /1000

8. How many motor vehicles are there per 1,000 population in China?

- a. 25 /1000
- b. 95 /1000
- c. 205 /1000
- d. 255 /1000

9. How long is the famous Las Vegas strip?

- a. 2.2 miles
- b. 4.2 miles
- c. 6.2 miles
- d. 8.2 miles

10. How many cars are there on the road globally?

- a. 250 million
- b. 400 million
- c. 550 million
- d. 700 million

11. Which 2008 model car is rated "Greenest" by the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy (ACEEE)?

- a. Honda Civic GX
- b. Toyota Prius
- c. Honda Civic Hybrid
- d. Smart Fortwo

12. What manufacturer supplies all the engines for the IndyCar racing series?

- a. Ford
- b. General Motors
- c. Honda
- d. Toyota

13. When was oil first discovered in the Middle East?

- a. 1908
- b. 1927
- c. 1939
- d. 1958

14. What automotive group sold the most new vehicles in China in 2007?

- a. Honda
- b. Toyota
- c. General Motors
- d. Volkswagen

15. Worldwide, how many Prius hybrids have been sold since it was launched in Japan in 1997?

- a. 500,000 sold worldwide
- b. 1 million sold worldwide
- c. 2 million sold worldwide
- d. 3 million sold worldwide

16. How many hybrid vehicles did Toyota sell worldwide in 2007?

- a. 339,250
- b. 429,400
- c. 501,880
- d. 621,500

17. Which Acura model offers a turbo-charged engine?

- a. RL
- b. TSX
- c. RDX
- d. TL

18. What percentage of new car buyers are under 21 years old?

- a. 1.2 percent
- b. 3.3 percent
- c. 5.1 percent
- d. 6.5 percent

19. Which brand had the fewest problems per 100 vehicles in the J.D. Power and Associates 2008 Initial Quality Study?

- a. Porsche
- b. Infiniti
- c. Lexus
- d. Mercedes-Benz

20. Which brand had the most "Highest Ranked" vehicles in 17 categories of the 2008 J.D. Power Initial Quality Study?

- a. Infiniti
- b. Mercedes-Benz
- c. Chevrolet
- d. Honda

21. How much does the average family (with a head of household age 65 to 74 years old) spend per person annually on new cars and trucks?

- a. \$443
- b. \$671
- c. \$914
- d. \$1,163

22. What percentage of new car shoppers said in a June survey that they had stopped going to Starbucks or other coffee houses entirely to make up for the high price of gas?

- a. 12 percent
- b. 17 percent
- c. 21 percent
- d. 28 percent

23. What percentage of American filling stations have diesel fuel available?

- a. 21 percent
- b. 36 percent
- c. 42 percent
- d. 65 percent

24. In May 2004, 28.2 percent of new cars were 4-cylinder models; what was the percentage in May 2008?

- a. 24.9 percent
- b. 34.2 percent
- c. 45.6 percent
- d. 52.7 percent

25. What is PDK on the 2009 Porsche 911?

- a. Sophisticated new stability control
- b. New double clutch transmission
- c. State-of-the-art communications
- d. New direct-injection system

26. What percentage of women surveyed in a recent study would rather "chat up" someone who owns the latest fuel-efficient car versus the latest sports car?

- a. 35 percent
- b. 51 percent
- c. 69 percent
- d. 88 percent

27. In which part of the world were the most cars and trucks sold in 2007?

- a. North America
- b. Europe
- c. Asia and Pacific
- d. South America and Central America

28. How many shoppers say they intend to buy a vehicle with better fuel economy?

- a. 57 percent
- b. 68 percent
- c. 79 percent
- d. 86 percent

29. Who is adding a new mid-size pickup, the Equator, to their lineup for 2009?

- a. Ford
- b. Suzuki
- c. Subaru
- d. Hyundai

30. What percentage of full-size trucks sold in 2007 were Japanese brand (Toyota Tundra, Honda Ridgeline or Nissan Titan)?

- a. 3 percent
- b. 9 percent
- c. 14 percent
- d. 21 percent

ANSWERS ON NEXT PAGE >>



Piloti Spyder SV
Black/Ecosse Blue/Race Yellow

What's the difference between a driving shoe and a regular shoe?

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Driving a car is a specialized activity, just like golfing, hiking, jogging or closing a deal in the boardroom. To perform at your best, you need the right shoes—Piloti driving shoes from AutoSport. Sleek tread patterns give you the feel you need for smooth heel-and-toe downshifts. Tidy sole sides won't snag on

the pedals. And Piloti's patented Roll Control™ heel not only helps with precise pedal application, it also centers and stabilizes your heels while walking.

Whether you're a daily driver or a weekend racer, nothing beats the comfort, control and style of Piloti driving shoes from AutoSport.



Piloti Spyder SV



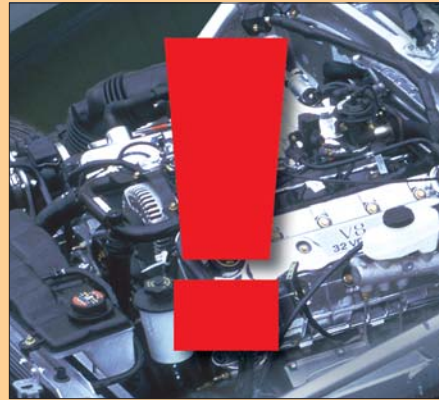
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>ANSWERS (quiz on previous page)



1. Answer: a. According to projected automaker fuel economy standards for the 2015 model year, Porsche vehicles will have to have an average rating of 41.3 mpg. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration numbers are determined by a sliding scale where the smallest vehicles will have the highest relative increase, measured by the vehicle footprint. Porsche and other performance brands are likely to pay the penalty rather than compromise their performance philosophy. Suzuki will have to achieve 41.2 mpg, Subaru – 40.8 mpg and Volkswagen 39.5 mpg.
2. Answer: b. Franchised Toyota dealers sold an average 1,638 units per dealership, and second place Honda dealers averaged 1,165. Nissan 746. Ford 236. General Motors 202. In sixth place was Chrysler with 169.
3. Answer: d. According to the National Safety Council, 12.5 percent of licensed drivers get into an accident annually.

4. Answer: c. In 2001 Volvo moved their US headquarters to Southern California as part of Ford's Premier Auto Group. Currently the company is in the process of moving back to New Jersey.
5. Answer: c. According to *Automotive News*, the strong lightweight carbon fiber used to lighten some upper-end cars can cost up to 30 times more than steel.
6. Answer: a. According to R.L. Polk & Co., convertible sales slipped by 8.6 percent in 2007, after several years of significant increases.
7. Answer: d. According to the Freedonia Group, as reported by *Business Week*, there are 815 motor vehicles per 1,000 people in the US.
8. Answer: a. According to data compiled by Freedonia Group in *Business Week*, there are 25 motor vehicles per 1,000 population in China. India also has 25 per 1,000.
9. Answer: b. The Las Vegas Strip is about 4.2 miles long.
10. Answer: d. According to *Fortune* magazine, there are 700 million cars on the road globally, with 70 million more added each year.
11. Answer: a. According to the American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy, the Honda Civic GX is the "Greenest" car sold in the US for 2008 with a "Green Score" of 57. The Civic GX is powered by natural gas, which is 90 percent cleaner than the average gasoline powered car. Other "Green Scores" were Prius 53, Civic Hybrid 51, and Smart Fortwo 49.
12. Answer: c. Honda has supplied engines for the IndyCar racing series since 2003 and has signed on for five more years. For 2008, the engines are 3.5-liter V-8s.
13. Answer: a. William D'Arcy, and his company Anglo-Persian Oil discovered oil in Persia, known now as Iran, in May of 1908 after seven years of exploration.

14. Answer: d. According to J.D. Power and Associates and Automotive Resources Asia, the Volkswagen group (Audi, Skoda and Volkswagen) sold the most new vehicles in China (946,433) in 2007. GM (Buick, Cadillac and Chevrolet) 527,915. Toyota (Toyota and Daihatsu) 455,038. Honda 422,341. The largest selling Chinese brand was Chery, selling 369,459.
15. Answer: b. Toyota said, in April 2008, global sales of the Prius hybrid topped one million with most sales being made in Japan and the United States. Prius is currently being sold in 40 countries.
16. Answer: b. Worldwide, Toyota sold 429,400 hybrid vehicles in 2007.
17. Answer: c. The RDX, a premium compact crossover SUV, is the only, and first ever, Acura model powered by a turbocharged engine. It has a 2.3-liter turbocharged 4-cylinder engine rated at 240 horsepower.
18. Answer: a. According to J.D. Power and Associate estimates, 1.2 percent of the new car buyers are under 21 years old.
19. Answer: a. With only 87 problems per 100 vehicles, Porsche has the best rating in the J.D. Power and Associates 2008 Initial Quality Study. Infiniti 98. Lexus 99. Mercedes-Benz 104.
20. Answer: d. Honda had three vehicles earning the "Highest Ranked" position in the 17 categories of the J.D. Powers and Associates 2008 Initial Quality Study. The Hondas getting the top ratings were the Fit, Civic and CR-V. Mercedes-Benz, Infiniti, Lexus, Chevy and Dodge each had two vehicles ranked as "Highest".
21. Answer: d. According to the Bureau of Labor statistics, the average family (with a head of household age 65 to 74) spends \$1,163 per person on new cars and trucks annually.
22. Answer: d. According to a *kbb.com* (Kelley Blue Book) study of new-car shoppers in June 2008, 28 percent indicated they had stopped going to Starbucks or other coffee houses to compensate for high gas prices. Another 21 percent said they are going less often.
23. Answer: c. According to *NYTimes.com* 42 percent of American filling stations have diesel fuel available.
24. Answer: c. According to J.D. Power and Associates, 45.6 percent of all new vehicles sold in the US in May 2008 were powered by 4-cylinder engines.
25. Answer: b. Porsche will offer a new 7-speed double clutch transmission in the 2009 911 called Porsche-Doppelkupplung or PDK. Replacing the Tiptronic automatic transmission, the PDK improves 0-to-60 times by 0.2 seconds over the standard 6-speed manual.
26. Answer: d. According to a recent GM study, as reported by *AutoWeek*, 88 percent of women surveyed would rather "chat up" someone who owns the latest fuel-efficient car over the latest sports car.
27. Answer: b. There were 22,927,585 new cars and trucks sold in Europe in 2007. Asia 21,420,094. North America 19,372,251. Central and South America 4,408,103.
28. Answer: c. According to a recent Auto Pulse Survey conducted by the Consumer Reports National Research Center, 79 percent of car shoppers said they intend to buy a vehicle that gets better fuel economy.
29. Answer: b. Suzuki is introducing a new midsize pickup called the Equator for the 2009 model year. Nissan is building the Equator with mechanicals coming from the Nissan Frontier.
30. Answer: c. Of the 2,179,701 full-size trucks sold in 2007, 14 percent were Japanese brands.

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



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A sanctuary with sensibility

The 2009 Escalade Hybrid and Platinum Edition deliver the ultimate in large SUV luxury and efficiency



Story by JP Molnar
 Photos by Randall Bohl Photography
www.randallbohl.com

The term Sanctuary generally means a place of rest, of rejuvenation and peace. It only made sense, then, that Cadillac would choose Paradise Valley's Sanctuary Resort to introduce its ultimate new Escalade, the Platinum Edition, as well as its first foray into the luxury hybrid marketplace with the Escalade Hybrid. After all, the Escalade nameplate has become synonymous with providing luxury, performance and comfort at a level that provides a rolling sanctuary, if you will, for its driver and passengers. The Escalade has also been the benchmark platform for Cadillac to introduce its ultimate technologies for the luxury consumer SUV market. With recent economic times placing environmental and fuel economy concerns at the top of many drivers lists, Cadillac chose the naturally beautiful background of The Sanctuary to introduce its new Escalade Hybrid which represents, according to John Howell, the Director of Global Products for Cadillac, the ultimate blend of luxury and efficiency in a large SUV. While there, we had a chance to drive the hybrid on an urban loop through Scottsdale, as well as Paradise Valley. We also had a chance to drive the Platinum Edition, which is highlighted in a separate sidebar in this article, but the introduction of hybrid technology in the high-profile luxury SUV marketplace places it center stage as the future of large scale personal vehicles.

WHY A HYBRID?

In a time where gas routinely surpasses the \$4 dollar mark, it would only make sense that a manufacturer of large SUVs would see the writing on the wall, and find a way to incorporate the technology into its larger vehicles. Plus, showing some corporate responsibility towards energy and environmental concerns places them in a more enviable market position as being sensitive to a changing world. But, it's also important that, in doing so, they don't alienate their buyers. Fortunately for Cadillac, it had hybrid technology available for the asking. What was more challenging was meeting the requirements of integrating the system without diluting the luxury, performance and comfort that Escalade buyers were accustomed to having. As Howell puts it, "People's needs haven't really changed. Fuel costs have gone up, but there is a segment of the population that needs a large vehicle to meet their needs." Howell adds that the luxury vehicle market is growing because many more Americans are reaching their peak earning years, and want to buy something to reflect their accomplishments. The Hybrid is Cadillac's answer to those buyers who want a large luxury SUV, but are also seeking better fuel economy, or are commit-



ted to making an environmentally positive statement with their vehicle.

DESIGN AND ENGINEERING

The system utilizes GM's patented two-mode hybrid system that was originally developed for transit buses. It consists of an advanced electrically variable transmission (EVT) and 300-volt nickel-metal hydride Energy Storage System (ESS). These systems work in concert with the standard 6.0L V-8 Gen IV gasoline engine with Active Fuel Management (AFM) and late-intake valve closing (LIVC) technology. AFM enables the V-8 engine to seamlessly shut off half of its cylinders when less power is needed, such as during highway cruising. This new hybrid system not only enables the Escalade Hybrid to drive low speeds on electricity alone, it also allows the 6.0L V-8 engine to operate in its more economical four-cylinder mode for longer periods. According to Howell, this translates to an increase of city fuel economy to approximately 20 mpg, which is a huge jump from the 12 mpg rating of the non-hybrid.

The key to the two-mode hybrid system is that the electric power used to propel the vehicle is generated by the hybrid system itself. When the brakes are applied or the vehicle is coasting, the electric motors within the hybrid system create electricity that is stored in a 300-volt nickel-metal hydride Energy Storage System (ESS) located under the second-row seat. The ESS also provides power to the air conditioning compressor and

the Accessory Power Module (APM), which converts the high-voltage supply to 42 volts for the electric power steering system, and 12 volts for the vehicle battery and other 12-volt electrical accessories.

The Escalade Hybrid's 6.0L V-8 engine features Active Fuel Management and late intake valve closing (Atkinson-cycle combustion process) for reduced pumping losses and better overall fuel economy. It uses flat-top pistons, cylinder heads borrowed from GM's 5.3L high-output V-8 and a 10.8:1 compression ratio, producing 332 horsepower at 5,100 rpm and 367 lb.-ft. of torque at 4,100 rpm. It runs on regular unleaded fuel and a unique 3.42 rear axle ratio is utilized. The engine package also includes an Auto Stop mode. Once the vehicle reaches 0 mph, the gasoline engine is automatically shut down. By leaving the engine off and allowing the vehicle to move only under electric power, such as during heavy stop-and-go traffic, fuel consumption and emissions are greatly reduced. However, when extra power is required, such as for wide-open-throttle acceleration from a standing stop, the Vortec 6.0L V-8 is seamlessly restarted so it can deliver the necessary power and torque. In this case, the engine is restarted effortlessly from the Auto Stop mode using the EVT's powerful internal electric motors; there is no traditional starter motor.

The hybrid package is available in 2WD and 4WD configurations and delivers 5,800

KEEP RIGHT >>

2009 CADILLAC ESCALADE PLATINUM EDITION



In every segment of luxury, there are those who simply have to have the very best that a manufacturer has to offer. Cadillac recognized that a select few buyers were willing to pay a premium to have an Escalade that is just a step above the other offerings. Enter the 09 Escalade Platinum.

"The Platinum Edition extends Escalade's continuing status as the large luxury SUV of choice for top consumers," said Jim Taylor, Cadillac general manager.

Offered on Escalade and the extended-length Escalade ESV, the Platinum edition features a signature front end patterned after Cadillac's CTS sport sedan. It also includes unique 22-inch wheels and wears exclusive Platinum exterior badges. It's also the first Escalade to incorporate Magnetic Ride Control technology à la Corvette, and the first production vehicle anywhere to use light emitting diodes (LED) for all of the exterior lighting.



On the interior, the most striking additions are a leather-wrapped-and-stitched instrument panel, center storage console and door trim, unique wood inlays and aluminum trim. Unique Aniline leather is used to trim seating areas. Platinum-specific door sills and floor mats; a heated steering wheel; heated and cooled cupholders and a power liftgate are also included. Also, the DVD entertainment system adds screens integrated into each front-seat headrest, in addition to the existing roof-mounted screen.

The Platinum edition retains the standard 6.2L V-8 rated at 403 horsepower and 417 lb.-ft. of torque, mated to a Hydra-Matic 6L80 six-speed automatic transmission.

Driving the Platinum edition revealed some interesting chassis behavior, as the Magnetic Ride Control clearly made for a much firmer ride over the standard Escalade. This adds to its sporty flavor, but the jury's still out as to whether the boulevard crowd might find the ride quality out of step with the sumptuous presentation of the rest of the vehicle. Inside, the addition of the leather across the dash, combined with the soft Aniline seats, makes it one of the most luxurious SUV rides in business. Combine that with the striking 22-inch wheels, wild LED lighting, distinct grill design, and a price tag in the 80K range, and there is no doubt that other motorists will know that this Escalade is more than just a little bit special. ■

pounds of usable towing capacity on 2WD models and 5,600 pounds on 4WD models. Nearly all of Escalade's standard comfort and convenience features are included as standard equipment on the hybrid model, including an eight-inch, touch-screen navigation system that displays performance readouts of the two-mode hybrid system on the screen.

STYLING

The Escalade Hybrid doesn't look really that much different than any other Escalade, other than the inclusion of Hybrid badges and some controversial stickers that leave no doubt as to the powertrain choice of its driver. At our press drive, GM was still deciding whether or not to keep the large stickers on the sides and windshields of our test vehicles. According to John Howell, market research had the keep/ditch ratio at an even 50-50. Our opinion is to ditch them as they detract from the classy reputation and styling cues that Cadillac has carefully cultivated over the years. Yes, there will be some buyers who want to scream "look, I'm green too" in their full-size luxury SUV, but the stickers add a carnival atmosphere to an otherwise handsome vehicle. Current Escalade owners won't find themselves getting lost on the inside of the Hybrid as the interior is consistent with other models. That is, they are sumptuous, well crafted, comfortable cabins that do an excellent job of making you forget you are piloting a nearly 5800 lb. (2WD) vehicle down the tarmac. About the only real difference in terms of driver information systems is the center mounted multimedia screen that can prominently relay the current status of the hybrid system as you drive.

DRIVING IMPRESSIONS

Speaking of which, driving the Escalade Hybrid creates its own entertainment, mostly due to the aforementioned hybrid information screen. Howell says that the Escalade, when driven smoothly, can be driven up to almost 30 mph in all-electric mode. This can be verified by the center screen, which teases you with a schematic of the drive train in motion that is labeled with "electric mode". Squeeze the throttle too hard, and "electric" is replaced with "hybrid". Squeeze really hard, and the screen jumps right to "Hey, your sucking some real fuel here" mode. So, as I drove the Hybrid on the streets of Paradise Valley, the "game" became one of how fast I could travel in all-electric mode. Howell says 30 mph is about as good as it gets. All I could muster was 29 mph before the gas gremlins appeared, but suffice it to say, the inclusion of the electric mode can be

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very beneficial in slow traffic. So too, is the Auto Stop mode. It initially makes things a little eerie, as there is no engine sound at rest, but a touch of the throttle and the whir of the electric motor moves the Escalade smoothly on its way. This effect didn't go unnoticed by a group of curious golfers during an exploratory stint on the roads at the Camelback Inn. They were, no doubt, intrigued by the sight of an Escalade whirring by them in run silent/run deep mode.

Engine response was very good in the Hybrid. We had a normally aspirated Escalade on hand for comparison, and the combination the Hybrid's maximum-torque-at-any-RPM, and the 6.0 liter engine made for much better throttle response at low speed. The normally aspirated Escalade pulls harder at higher RPM's, but being that most driving these days seems to be stop-and-go, Hybrid owners will appreciate the point-and-squirt advantages of the two-mode system. Where the Hybrid also differs is in the steering. The normally aspirated Escalade uses a mechanical system, but the Hybrid uses an all-electric, 42-volt, rack and pinion system. Again, driving them back to back, the mechanical set-up in the non-Hybrid delivers a more traditional road feel that communicates road and steering feel that one comes to expect with the advantages of rack and pinion configurations. The Hybrid's system feels artificial, with no real sense of what the front tires are doing. The necessity of the electric steering is understandable given that the vehicle must still be able to steer in all-electric or engine-off mode, but those Escalade owners seeking a more sporting experience would be wise to compare the two systems before making their decision.

Ride quality is expectedly good, with the Escalades standard independent, coil over front suspension and rear five-link setup absorbing road imperfections while not being overly cushy or too stiff.

Overall, the Hybrid system works well, with transitions from all-electric to Hybrid to gas-only occurring in a smooth process. In fact, drivers are more apt to know what's going on under the hood by the distinct noises produced by the electric motor than anything they feel in their seat. We didn't get a chance to verify any fuel economy gains during our short drive, but common sense would point to the benefits of an all-electric option for reducing the need for fuel.

Pricing for the Escalade Hybrid had not been announced at the time of our drive, but figure somewhere north of the 70K range since that's where most Escalades are living these days. It's a sizeable bit of coin, but for those buyers interested in reducing their "carbon footprint" while enjoying a top-tier luxury SUV driving experience, the Escalade Hybrid is the only game in town. ■

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EQUIPMENT : SUN PROTECTION

Sound advice for convertible owners

Once the moonsoon passes and the temps ease down below 100 again, convertible season is back in full swing. When out on the road, though, UV rays beat down directly from the sun. Even wearing a T-shirt, "accidental burn" can occur: for instance, a white T-shirt provides an SPF of about 5... hardly the protection needed to prevent skin damage.

In response, Dr. Patty Agin of the Coppertone Solar Research Center has developed the following **5 Safe Sun Tips** that will keep you protected with minimal intrusion into top-down adventures:

- 1. Apply. Apply. Apply.** Because the sun may cause damage immediately, it's important to apply sunscreen before heading outside, even if spending some of your time in partial shade (beneath trees, in partly cloudy skies, even in a parking garage). You should reapply every 80 minutes—even when the sunscreen is waterproof and sweatproof.
- 2. High SPF.** Coppertone released SPF 70+ Ultra Guard and Sport Continuous Sprays this year—clear, no-rub sprays that quickly cover the body at any angle for fast protection. Sprays allow for quick reapplication in less than 1 minute. Perfect to spritz on without getting hands greasy.
- 3. Follow the shadow rule.** If a kid's shadow is shorter than he or she is, the sun's rays are at their strongest. Cover them up with sun protective clothing, such as a hat and sunglasses, and keep them in the shade during mid-day heat whenever possible.
- 4. Just for Kids!** Coppertone created specialty formulated Kids Lotion SPF 50, which comes in an easy-to-apply spray formula, as well as a rub-in lotion, making application convenient for kids.
- 5. See a dermatologist once a year** for a skin check—no matter your age. If detected early, melanoma can be treatable (survival rates for patients with early detection are about 99% but then decrease depending on how far the melanoma has spread).

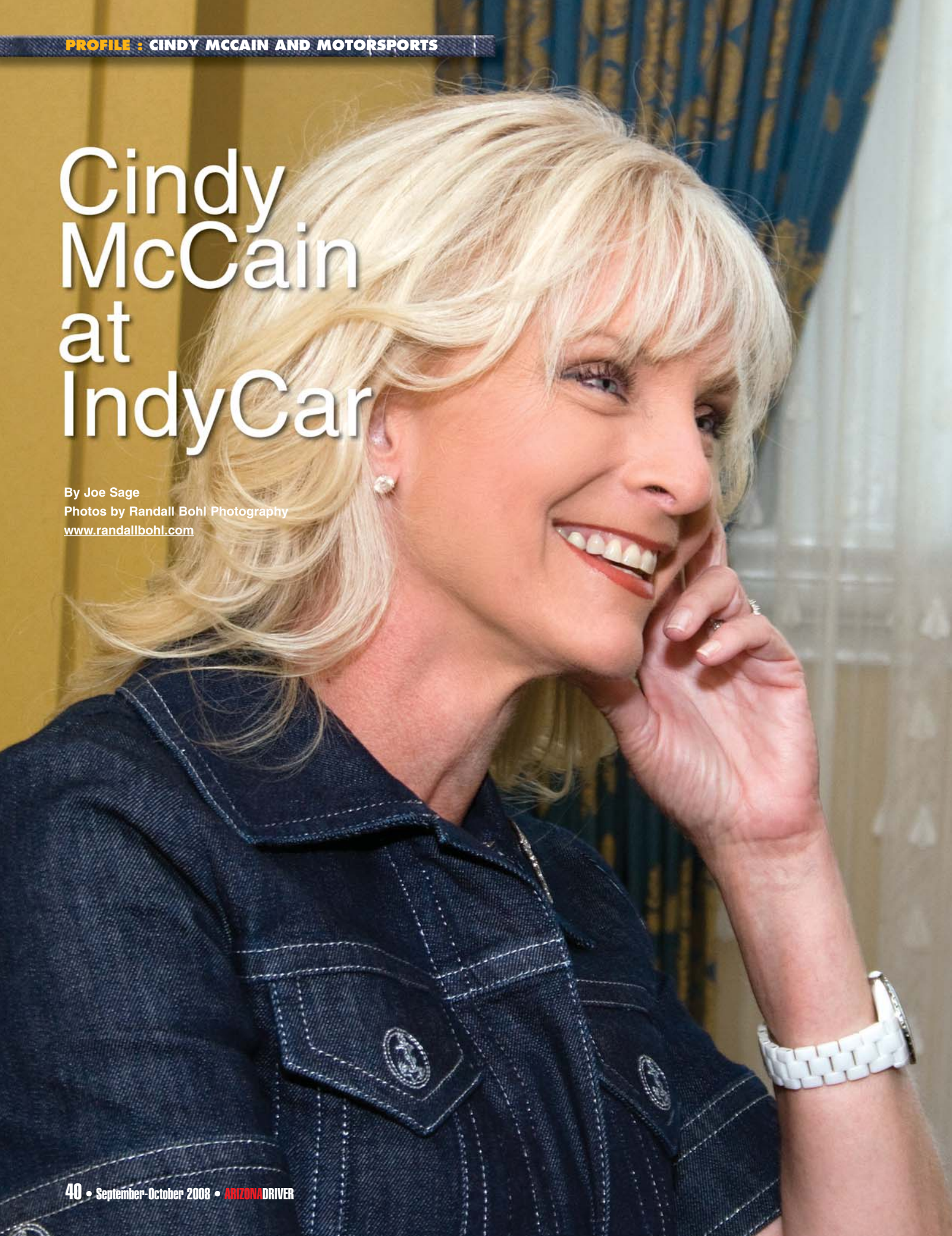
Protect skin short term from painful burns, and long-term from premature aging/the potential of melanoma and skin cancer. ■



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Cindy McCain at IndyCar

By Joe Sage
 Photos by Randall Bohl Photography
www.randallbohl.com



Cindy McCain, wife of Arizona Senator and presidential hopeful John McCain, has a very full life. She's the mother of four and Chairman of Hensley & Company, but also makes plenty of time and provides plenty of talent for charity work worldwide.

Mrs. McCain founded the American Voluntary Medical Team (AVMT), a non-profit organization providing medical and surgical care to impoverished children and countries struck by disaster, through which she has led 55 medical missions to the third world. She is heavily involved with (and a member of the Board of Trustees of) HALO, a non-profit organization dedicated to land mine removal and weapons destruction in war-torn countries; she has traveled with HALO to Sri Lanka, Mozambique, Angola and recently Cambodia. She is on the Board of Directors of Operation Smile, whose mission is to repair cleft lips, cleft palates and other facial deformities for children. Operation Smile has provided free reconstructive surgery to over 100,000 children and young adults in 25 countries, and Mrs. McCain has assisted on volunteer missions in Morocco, India and Vietnam (including a repeat visit to Vietnam this summer). She is on leave from the Board of Directors of CARE USA during the course of the presidential campaign, but did recently travel to Tanzania to work on CARE's projects fighting global poverty, particularly among women. Cindy McCain is one amazing Arizona lady.

And she does find time for fun. For some of that, we recently caught up with her in Nashville, where she was scheduled to ride in the pace car at the Firestone Indy 200 race at Nashville Superspeedway.

We met at The Hermitage Hotel in downtown Nashville. Named in honor of Andrew Jackson's nearby Hermitage estate, the hotel opened in 1910, boasting the finest Italian marble, Russian walnut paneling, Persian rugs and a vaulted lobby with stained glass ceiling. The Grille Room was built by German rathskeller craftsmen. Guests have ranged from Gene Autry, Greta Garbo and Al Capone, to presidents Howard Taft, FDR, LBJ and Richard Nixon, to a long list of Nashville's world-famous musicians. It was home to famed pool hustler Minnesota Fats for eight years, where he had his own pool table. The hotel was purchased in 2000 and painstakingly renovated.

Arizonans are used to hot summers, but humidity is not on our menu. Nashville in July is both hot and humid. Mrs. McCain arrived there fresh from trips to Cambodia, Colombia and Mexico, so we wondered whether that run of muggy weather made

her miss the Sonoran Desert. "I tell everybody I don't mind the heat," she said. "I don't mind the muggy weather. I freeze to death from September to May. I'm very happy it's warm." On private airplanes, she admits to "frying" everybody else, by turning the heat way up. Born in Phoenix, Junior Rodeo Queen of Arizona in her teens, and happiest when it's hottest... Cindy McCain is an Arizonan through and through.

Her official mission in Nashville this day is to drive a Honda Accord Hybrid pace car during the Firestone Indy 200. This is an opportunity she embraces; it turns out that Mrs. McCain has a strong motorsports heritage and an longtime love of the sport.

We discussed Arizona's HOV-lane program for hybrids. Her daughter drives a Toyota Prius, which she's had for just under a year. "She loves it," says Mrs. McCain. "And I've driven it. I can't get over how quiet it is. You know, when you start it, you can't hear it start, and I'm used to the rumble of the engine, so I've made more than one mistake trying to start her car."

Cindy McCain is indeed used to the rumble of the engine. We knew she had done some drift lessons, but it turns out she has spent considerable time at the Bondurant School of High Performance Driving and at Firebird International Raceway, and not in the spectator stands.

"Yes," she says, "I've done a lot of stuff out there, actually. I started when my son gave me a birthday present years ago, called the Executive Protection program. He said, 'Mom, I thought it'd be a good thing for you to have,' and it was great! It was four days, and it was everything you could imagine. Everything from learning how to handle a car, in a skid or anything else. You learn the basics of car driving, but also about how to get yourself out of a trap."

Every bit as exciting as track racing and drifting, this anti-terrorism/anti-kidnapping program teaches such skills as how to turn a stretch limo on a dime, 180 degrees, in forward or reverse gears at high speed, as well as evasion and ramming skills. Handy knowledge for the potential next First Lady.

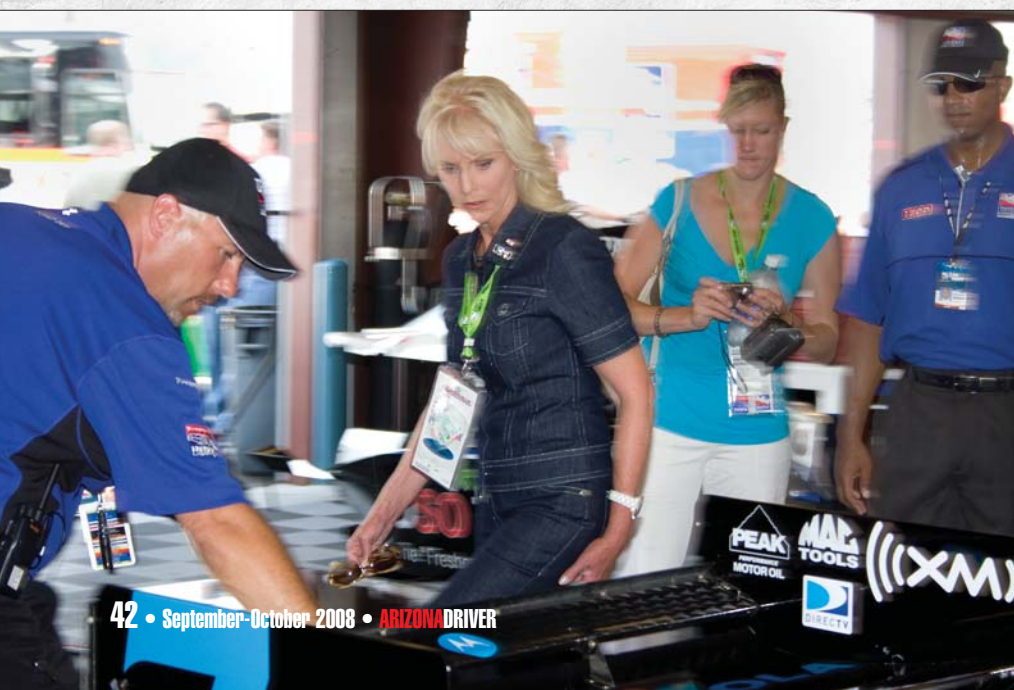
But that was not her first track time, not by a long shot. "To take you back a little bit," she says, "my father had been into racing, when I was growing up, so I grew up around particularly Indy cars, because he had a very small, minor piece of a car for awhile. The very first time I went to an Indy car race, and several times after that, women were not allowed in the pits or gasoline alley, so



KEEP RIGHT >>



Photo: Bondurant School of High Performance Driving



although I was part owner of a car, I couldn't go in," she laughs. "But then I was there the first year they let us in, too, about 1970 or '71, which was great.

"So I grew up around it and just had kind of a fascination with the cars, anyway. I mean I'm the girl who took auto mechanics in high school. It's a basic course in how to fix your car and change a tire and all that." She did not take home ec; she went where her adrenaline led her.

"I've always had the fascination, as my father did, the fascination with cars."

She and her dad had tons of fun. "It was a long, long time ago, with the Unser brothers, and it was just a very, very minor piece (of ownership). It was really more for fun. We had a great time, great, great friendships. My father's best friend in those days was into it, so we had a lot of fun with it. It was a great father/daughter thing, and we traveled a lot together."

And thus, the stage was set for a new era of mother/son racing.

A couple of years ago, Dan Dineson from Bondurant brought a red Corvette Z06 to the McCain residence for a photo shoot, and Cindy took him straight to the garage, to reveal son Jack's Nissan Skyline drift car. The Skyline GT-R will be coming to the States for sale now, after years of enthusiast clamoring, but Jack was way ahead of the curve. He has had one of the only Skylines in the country for a number of years, a righthand-drive Japanese model.

Mrs. McCain has mastered the righthand drive, but this is not her only drift car involvement. She and son Jack have built a drift car together, another Nissan. "We stripped the car out, put two seats in it, put a roll bar in it, and lightened the load on it. We built it and raced it together! We're the only mother/son team out at Firebird." She laughs heartily. "It really was fun. At the time I told him I was willing, but you really want to have somebody else do this. And he said, 'are you kidding me? you're the only one who knows what's going on!'

"So we would go, and sometimes I would drive, most of the time he drove, and then I would gauge the track, talk to him and help him through the race." Highlights? "I also helped when we lost the bumper! The bumper fell off, so they black-flagged us, and we had to go pick it up and put it in the car."

Mrs. McCain has indeed driven competitively, but plays down the heroics. "Just at Firebird, and it was very minor, but it was so much fun. I mean I can't tell you how much fun it is. I've had offers to do other things, just for fun in an amateur standing, but I've

been too busy raising children. I'm just now getting a little more time where I can do stuff like that."

We look forward to that.

Cindy McCain has also driven the pace car at Phoenix International Raceway, and she did a test run at Darlington Raceway in South Carolina, where she "pushed it a little... I took it probably too fast." She says that's the fastest she's driven, "up over 125." You could do that in a Suburban, but she says, "Yeah I know, but not on a tipped track, on the high lip of it!"

Back in Phoenix, she and her son both admit to photo radar tickets. So the only mother/son team in drifting also went to driving school together. She laughs and says that was fun, too.

Cindy McCain is also a licensed pilot. Business and politics led her to a lot of private flights around Arizona, which she hated. But she dealt with it by signing up for ground school, just to expand her comfort zone. She became so interested that she went ahead and got her license... without telling her husband. One day, she brought him to the airport, with "something to show you," and revealed her new skills. Did her auto racing take a similar path? "No, he knew we were doing that," she says.

She continues, "A large part of Bondurant and the other things I've done with my son has been... you know I had a stroke, and I think my son probably picked up on it quicker than I did, but it was a great deal about being able to put yourself back together and function again. My son really pushed me to get back out on the track and do things at Bondurant or wherever I could do it. The whole drift thing was post-stroke, and it was very helpful to me for self-esteem and self-confidence, because I had lost some mobility and lost some speech and things like that. It was a large part. Jack was very helpful to me in helping me put everything back together after the stroke."

"I went out the first time after the stroke, and Jack was with me, and I said I don't know if I can do this... I don't know if I should be here, and Jack said, 'Mom, get in the car, you know you feel at home in a car, you love this stuff, just do it, you'll feel great.' And I mean, by the end of that week, I couldn't have been better, I could not have been better! I felt so good about myself. It's about motor skills, it's about putting cognitive thinking, putting everything together, it's so fast, so it was very helpful to me."

Mrs. McCain has promised us a look at



INDYCAR AND ALT FUELS

Exceptionally high-performance cars being driven at exceptionally high speeds could easily conjure up an image of exceptionally high fuel consumption. With IndyCar, that is not the case. At least they're not gobbling up gasoline.

In short, the Indy Racing League (IRL) used traditional methanol racing fuel, standard in the sport since the mid-'60s. In 2005, the Ethanol Promotion and Information Council (EPIC) launched sponsorship of IRL, anxious to ease common misconceptions that ethanol offered poor performance and could be hazardous to engines. By 2006, the IRL was running a 90% methanol/10% ethanol mix. For 2007, the switch had gone all the way to 100% Fuel Grade Ethanol (nomenclature for what is actually 98% ethanol and 2% gasoline; the US government mandates that fuel alcohol must be unfit for human consumption, and additives also make the flames visible in case of fire).

Ethanol offers other advantages over methanol: it does not cause burns to the skin, fumes are less irritating, and pollution from spills is less hazardous.

IRL cars in 1997 produced about 700hp from a 4.0L methanol engine. In 2000, displacement dropped to 3.5L, reducing horsepower, but engine block variables were allowed. In 2004, following several serious crashes, displacement was mandated down again, to 3.0L. Ethanol brought less power, so displacement was increased to 3.5L, producing 650hp, to compensate. Ethanol also gets better fuel mileage, so fuel cell size was reduced, saving weight.

And ethanol is basically renewable. ■

OUR NASHVILLE TRIP

We booked one-stop flights to Nashville, something we almost always avoid, via Charlotte NC in both directions. We definitely scratched Tennessee off the list of states we'd never been to, though counting NC would be a stretch. The least expensive rental car, in the face of current runaway gas prices, was a big Ford Crown Vic. We didn't have far to drive, so the Bluesmobile was a win-win. Nashville Superspeedway is about 36 miles east-southeast of Nashville, with a Lebanon address, but nearer to Gladeville, depending who you talk to. We stayed in a roadside hotel officially in Lebanon, booked online, though we never saw the historic downtown. We did get to enjoy lunch at Nashville's beautifully restored Hermitage Hotel, where our interview was held. We never did find time to hit a Waffle House, though, even with one at about every exit, and that was a shame. ■



Top three photos: Joe Sage

Bottom four photos: Rendall Bohn Photography



another vehicle in the family fleet. "I'd love to have you come take a look at what my son has done with his Cadillac. He rebuilt the entire engine, and this thing is about 750-800hp. I've driven it a number of times, and it... is... hot. I mean this car, I'm really proud of him. It's too much car for the road, but it was great fun to watch him build it. I was out at the garage periodically when they were working on it. It's such a hot car, it's such a great car, it's just, oh my, it's just wonderful." We look forward to seeing it.

We talked about the large fleet of trucks operated by Hensley & Company, the impact of current fuel prices and the potential for use of alternative fuels. "Like everybody, we're struggling with this," Mrs. McCain says. "Our warehouses are green, we're building a new warehouse that is green, and we have every intention of greening the fleet completely. It's necessary and it's important, for the size of this kind of business that we're in, we have to, and we want to. But like everybody, we've got to find equipment that works for us, as well. So we're very much finding our way on this and very, very involved." We sketched out plans to follow up on this for our readers, too.

Cindy recalls the evolution of fuels in Indy racing (see sidebar). "It was a fire hazard, but it was also because there was a huge gas crunch in the '70s. Gas was at a premium and you couldn't get it, and in those races, you have just a certain amount of fuel. A large part of winning those races was not speed, but accuracy and the ability to stretch the gas in the car and how they drove, so it's a much different challenge for the driver."

By the time we arrived at Nashville Superspeedway for the race, the weather had turned ugly, and we found ourselves in a torrential downpour. It looked like it could go for days, but the clouds parted for tours of Gasoline Alley and the pits, Cindy McCain's pace car laps and the races themselves. Her track time rated a hearty "OMG."

The rain did come back. Chatting up race fans back at the motel, we found they were all big fans of Cindy McCain. And as is Mrs. McCain herself, they were all big fans of Danica Patrick (the highest finishing female driver in Indianapolis Speedway history). They were equally big fans of Janet Guthrie, the first woman to race in the Indy 500 (1977), and of Lyn St. James, the first woman to be Indy 500 Rookie of the Year (1992). Three of these four—McCain, Patrick and St. James—are Arizona ladies. Not bad. And no wonder the crowd was so receptive to Cindy McCain, Arizona motorsports ambassador extraordinaire. ■

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ALTERNATIVE FUELS & VEHICLES NATIONAL CONFERENCE & EXPO 2008 IN LAS VEGAS

going green

THE LATEST IN ALTERNATIVE FUEL VEHICLES

By HR Driver



Photo © Sjudin Photography LLC

Being a performance car enthusiast, I had reservations about attending the Alternative Fuels & Vehicles National Conference & Expo 2008 in Las Vegas, put on by the Alternative Fuel Vehicle Institute (AFVI). I wondered whether I could actually spend three whole days listening to environmentalists preach to me about miles per gallon, global warming and going green.

In my world, "going green" means that the starter just dropped the green flag and the race is on! In the environmentalist's world, "going green" means that you drive a Prius, recycle your tofu containers and live in a solar powered house. What could a car guy like me possibly have in common with these environmental greenies?

To my surprise, I found that I actually had a great deal in common with them. Upon entering the AF&V Conference hall, I spied Ryan Hunter-Rey's Indy car on display at the Ethanol booth. Yes, long before Ethanol E85 became the fuel of choice of the greenies, it was the fuel of choice of the Indy 500 race teams. Because it burns cleaner than gasoline and delivers excellent power, Ethanol has been used in race cars for over five decades. Scratch one myth: "Alternative fuel vehicles are slow and boring."

Down the aisle, there were also several dual-fuel high performance street machines. These are vehicles which can run on either gasoline or alternative fuel. Amazingly, the green car guys like fast machines, too. Kill another myth: "Greenies are environmental geeks who ride recumbent bicycles, wear goofy helmets and despise high performance cars."

The first street legal vehicle which came into view was a dual-fuel Ford F-150. It could run on either CNG (compressed natural gas) or gasoline. This awesome truck produces over 450 horsepower, yet it can run cleaner than 90% of the cars on the road when inhaling CNG. Yes, we are talking about the same CNG that heats your home. When compressed, CNG can be used in your street ride if said ride is converted to a dual-fuel system. At an average of \$1.67 per gallon, CNG is far cheaper than gasoline. However, an EPA-approved aftermarket CNG/gasoline system does cost about \$3,000. Thus, you had better install this dual-fuel system on a vehicle

Fuel and vehicle alternatives were presented at every turn, from the Rahal Letterman team's ethanol IndyCar (top) to Chevrolet's electric Volt. Emcee Annaloyd Thomason, Executive Director, AFVI, electrifies the crowd with her welcoming speech. Photos: HR Driver.



Where the roads are dry and the cars are slick.



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E85/gasoline alt-fuel vehicles

GM is leading the E85/gasoline hybrid parade with twenty new flex-fuel (dual-fuel) models, from Chevrolets to Hummers. However, Chrysler LLC is not far behind. As you may already know, E85 stands for 85% ethanol, which in the US is derived from crops such as corn, soybeans and switchgrass. Basically, E85 is a renewable resource which lessens our dependence on foreign oil. E85 also burns much cleaner than gasoline.

Recently there has been some flap over the increasing price of E85, spurred by the shortage of corn and corn's increasing price on the commodities markets. However, E85 may still be the best bet for many alternative fuel vehicle shoppers. Let's look at the facts.

First, E85/gasoline vehicles can use either pump gasoline or E85, so they're ready for when E85 becomes more widely available. Second, GM has invested heavily in an innovative E85 refinery, which can produce biofuel out of virtually anything. Expect E85 to be produced from switchgrass, and even garbage or old tires, using this method. Next, expect to see many national superstores work with GM to make E85 pumps available to you locally. Shell, Sinclair and several other smaller oil companies will also help consumers in accomplishing this. Finally, E85/gasoline dual-fuel vehicles cost little more than gasoline powered vehicles, so why not buy an E85/gasoline vehicle?

Biodiesel vehicles

Forget what you think you know about diesel cars and pickups. Today's diesels are clean, quiet, fuel-efficient and powerful. Audi has proven the performance capabilities of the new generation of diesel and biodiesel engines by winning the 24 Hours of Le Mans and the 12 Hours of Sebring races with their Audi TDI race cars.

Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen, Audi, BMW and Jeep all will offer fuel-efficient, clean turbo diesel vehicles in American in 2009. With over 50% of the vehicles in Europe using diesel power, it is about time that the USA got its fair share. Yes, diesel fuel is more expensive than gasoline at the moment; however, that could change in the future as biodiesel production increases in America.

Diesels have several other advantages over gasoline/electric hybrids, as well. First, they have no expensive battery packs to replace. Second, a diesel engine typically runs about twice as long as a

real-world driving in the Valley of the Sun. Why? With 100-plus-degree outside temperatures and frequent stop-and-go commuting, the hybrid's gas engine will be running much of the time here. However, even a 35 MPG average would be an improvement over most of our current vehicles.

Another factor to consider is the life of the expensive battery pack. While most auto manufacturers state that their battery packs will last for five to ten years, depending on the miles you drive annually, there is some concern that your MPG will drop as the batteries get older. Yes, like the battery in your cell phone, the batteries in hybrids will lose power over time and ultimately wear out. As they age, your MPG could drop. Unfortunately, gas/electric hybrids have not been on the road long enough for us to really know. That is the downside.

The upside for gas/electric hybrids is that many new hybrid models provide quick acceleration while still offering excellent MPG. A prime example of this would be the new Chevy Tahoe. It has a gasoline engine with 332 HP and 362 lb.ft. of torque, yet it gets an estimated 21 MPG city/22 MPG highway. Excellent for a full sized SUV.

Rest assured that the Asian and American manufacturers have thoroughly tested their new hybrids in all types of climates and over millions of miles. However, the daily diet of extreme temperatures we have in Arizona will put hybrid batteries to the test.

Electric vehicles

Unless you live in a retirement community, a pure electric vehicle is not for you. Vehicles like Chrysler's GEM are best suited for limited use as golf course and park maintenance vehicles. With their top speeds limited to 25-30 MPH, they are not intended for highway use. Perhaps in the future, as battery technology evolves, we may see an electric car with adequate performance and range for Phoenix commuters. But not today.

CNG vehicles

The Honda Motor Company received AFV's top award for Achievement in the Field of Alternative Fuel Vehicle Innovation. Their CNG-powered Civic GX was the primary reason. Honda's in-garage compression/filling system, affectionately known as "Phill," allows you to use the \$1.67-per-gallon natural gas, delivered to your home, to run the little critter. With fuel mileage in the 40 MPG range, this makes the CNG Civic GX an attractive proposition for folks who need a dedicated commuter car. However, it is not a dual-fuel gasoline/CNG car.

Actor and activist Ed Begley, Jr., has well-established green credentials. He even pushes the envelope by getting to many of his Hollywood appointments by bicycle. Begley was a keynote speaker at the AF&V Conference. Photo: HR Driver.

From foods red and green, to vehicles large and small, but all alternatively fueled, the AF&V Conference definitely offered something for everybody. Photos © Sjodin Photography LLC.

which you intend to keep for a long time.

Next in line was a dual-fuel Mustang GT which could run on either propane or petrol. While no more powerful than a gas-fed Mustang, this machine can be operated on propane, which costs about half the price of premium gasoline. One major advantage of a dual-fuel propane/gasoline vehicle is that propane is readily available throughout the country. Furthermore, a propane/gasoline dual-fuel system does not need the home-based compressing/fueling station which a CNG car requires.

What did we learn at the AF&V Conference? We learned that Kermit the frog was WRONG. "It IS EASY being green." We all have choices in our daily lives which can make the world cleaner and we can start with baby steps. Planting native desert plants conserves water. Using more efficient light bulbs saves power and fuel. Planning our shopping trips efficiently also saves fuel. Finally, we have choices when it comes to buying a clean, green commuter machine. Furthermore, a green car need not be slow or boring.

Selecting the right green vehicle for you

The one thing upon which all of the car manufacturers and greenies agree is that there is no single alternative fuel vehicle which is right for everyone. Since green car technology is in its infancy, you need to examine all of the alternatives and select the car which is best for you. Among the new cars on the market, you have many choices. Gasoline/electric hybrids. Electric cars. Gasoline/E85 dual-fuel cars. CNG cars. Clean diesel cars.

Gasoline/electric hybrids

While the Toyota Prius and Honda Civic are long the darlings of the set, Ford, Mercury, Chevrolet, Saturn, Cadillac and Lexus are all offering gas/electric hybrids in 2009.

Gasoline/electric hybrids use an electric motor to conserve gasoline when operating in poky commuter traffic, then switch to their gasoline engine when operating at higher speeds.

While cars like the Honda Civic hybrid get an EPA estimated 40 MPG city/45 MPG highway, most owners will not see this in





Proof positive that green is not boring, as our gearhead author quickly learned. Alternative fuel vehicles are not just for running a 5-mile errand, as evidenced by everything from large commercial rigs to high-performance Mustangs and IndyCars. A green event also offers its own thrills, from poolside resort dining to an exotic fire dance. Photos © Sjodin Photography LLC.

gasoline engine before it needs a major engine overhaul. This is due to the fact that diesel engines must have stronger internal components to withstand their high compression. Finally, diesels operate at lower RPMs than gasoline engines; thus their city MPG is almost as good as their highway MPG. It is not unusual to find a VW Jetta TDi owner who gets 35 MPG city/40 MPG highway, even while running the air conditioner on high.

Which is best for the long haul?

If you plan to keep your car for over 100,000 miles, there is little question that a clean biodiesel engine is your best investment. Of all the owners of hybrids and alternative fuel vehicles who were surveyed by JD Power and Associates in 2006, the Mercedes-Benz E320 CDI (turbo diesel) was the car which came closest to meeting the owners' expectation of fuel mileage. However, the Mercedes E320 is a bit pricey, so you might consider a VW, Audi or BMW turbo diesel as an alternative.

For a single-purpose, dedicated commuter car, go with the Civic CNG if you have natural gas running to your house. The Civic's garage buddy "Phill" will cut your fuel costs IN HALF. Remember, you are buying fuel from a public utility, not big oil. Enough said?

For those of you who need a large SUV, the Chevy Tahoe Hybrid, Cadillac Escalade Hybrid or Jeep Grand Cherokee with the Mercedes 3.0 V-6 turbo diesel option may be your best bets. We recently ran the Jeep diesel to California at highway speeds of 75-85 MPG and registered 22 MPG. Perhaps not great by Toyota Prius standards, but excellent real world mileage for a 4WD SUV which can tow over 7,000 pounds. (This mileage result did not include towing.)

For those of you who own a full-size pickup and are getting eaten alive by fuel bills, our advice to you is: "Hang in there until 2010." If you can tough it out, both Ford and Dodge expect to offer fuel-efficient, small-block diesels as an option. These will provide much better fuel economy and will last far longer than their gasoline engine counterparts. Buy one of these trucks, service it regularly and drive it until it dies. Amen. ■



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EcoBoost combines direct injection with turbocharging that uses waste energy from the exhaust gas, delivering the power and performance of a larger engine with up to a 20% increase in fuel economy and a 15% reduction in CO₂ emissions.

Ford Explorer America concept



The Ford Explorer America concept delivers an approximately 20 to 30 percent fuel-economy improvement, while providing room for six and their gear plus moderate towing and off-roading capabilities.

Ford's approach to sustainable vehicles in this concept includes:

- A 4-cylinder 2-liter EcoBoost engine delivering 275 hp and 280 lb.-ft. of torque, or a premium 3.5-liter V-6 with 340 hp. Fuel-efficiency improves 20 to 30 percent versus today's V-6 Explorer
- Migration from current body-on-frame to unibody construction, reducing weight and delivering superior driving dynamics
- A fuel-efficient 6-speed transmission with auto shift control, so the driver can select and hold a lower gear at the turn of a dial
- Weight reduction of 150 pounds for the V-6 version with its new lighter but more powerful engine plus more lightweight materials, suspension and chassis components
- Electric power assisted steering (EPAS) and other engine actions that deliver fuel savings of about 5 percent. 80 to 90 percent of Ford vehicles will have EPAS by 2012
- Aerodynamic and parasitic improvements that add up to a 5 percent fuel economy

Ford is preparing to equip half a million vehicles with its new EcoBoost engine technology. EcoBoost is a new, affordable high-volume engine technology slated for a range of global vehicles, from small cars to large trucks.

EcoBoost uses gasoline turbocharged direct-injection technology for up to 20 percent better fuel economy, 15 percent lower CO₂ emissions and superior driving performance compared to traditional larger displacement engines.

The Ford Explorer America concept, revealed at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit last winter, showcases EcoBoost combined with other sustainability features. The EcoBoost family of 4-cylinder and 6-cylinder engines features turbocharging and direct injection technology. Unlike more expensive hybrids and diesel engines, EcoBoost builds upon today's gasoline engine.

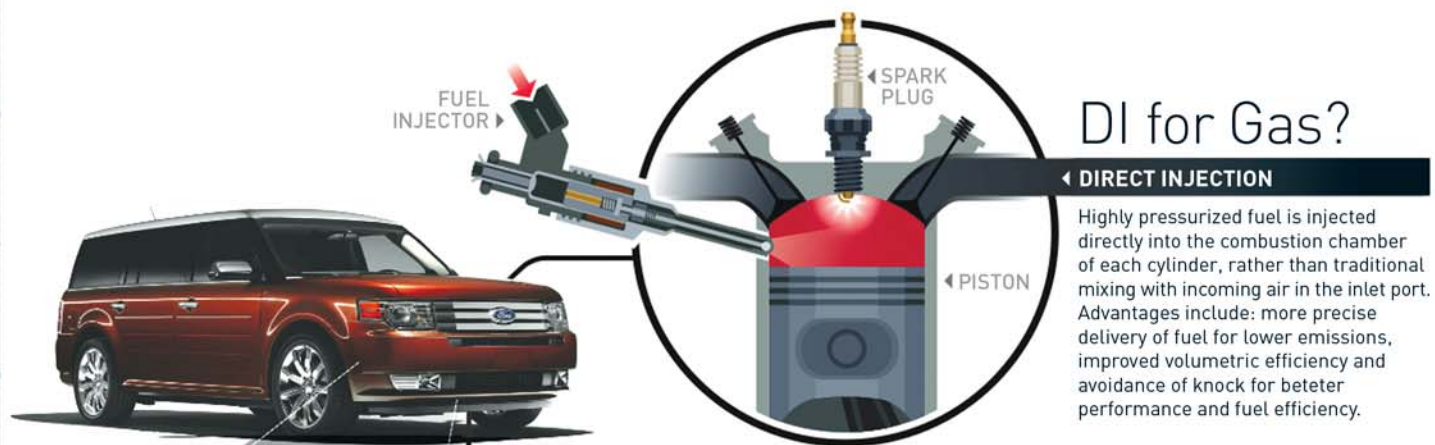
Ford will introduce EcoBoost on the new Lincoln MKS flagship in 2009, followed by the Ford Flex and other vehicles. By 2013, Ford will have more than half a million EcoBoost-powered vehicles on the road annually in North America. For 2009, EcoBoost on the Lincoln MKS will feature a 3.5-liter twin-turbocharged V-6. It will

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MORE WITH LESS

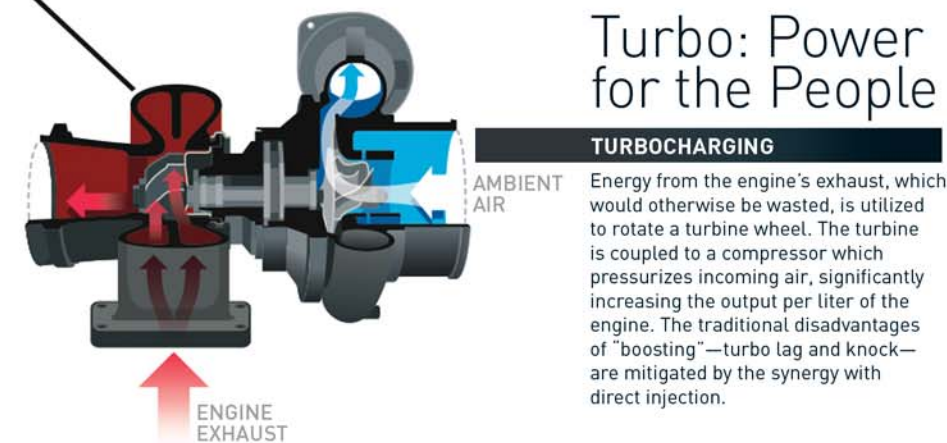
Better fuel economy? Up to 20%. And more power. Even with advanced technologies, Ford anticipates the majority of vehicles worldwide will be gasoline powered. That's millions. Ford's new gas-turbo direct-injection engines can help. Here's how Ford's **EcoBoost** does more with less:



$6 = 8, 4 = 6$

SMALLER ENGINE BLOCK

With both factors in the equation, the EcoBoost 6-cylinder engine can produce like an 8; a 4, like a 6. In addition, Ford's 6-speed transmission (available on Ford Edge, and first-in-class for Fusion, Taurus and Taurus X) promises smoother acceleration and better economy. Go farther. Use less.



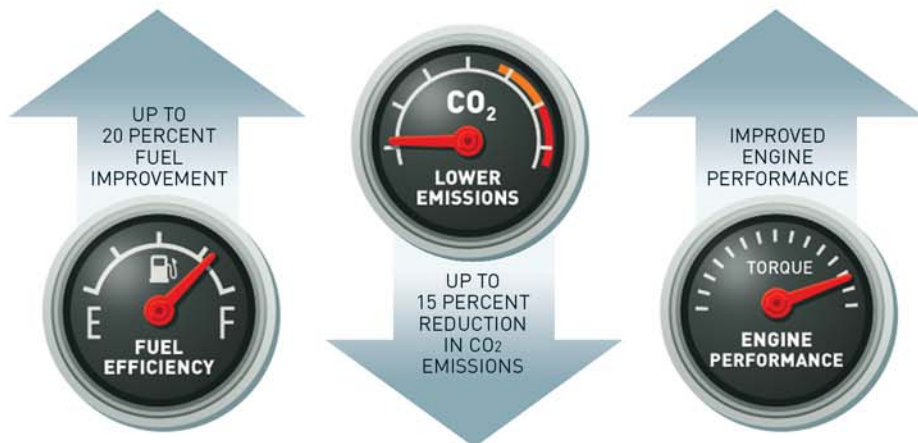
Turbo: Power for the People

TURBOCHARGING

Energy from the engine's exhaust, which would otherwise be wasted, is utilized to rotate a turbine wheel. The turbine is coupled to a compressor which pressurizes incoming air, significantly increasing the output per liter of the engine. The traditional disadvantages of "boosting"—turbo lag and knock—are mitigated by the synergy with direct injection.

Fatter Wallet

With EcoBoost's more efficient use of fuel, drivers should experience fewer trips to the gas pump, while not having to sacrifice performance in order to make the world a better place for all of us.



With Ford EcoBoost direct injection, fuel is injected into each cylinder of an engine in small, precise amounts. Compared to conventional port injection, direct injection produces a cooler, denser charge, delivering higher fuel economy and performance.

produce the power and torque of a V-8 engine with the fuel efficiency of a V-6. With an estimated 340-horsepower and more than 340 lb.-ft. of torque, the Lincoln MKS will be the most powerful and fuel-efficient all-wheel-drive luxury sedan in the market.

EcoBoost's combination of direct injection and turbocharging mitigates the traditional disadvantages of downsizing and boosting 4- and 6-cylinder engines, giving customers both superior performance as well as fuel economy. With direct injection, fuel is injected into each cylinder of an engine in small, precise amounts. Compared to conventional port injection, direct injection produces a cooler, denser charge, delivering higher fuel economy and performance.

Ford's 3.5-liter EcoBoost V-6, for example, can deliver about 340-plus lb.ft. of torque across a wide engine range—2,000 to 5,000 rpm—versus 270 to 310 lb.ft. of torque for a conventional naturally-aspirated 4.6-liter V-8 over the same speed range. At the same time, this V-6 gives an approximate 2 mpg improvement and emits up to 15 percent less CO₂.

Direct injection coupled with turbocharging allows for the downsizing of engines, as well. A small 4-cylinder EcoBoost engine produces more torque than a conventional 4-cylinder engine nearly an entire liter larger in displacement—with better fuel efficiency.

The real-world fuel economy benefit is consistent no matter the drive cycle, meaning the engine is efficient in the city as well as on the highway—unlike hybrids, which are most efficient in stop-and-go traffic. In addition, customers who tow and haul—and have long turned to expensive diesel powertrains for their superior towing capabilities—can find the torque they seek from this powertrain.

Combined with multi-speed transmissions, advanced electric power steering, weight reductions and aerodynamic improvements, EcoBoost is part of Ford's strategy. Despite the comparisons just made, Ford has additional hybrids and diesels planned. Longer term, Ford plans to remain aggressive in the development of plug-in hybrids and hydrogen fuel cell-powered vehicles.

"We know that what will make the biggest difference is applying the right technology on volume vehicles that customers really want and value and can afford," says Derrick Kuzak, Ford's group vice president of Global Product Development. "EcoBoost puts an affordable technology within reach for millions of customers." ■

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THE DAILY NEWS

Last Cruise Nite of the season brings crowd for classic car nostalgia (Santa Paula Times)

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NEW VEHICLES : DODGE AND CHRYSLER HEMI® HYBRIDS**Hemi® Hybrid: oxymoronic genius****By Bill Schaffer**

The term "Hemi Hybrid" would seem like it might be the automotive dichotomy of the year. When we think Hemi®, we think big, powerful V-8 performance. When we think Hybrid, we think sedate fuel sipper. The two just don't go together, or do they?

In a perfect green world, everyone probably would drive some sort of sensible small or midsize car, but it's never going to be perfect, because some people need larger vehicles to carry their family and friends, pull a boat or horse trailer, or perform some other function that requires a larger, more powerful vehicle.

Chrysler planners must have thought, "If the big SUVs are using the most gas, wouldn't

speed electric continuously variable transmission modes and a sophisticated fuel-saving system that incorporates four fixed-gear ratios for efficient power-handling capabilities. Electric motors in the system can be used for acceleration, improving fuel economy or for regenerative braking utilizing the energy that would normally be lost during braking. Excess energy is stored in batteries for later use.

At low speeds and with a light load, the system can operate on electric power only, gas engine power only or a combination of the two. At highway speeds, the hybrid system can assist the gas engine for extra acceleration power, pulling a trailer or climbing a steep grade. With a light foot on the accelerator, the Hemi Hybrid will stay in the all-electric mode up to 25-28 mph. When decelerating the gas engine will switch off and go back to the electric-only mode at 25 mph.

The vehicles can tow trailers up to 6,000 pounds, plus they are equipped with an Electronic Stability Program with Electronic Roll Mitigation and Trail Sway Control.

The system operates seamlessly, so it is nearly impossible to feel the changes taking place, although these changes can be seen on the hybrid display screen of the navigation system. There is also an instrument, to the right of the speedometer, that indicates the level of electric, hybrid and gas activity.

The complex system mounts easily within the confines of the vehicle engine compartment and under the floorboard. A 300-volt battery pack fits under the second row passenger seat with no compromising of the passenger space.

Official EPA fuel economy estimates have not been published, but Chrysler says the gas Hemi figures of 13 mpg city and 18 mpg highway are increased by 40 percent in city driving and 25 percent overall with the new Hemi Hybrid (which would equal about 18 mpg city and perhaps approaching 22 mpg highway).

Both Hybrid vehicles get top model equipment levels, with standard features like MyGIG Entertainment with navigation and hard drive, leather-trimmed seating, heated front seats, Rear Park Assist System, ParkView™ rear backup camera and more.

Prices start at \$45,340 for the Dodge Durango Hemi Hybrid and \$45,570 for the Chrysler Aspen Hemi Hybrid, including an \$800 destination charge, with only a few options available. Hybrid prices are about \$3,600 more than a similarly equipped gasoline model, but they are nearly \$8,000 lower than competitive full-size hybrid SUVs. Buyers are expected to receive an estimated \$1,800 tax credit. The hybrid electrical components are under an 8-year, 100,000 mile warranty, while the rest of the mechanicals are under the Chrysler Lifetime Warranty. ■

THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS



Ford Flex

Stamp collectors and car lovers will want to make a special trip to the post office when a new series of **stamps** is issued starting October 3. Five new 42-cent stamps will have pictures of classic American cars from the 1950s including the 1957 Chrysler 300C, Lincoln Premiere, Pontiac Safari, Studebaker Golden Hawk

and 1959 Cadillac Eldorado. **Ford** North American design chief Peter Horbury says his department is already working on the restyling of the Ford Flex, just as shipments of the first Flex are arriving at dealerships. Horbury said the idea is to keep their vehicles fresh and exciting before they have a chance to get stale. The new design timeline is set at three years instead of the normal five-year cycle.

Infiniti has developed a system to keep your new car smelling new, even if, for example, a bag of French fries rots under a seat or even if someone smokes in the car. The new Plasmacluster Filtration system runs constantly ionizing and deodorizing the cabin area. Installed first in the upcoming FX50 the system works by charging the particulate matter floating around the cabin. Once particles are charged, the smells affix to water molecules in the air and then that ionized residue is pulled through a filter that never needs replacing.



Lincoln MKT concept

Ford is delaying the introduction of the 2009 model F-150 pickups to give dealers time to sell down existing inventory. The market for larger vehicles has declined with the high gas prices and Ford plans to cut third-quarter production by 50,000 units. Look for the new model late this fall.

Ford announced plans to equip nearly all its vehicles with 6-speed transmissions by 2012. The company will more than double the number of North American vehicles with the fuel-efficient transmissions and said the transmissions should boost fuel economy by 4 to 6 percent. The first change will occur in the 2009 model Ford Escape and Mercury Mariner crossovers, in which the new 6-speed automatic will replace the current 4-speed.

Audi plans to challenge the Mercedes-Benz CLS and BMW 8-Series with their new A7 "four-door coupe". The lower volume niche vehicle is based on elements of the next generation A6 platform with a variety of engine choices including a



Audi Q5

supercharged V-6, turbocharged V-8 and a twin-turbocharged 5.2-liter V10 engine rated at 600 hp for an RS7 version. There may also be a 4-door convertible version.

The next generation **Ford** Mustang, due in 2010, will be about the same size as the current Mustang but will look smaller. "By cleverness in design, we've been able to make it look like the wheels are further out, further forward and further rearward," said Peter Horbury, Ford's North American design director.

A small front-wheel-drive **Chevrolet** sedan has been spotted testing in Europe. The yet to be named car is expected to replace the Cobalt in 2009 as a 2010 model. It is powered by a turbocharged 1.4-liter 4-cylinder engine and is being developed on the new GM global compact vehicle architecture.



Mercedes-Benz CL550 4Matic

Normally a \$3,000 option, 4Matic all-wheel drive will be standard equipment on the 2009 **Mercedes-Benz** CL550. The big coupe is based on the short wheelbase version of the S-Class sedan (not available in the US). 4Matic adds security in wintery or slippery conditions, but only adds 145 pounds to the overall weight and without affecting the EPA fuel economy.

BMW plans to bring nearly 500 electric MINIs to California for testing and demonstrations. The pure electric cars will be painted silver with yellow roofs. BMW sources are reported to have told European press that 490 of the MINIs will be leased and the others will be used as show cars. The cars are part of Project I, which will help BMW meet new California regulations that require carmakers selling cars in the state to offer zero emission vehicles. No dates we announced.

Jaguar appears to be testing an XF-R version. Spotted at the Goodwood Festival of Speed, the XF-R is rumored to be powered by a 5.0-liter supercharged V-8 with around 500 horsepower. We may see it in showrooms as early as next year.



Jaguar XF

Watch for the 2010 **BMW** Z4 to get a retractable folding hardtop. There will also be some new engines for the BMW 2-seater including a 3.0-liter twin-turbo inline 6-cylinder and possibly a diesel option in Europe. The M version is likely to get the V-8 engine from the M3.

When **Kia** replaces their midsize Spectra next summer, plans call for a coupe in addition to the sedan. It will be based on the Koup Concept shown at the New York auto show earlier this year. The sedan will come first with the coupe coming a few months later. Kia is hoping a new look styling will attract new buyers.

Skyrocketing gas prices has caused **Hyundai** and **Kia** to cancel planned pickups for the US market. The trucks were expected to be front-wheel drive, V-6 powered and built on a mid-size unibody platform at the new Kia plant in Georgia.

Volkswagen is working out the final bugs on an ultrasonic-based parking system that allows the driver to automatically park the car even while standing on the sidewalk watching. The "Park Assist Vision" system is expected to be an option in various models including the new Tiguan

SUV and Passat. To perform this feat, PAV uses cameras and ultrasonic sensors to guide an electro-mechanical steering system, while a computer determines the size of the parking space.

Ford is rumored to be working on a unibody platform pickup to help the company and customers deal with the high fuel prices. Engine choices would likely be a turbocharged 4-cylinder or V-6 and the size would probably be significantly smaller than the current F-150. The work is underway under the code-name P525 and speculate that the F-100 badge may be brought back for the new truck. Production could be as soon as 2011.

Engines planned for the upcoming **Chevrolet** Camaro include a little of everything from a turbocharged direct-injection (260-hp) four-cylinder (from the Pontiac Solstice GXP and Saturn Sky Red Line), a direct-injection 3.6-liter V-6 (about 300-hp) and a 6.2-liter V-8 with at



Kia Koup concept

least 400 horsepower.

Toyota is setting up a battery research department to develop the next generation battery after the lighter, more powerful lithium ion battery scheduled to be introduced in 2010. The new department will start with a staff of 50 and that number will be doubled in two year. The next generation battery may take until 2030.

General Motors is expected to switch the Chevrolet Tahoe and GMC Yukon SUVs to lighter, more fuel-efficient platforms. The present vehicles will "fade away in their present form" to adapt more efficient models. The future of the larger Suburban and Escalade is unclear, because larger families and people who pull larger trailers will still need vehicles like those. ■

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*.



Craig Rust, president of Watkins Glen International, and Terry Angstadt, president of the Commercial Division for the Indy Racing League announce an energy partnership between WGI and JUICE in Gatorade Victory Lane, with a show version of the #17 Ethanol Rahal Letterman Racing Dallara car driven by Ryan Hunter-Reay.

Watkins Glen International goes green with wind power

JUICE ENERGY HELPS THE GLEN RACE TO A FUTURE OF GREENER, LOWER-PRICED ELECTRICITY

Watkins Glen International, the historic racetrack in New York's Finger Lakes region, will soon be leading the way toward reducing their carbon footprint with the help of Juice Energy. The 60-year-old raceway, known worldwide as "The Glen," has signed a new contract with Juice in an effort to lower ever-rising electricity costs and limit the track's impact on the environment.

Juice Energy, Inc. is a New York-based electricity supplier that utilizes unique methodologies to deliver electricity to their clients at the lowest possible rates. By constantly monitoring the energy markets, Juice creates custom solutions that bring the advantages of electricity competition to

clients. At the same time, Juice offers clients access to renewable energy sources such as wind and solar power, making them a popular choice for businesses looking to curb their environmental impact.

The new deal will cover all of The Glen's electricity needs for the next three years. In addition, the track will become one of the first motorsports facilities in North America to adopt a greener electricity strategy with the purchase of wind power equal to 100% of their annual electric use. The green power purchase effectively offsets the track's electricity related greenhouse gas emissions.

Craig Rust, President of Watkins Glen International, said the decision was an easy

one: "It's not everyday that we find a new business partner that brings as much to the table as Juice. We're going to enjoy savings on electricity and take a major step forward in our plan to become a greener track."

"Millions of people have enjoyed races at The Glen over the past 60 years. We're really excited about our new involvement with this particular partner," said Brian Hayduk, co-founder of Juice. "Our main priority is customer service, so we'll probably have to stop by on race days to see how our strategies are working."

Tickets and information are available via the Watkins Glen International ticket office at 866-461-RACE or www.TheGlen.com. ■

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UPCOMING FEATURES

Monterey 2008: multiple auctions, multiple shows, vintage racing



We'll bring you highlights from the Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance, Concorso Italiano, Russo and Steele, Gooding & Company and RM Auctions, and Tim Sharp's Monterey Historic Races entry at Laguna Seca.

BMW 128i promises pure performance in a petite package



BMW's newest and smallest coupe fills a new niche for some, while it recreates the earlier 3 Series' (or even the 2002's) original niche for others. We'll spend a week with the 128i and see how it tackles its heritage, the BMW lineup and the pump.

Volvo C30 serves up safety and style in a smaller size



Small is definitely big. We'll spend another week with this Volvo hatch, which to some recalls Volvo's P1800 Sportswagen of the '60s and '70s. The C30 is one of several vehicles finally connecting Americans to hatchbacks.

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