

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 10 NUMBER 1
JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2011

AUCTIONS

BARRETT-JACKSON
GOODING & COMPANY
RM AUCTIONS
RUSSO AND STEELE

EVENTS

BRIGHTON CLASSIC CAR RALLY
NASCAR AT PIR
GOODGUYS SW NATIONALS
COLORADO LAND ROVER TREK

VEHICLES

NEW JEEP LINEUP
LEXUS CT 200h
CORVETTE Q5 CONVERTIBLE
FORD EXPLORER
LINCOLN MKX
FORD FIESTA 5-DOOR
NISSAN MAXIMA
AUDI Q5
AUDI A5 CABRIOLET



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"THE V7 IS THE FINEST I HAVE EVER SEEN — THE BEST OF THE BEST.
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- Kip Wasenko
GM Performance Design Director



1963 CORVETTE - VIN 30837S111289

V7 twin turbo mid-engine Corvette
(7th Generation)

Winner of the automotive industries coveted GM Design Award, the highly styled 1963 Stingray split window coupe body has been cab-forwarded 24" and widened 10". Active air ducts feed the 1000 hp twin turbo V8 and aid brake cooling and ground effects. Based on mid-engine GT architecture the V7 incorporates a custom tube frame with adjustable Penske race suspension.

Entering the V7's cockpit is handled by a unique "sucislide" articulating door system. All deck lids open electrically. The leather wrapped interior redesign features all state of the art components.

Selling at the Scottsdale 2011 auction.

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THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

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COVER: The 2011 collector car auctions are here. On the cover is RM's display last year at the beautiful Biltmore Resort. Photo courtesy RM Auctions, Inc.



Photo: Randall Bohi

Photo: Randall Bohi

Cars, SUVs and trucks galore. Special events. Road trips. Road trips to drive cars and SUVs. It's all here, from a trek to New Orleans to try out the all-new Lexus CT 200h hybrid, the latest in their annual hybrid cycle but a very new concept for the brand this time, to San Diego for the Ford Explorer. We'd been to Dearborn last summer to be among the first to see the new Explorer (and ride along with engineers in a heavily masked pre-production model); now we tried the real thing, on- and seriously off-road.

Locally, we spent a week at a time with two Nissans, the extremely high-value Maxima and Altima, with two Audis, the sporty A5 quattro Cabriolet and the Q5 2.0T quattro, our second Ford Fiesta, this time the 5-Door Hatch, and a prize on the Corvette price scale, the Grand Sport convertible. We also gave the Mercedes-Benz E350 Cabriolet another run, this time locally (we'd originally driven it at launch in the Great Smoky Mountains), with special attention to the AIRCAP® and AIRSCARF® features.

Presented but not driven were three highly-updated products from Jeep®: they brought the new Grand Cherokee, Patriot and Wrangler to us in Paradise Valley, along with key engineers and marketers, to point out major improvements they've been making while being fairly quiet the last year or so.

Brighton Motorsports invited us along on their 3rd Annual Classic Car Rally, even providing the hardware: a low-mileage 1968 Jaguar XKE Roadster, which we raised the mileage on just a bit.

Round it all out with a ride in the Goodyear Blimp before PIR's NASCAR weekend, a look back at that week and weekend at PIR, the Goodguys SW Nationals, representing the first time the event opened and closed its series in Arizona, and an overview of some of the wonders set to cross the various auction blocks here in January.



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@arizonadrivermagazine.com

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Finely Tuned Instruments

Audi North Scottsdale introduces the all-new 2011 Audi A8 at MIM



The MIM

The Audi A8 evening included a performance by the Chestnut Brass Company. The group has its roots on the streets of Philadelphia, but they now take a combination of talent, skill, historical knowledge and lighthearted entertainment on tours worldwide. They bring to life an entire timeline of military buglers, minstrels and bands, as sounds were combined, instruments refined and actual scores written, playing and displaying instruments that are among only two or three examples in the world. For more information, visit www.chestnutbrass.com.

The Musical Instrument Museum, a new gem in the Valley, is an energetic cultural and musical venue—part Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, part Lincoln Center, part Smithsonian and completely its own animal—where the young, the old, the uninitiated and the knowledgeable can explore the rich diversity of the world's music and musical instruments. MIM has musical instruments from every country in the world, preserved, protected and ready to share. Museum guests enjoy a close encounter with the instruments, with state-of-the-art audio and video that offer the sounds and sights of these instruments as experienced in their cultures of origin. The MIM theater has live performances of music from every corner of the globe in an intimate, comfortable environment with superb acoustics, among the best we've ever heard.

The museum is on the corner of Tatum and Mayo Boulevards, just south of Loop 101 in north Phoenix.

MIM
 4725 East Mayo Boulevard
 Phoenix AZ 85050
 480-478-6000
www.themim.org

Be it this Audi A8 air suspension strut or the fine brass baritone at right, a finely engineered instrument is music to the human ear. And don't these two make a pair, as Audi North Scottsdale revealed the all-new 2011 Audi A8 luxury sedan at the spectacular new Musical Instrument Museum in north Phoenix. (They held similar events at the Rhythm & Wine Restaurant and at the Westin Kierland Resort & Spa a few days before and after this one.)



The Audi A8 'bahn-burning sedan blends innovation, performance and luxury. For 2011, new prices start at \$78,050 for the normal wheelbase model, or \$84,000 for the long wheelbase.

The base price for the Audi flagship includes an 8-speed Tiptronic® transmission and next-gen Audi MMI® system with exclusive touch technology and handwriting recognition for multime-

dia, navigation and communications commands. The A8 comes with quattro all-wheel-drive and aluminum ASF® construction. Available is a 1400-watt Bang & Olufsen® Advanced Sound System with 19 speakers, fully incorporated into the structure from the earliest stages of development.

There are a variety of other premium comfort, convenience and entertainment packages available. Audi North Scottsdale General Manager Mark Reicks expects most models, with typical options, to run about \$90-93,000.

For more information:
 Audi North Scottsdale
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Firebird Raceway 2011 Schedule

Elevation of NHRA Arizona Nationals to Playoff Race and two Lucas Oil Off Road Races highlight busy 2011 calendar

Long the star of Firebird International Raceway's early season, the 2011 NHRA Arizona Nationals moves to fall, ensuring the race a spot in the six-race Points Countdown—the sport's equivalent of championship playoffs.

After its Firebird Raceway December debut on a newly remodeled off-road track, the Lucas Oil Off Road Racing Series returns in March for the first of two 2011 races at Firebird. The year also includes two Lucas Oil Drag Boat Series events, the annual Monster Trucks event, and the Super Chevy Show, which returned to Firebird in 2010 after a nearly eight-year hiatus. The action begins in early February and continues all year.

February 17-20: NHRA Division 7 Series Opener

Teams look for early-season momentum at one of the largest events in the country, in classes from Alcohol Funny Cars to Gas, Super Street and more.

March 19-20: Lucas Oil Off Road Racing Series

Short-course off road racing with West Coast influence, LOORRS brings intense four-wheel door-to-door action.

March 27: BUGORAMA

America's longest-running VW event: drag racing, the world's largest VW-only swap meet, show & shine, more.

April TBD: AHDRA Nationals

All-Harley Drag Racing Association: 15 different classes from 230-mph Top Fuel bikes to ET class.

April 30: NAPA Auto Parts Monster Truck Nationals

One of Arizona's largest fields of Monster Trucks, competing side-by-side in all-out freestyle competition, plus some of the world's fastest jet cars at almost 300 mph.

May 27-29: Lucas Oil Drag Boat May Fest

The liquid quarter mile at Firebird Lake plays host to the first of two visits from the Lucas Oil Drag Boat Series.

October 14-16: NHRA Arizona Nationals

A critical Points Countdown race toward determining 2011 world champions, with Top Fuel, Funny Car and Pro Stock divisions. NHRA's motorcycle class also debuts.

October 29-30: The Super Chevy Show

Hot rods and customs, a huge vendor midway, hundreds of show cars, and awards from *Super Chevy Magazine*.

November 17-20: NAPA Auto Parts World Finals

Firebird Lake hosts the end-of-season showdown in the Lucas Oil Drag Boat Racing season as Top Fuel Hydros, Top Alcohol Hydros, Pro Modified, Pro Gas Flats and more battle it out at nearly 250mph.

December 10-11: Lucas Oil Off Road Racing Series

After opening their season at Firebird, the daring competitors of the LOORRS will end their season at Firebird as well. Championships are decided as the dirt flies.

For more information, visit firebirdraceway.com. ■



Photos: Joe Sage

The 4th Annual Wheels of Wellness Charity Event

Racing Greats Dario Franchitti, Danica Patrick, Bobby Rahal and Denise McCluggage: teen and family cancer support programs benefit from exclusive, world-class showcase

The Wellness Community, 360 E. Palm Lane in downtown Phoenix: 11am-3pm, Sunday, January 16, 2011

Now in its fourth year, Wheels of Wellness has become a much-anticipated gathering of racing luminaries and car aficionados that kicks off Arizona Auction Week, a series of events that draws car enthusiasts from across the nation and throughout the world. The event is the brainchild of a small group of Phoenix and Scottsdale business executives who are avid vintage car collectors and drivers, and whose lives have been touched by cancer. 2009 IndyCar Series Champion Dario Franchitti and Danica Patrick, the first woman to win an IndyCar race, are among the racing greats who will participate in a Legends of Motorsports panel. The event, title sponsored by GoDaddy.com, the world's largest Web hosting provider and top domain name registrar, will also feature Lyn St. James, the first female Indy 500 Rookie of the Year, who will serve as moderator for the panel discussion. The panel will include such female racing luminaries as Denise McCluggage and Desiré Wilson. Justin Bell, son of celebrated racing driver Derek Bell, will also attend. Celebrities, racecar owners and sponsors are donating their time and talents to help raise funds to support programs provided by The Wellness Community—Arizona for teens with cancer and families impacted by cancer.

GUESTS: Among the racing greats who have been invited to appear at the event are:

- Two-time Indianapolis 500 winner and 2009/2007 IndyCar Series Champion Dario Franchitti
- Danica Patrick, the first woman to win an IndyCar race and star of 2009's most watched Super Bowl commercial
- Lyn St. James, the first woman to win the Indianapolis 500 Rookie of the Year award
- Noted auto racing driver, journalist, author and photographer Denise McCluggage
- Desiré Wilson, the only woman in history to win a Grand Prix race (the Aurora series)
- Justin Bell, FIA GT2 champion, Trans Am Rookie of the Year, correspondent for Jay Leno's Garage and for ALMS
- Bobby Rahal, winner of three championships and 24 CART open-wheel races, including the 1986 Indianapolis 500

WOMEN IN THE WINNER'S CIRCLE EXHIBIT: A special highlight will be an exclusive preview of the Women in the Winner's Circle Exhibit, which will subsequently tour the nation. Presented in partnership with The Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan, the 600-square-foot exhibit documents the extraordinary history and accomplishments of women in motorsports. Included are personal artifacts from significant drivers, an interactive kiosk and informational panels documenting the accomplishments of women drivers in racing since 1903.

HISTORIC RACECARS: Stroll among a world-class display of more than two dozen rare, exquisite vintage racecars. This year's special focus is on American-built racecars from the '50s and '60s, plus rare, vintage motorcycles. Racecars include:

- Lance Reventlow's dominating 1958 Scarab Mk1 (chassis #1)
- An original 1962 Chaparral I (Hall/Sharp Road America 500 winner)
- 1958 Echidna, 1 of 3 ever built ('59 SCCA national champion)
- 1962 Ol' Yeller VIII (built by Max Balchowsky)
- 1951 "Fabulous" Hudson Hornet stock car
- 1963 Ford Galaxie stock car (Dan Gurney's Riverside winner)
- 1964 McLaren-Elva MKIA (Cro-Sal Special)
- 1971 Alfa Romeo Tipo 33/3 (5th at the Targa Florio)
- 1976 IROC Camaro (A.J. Foyt)

TICKETS: Showcase entry tickets are \$75, with \$50 of this amount tax-deductible. There is limited availability, so RSVP as soon as possible. To purchase tickets, contact Stephanie DiStefano at 602-712-1006 or sdistefano@twc-caz.org. For more information about the event or to purchase tickets online, visit wheelsofwellness.org. ■

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AUDI WILL BRING TT RS TO US

Audi has confirmed plans to bring the TT RS to the US market by the third quarter of 2011. The decision was made after a US Facebook petition gathered more than 11,500 signatures in one month asking Audi to offer the high performance sports car in North America. The TT RS is powered by a turbocharged 2.5-liter TFSI, five-cylinder engine rated at 360 horsepower and 332-lb.ft. of torque. It is paired with a six-speed manual transmission and quattro® all-wheel drive to achieve a 0-60 mph time of 4.6 seconds. The lightweight body featuring Audi Space Frame ASF® aluminum construction produces a low drag coefficient of 0.32. ▼



Audi TT RS

2011 Neiman Marcus Chevrolet Camaro



CHEVY PUTS TOP DOWN ON CAMARO

Preparing for a sunny spring, Chevrolet is rolling the all-new Camaro Convertible into the Chevrolet dealers across the country for February delivery. The convertible will offer the same model configurations as the Camaro coupe. The standard model will have a 312-horsepower direct injection V6 engine delivering 29 mpg highway. The SS model will feature the 6.2L V8 engine producing 426 horsepower. A six-speed manual transmission will be standard, with an optional six-speed automatic. Camaro convertible will be available in 1LT/2LT (V6) and 1SS/2SS (V8) trim packages, priced from \$30,000 MSRP (including an \$850 destination fee). Nine production exterior colors are available, with tops offered in black or tan. Rear parking assist is standard on all convertible models, which is extremely helpful since rear visibility is usually quite poor in convertibles with the top up.

CAMARO CONVERTIBLE FOR CHRISTMAS

▲ Neiman Marcus picked the all-new Chevrolet Camaro Convertible as the showcase car in the 2010 "Christmas Book." Only 100 special edition convertibles were to be built, in an exclusive Deep Bordeaux exterior color, accented by subtle, "ghosted" rally stripes. The car is equipped with a 6.2-liter V8 engine

with a six-speed manual transmission or six-speed automatic. It also has exclusive 21-inch polished aluminum wheels with Pirelli P-Zero ultra-high performance tires. Other features include Brembo disc brakes, LED halo-ring headlamps, Bluetooth connectivity, rear parking assist, and a 245-watt Boston Acoustics sound system. The Neiman Marcus Camaro Convertible had a retail price of \$75,000, and will be ready for delivery this spring, shortly after the new 2011 Camaro arrives in dealerships. The 100 Neiman Marcus cars sold out in just three minutes.

THE "VOLT UNPLUGGED" ROAD TOUR

Chevrolet took the new electric Volt on a 3,400-mile tour demonstrating the world's first electric vehicle with extended-range capabilities. The "Volt Unplugged" tour gave consumers an opportunity to test drive the Volt, meet the people behind the development of the vehicle and participate in activities at each stop. The trip started October 13 in Seattle and ended November 20 in Chicago after 12 stops around the country. On a fully charged battery and tank of gas, the Volt has a driving range of hundreds of miles. Because the Volt can use gasoline to create its own electricity in extended-range mode, long trips are possible. The Volt is powered from electricity stored in its 16-

kWh lithium-ion battery for a typical range of 25 to 50 miles. The Volt's MSRP is \$41,000, including destination charge. Federal and state tax credits could reduce the net price by as much as \$7,500.

FIAT RETURNS TO US IN LITTLE WAY

After months of talk about bringing the Fiat 500 to the United States, Chrysler finally pulled the cover off the little car at the LA Auto Show. The 500 (Cinquecento), is cute, with its Italian styling, efficient design and innovative technology. The modern-generation Fiat 500 offers high levels of safety, fuel economy (more than 40 mpg), quality and advanced technology. It is powered by an all-new fuel-efficient 101-hp, 1.4-liter MultiAir® engine with standard five-speed manual and optional six-speed automatic transmission. The 500, which is about six inches shorter than a Mini Cooper, is equipped with seven airbags and is available in three models (Pop, Sport and Lounge). Pricing starts at \$16,000, including destination charge and can go to nearly \$24,000 for the Lounge model with all the options. All models will come with a standard four-year/50,000-mile warranty, roadside assistance and a three-year/36,000-mile maintenance program.

KEEP RIGHT >>



VW DOES A MAJOR TOUAREG REMAKE

▲ Volkswagen has done a major remake of the Touareg SUV for 2011. The new Touareg offers three powertrain choices, including Volkswagen's first-ever world-wide use of a hybrid system. All three engines—the 3.0L V6 TSI® supercharged hybrid, 3.0L V6 TDI® clean diesel and 3.6L V6 FSI® gasoline—are mated to Volkswagen's first eight-speed transmission, along with Volkswagen's 4MOTION® all-wheel drive system. The exterior is wider and has a shorter overall height for a stronger presence. The longer wheel-base and greater length provide more room inside the cabin. The use of new materials and other adjustments have removed approximately 350 pounds from the vehicle.

AUTOMOTIVE X PRIZE AWARDED

After nearly 30 months of vehicle and business plan development, on-track testing at Michigan International Speedway, including dynamic safety testing by partner Consumer Reports and laboratory verification at the Department of Energy's Argonne National Lab, three vehicles emerge as winners of the Progressive Insurance Automotive X PRIZE for Super Fuel-Efficient Vehicles. X PRIZE was launched in 2008 to inspire a new generation of viable, safe and super

fuel-efficient vehicles capable of achieving 100 miles per gallon or the energy equivalent (MPGe). The winning teams—Edison2 of Lynchburg, Virginia; X-Tracer of Winterthur, Switzerland; and Li-ion Motors Corp. of Mooresville, North Carolina—emerged from an original field of 111 competing teams, representing 136 vehicle entries from around the world.

NEW BOOK: MCQUEEN'S MACHINES

It's been 30 years since the untimely death of Steve McQueen. From every perspective, McQueen was cool, but the cars that he owned and drove were some of the coolest and most sought after. Any McQueen fan remembers the *Bullitt* chase scene, the Rolls Royce Silver Shadow in the *The Thomas Crown Affair*, the flying Triumph motorcycle in the *The Great Escape* and the Porsche 917K he pilots to more than 200 mph in *Le Mans*. Veteran auto writer and *Motor Trend* executive editor Matt Stone's fascinating new book, *McQueen's Machines—The Cars and Bikes of a Hollywood Icon*, documents McQueen's love of cars, motorcycles and speed. The large format 176-page paperback book includes 219 color photos and many other photos in black and white. The \$19.99 book is available at qbookshop.com, amazon.com, Borders, and Barnes & Noble.

FORD DEBUTS NEXT FOCUS

Ford pulled the wraps off the next-generation Focus at the Paris auto show, revealing three body styles and a unique ST performance version. Ford says 80 percent of the parts on each model will be common worldwide, and expects the new C platform to underpin at least ten different models around the world. The new range-topping Focus ST is powered by a new 247-hp version of the new 2.0-liter, four-cylinder Ford EcoBoost turbo-charged engine. The new Focus goes on sale in Europe and North America early in 2011, and the ST performance model launches early in 2012.

FORD TRUCKS LEAD IN FUEL ECONOMY

Ford's F-Series pickups have been America's best-selling vehicles of any type for years, and now they are becoming the most fuel-efficient pickups, too, thanks to a new engine lineup. An all-new 3.7-liter V6 engine is projected to deliver best-in-class 23 mpg highway, pending EPA certification, and the new 5.0-liter V8 engine is projected to deliver best-in-class 21 mpg highway, pending EPA certification. Other new engines for 2011 include a 411-hp 6.2-liter V8 and 365-hp 3.5-liter EcoBoost™ truck engine. The EcoBoost



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2011 Cadillac CTS-V Sport Wagon

will be available in early 2011. Each engine is mated to a fuel-saving six-speed automatic transmission.

FASTEST PRODUCTION WAGON: \$62,990

▲ Cadillac announced the pricing on the CTS-V wagon at \$62,990, including destination charges. Powered by a 556-horsepower V8, the 2011 Cadillac CTS-V Wagon accelerates from 0 to 60 miles per hour in 4.0 seconds and is one of the fastest, if not the fastest production wagon in the world. Like the CTS-V sedan and CTS-V Coupe, the CTS-V Wagon features a supercharged 6.2L V8 delivering 556 horsepower and 551 lb-ft of torque. Power is delivered to the rear wheels through either a standard six-speed manual, or a six-speed automatic transmission. Other high-performance features include standard Magnetic Ride Control, Brembo brakes, and 19-inch forged-aluminum wheels with Michelin Pilot Sport PS2 tires. The CTS-V Wagon combines V-Series performance with the practicality of a wagon and the appointments of a luxury sedan. The CTS-V Wagon can accommodate up to 58 cubic-feet of cargo and features a full range of luxury amenities.

HOW TO CHARGE YOUR NEW VOLT

Chevrolet arranged for new Volt owners to be able to purchase an affordable 240V charging system for only \$490, plus instal-

lation. The SPX Service Solutions system “Voltec” 240V home charging unit is one of several 240V home charging units that will be offered for sale by SPX Service Solutions, a national provider of home charging installation services and equipment. The Voltec 240V home unit can charge the Volt’s battery from depleted to charged in about four hours, compared with 10 hours with the standard 120V charge cord that plugs into a household outlet. Installation of the Voltec 240V charging unit is estimated at \$1,475 but can vary based upon electrical requirements.

CHEVY CRUZE LEADS SEGMENT MPG

The EPA announced official fuel economy numbers for the 2011 Chevrolet Cruze Eco, and they are better than expected. The Cruze Eco model gets a segment-leading 42 mpg on the highway (manual transmission models), with equally impressive city fuel economy of 28 mpg. Cruze Eco’s highway fuel economy beats non-hybrid segment competitor—including 23 percent greater highway fuel economy than the Honda Civic – as well as the Ford Fiesta subcompact and several other hybrid models including Ford Fusion Hybrid, Nissan Altima Hybrid and Toyota Camry Hybrid. The Cruze Eco carries an MSRP of \$18,895 (including destination charge). It goes on sale January.

THE HONDA EV IDEA IS FIT

Honda is electrifying its award winning five-passenger Fit to create their vision of the modern electric vehicle. Designed to meet the daily driving needs of the average metropolitan commuter, the Fit EV production model is powered by a lithium-ion battery and coaxial electric motor. The high-density motor, derived from the FCX Clarity fuel cell electric vehicle, delivers efficiency and power while remaining quiet at high speeds, up to a top speed of 90 mph. Honda says the EV will achieve an estimated 100-mile driving range per charge and 70 miles when applying EPA’s adjustment factor. The Fit EV is designed to be easy and convenient to charge. Battery recharging can be accomplished in less than 12 hours when using a conventional 120-volt outlet, and less than six hours when using a 240-volt outlet.

BOOKS: MAKE YOUR CAR LAST FOREVER

The secret to wringing out the most of your car is no longer a secret. Tom Torbjornsen’s new book, *How to Make Your Car Last Forever*, documents how to avoid expensive repairs, improve fuel economy and save money. Torbjornsen is a car repair expert with 35 years experience and is host of the satellite radio show *America’s Car Show with Tom Torbjornsen*. This book is a user’s manual for the car

Ford Ranger



owner, showing how to keep your vehicle in tip-top condition with preventive maintenance, identifying potential problems and making simple repairs yourself. The 175-page paperback book contains 225 color photos illustrating simple ways to get the job done. The book sells for \$24.99 and is available at www.qbookshop.com

BOOKS: LEGENDARY CORVETTES

As the icon of American sports cars, the Chevrolet Corvette has captured the heart and imaginations of car enthusiasts everywhere and author Randy Leffingwell has captured the essence of the Corvette with his new book, *Legendary Corvettes - ‘Vettes Made Famous on Track and Screen*. From racetracks to the big screen to the television sets of the world, Leffingwell and photographer Dave Wendt show how the Corvette has maintained its iconic status. They show 18 of the most legendary Corvettes of all time from the earliest surviving ‘Vette, built as a 1953 model, through the famous Route 66 television show car up to the latest racing Corvettes. The 176-page hardcover *Legendary Corvettes* book is illustrated with 130 color and 13 black and white photos. It is available at Motorbooks.com, Amazon.com and at most major bookstores. For more information or to order go to www.qbookshop.com.

NEW FORD RANGER—NOT SOLD IN US

▲ Ford finally introduced a new worldwide version of the Ranger pickup at the Australian International Auto Show in mid-October. Last redesigned in 1998, the current model Ranger has gone double the normal life expectancy of a new vehicle. Ford says they plan to sell this new Ranger in 180 different countries, however it will not be sold in the United States. This leaves Ford without a compact pickup offering for the first time since the Ranger was initially launched in 1982. The last-generation Ranger will be sold in the US through the 2011 model year, then discontinued in the US market.

AUDI OFFERS WIRELESS CHARGER

Audi vehicle owners can now add a wireless system that will charge any cell phone or other personal communication device without having to plug in. The innovative wireless charger, a collaboration involving the Audi Electronics Research Lab, Qualcomm Incorporated and Peiker Mobile Communications, effectively eliminates the clutter and complexity of having multiple devices connected by multiple cables for charging purposes. The device is powered by a single connection and charges mobile phones and PDAs, which in turn are con-

veniently situated within reach of the driver. Digital displays on both the phones and devices, and on the Audi audio system, indicate that the equipment is charging. The system can be added to existing or new Audi vehicles. Prices and availability were not announced.

EASSIST™ STANDARD ON LACROSSE

Buick revealed a new standard powertrain for the 2012 LaCrosse at the Los Angeles Auto Show, and it’s a hybrid even though the new office name is called eAssist™. By adding a state-of-the-art lithium-ion battery system and electric motor-generator, engineers were able to increase fuel economy of the LaCrosse to a class leading 37 mpg highway. Mated to a 2.4-liter Ecotec direct injection four-cylinder engine and next-generation six-speed automatic transmission, the eAssist system uses power stored in the battery to provide needed electrical boost in various driving scenarios, optimizing engine and transmission operation. Buick LaCrosse with eAssist technology also features improved underbody aerodynamics and tires optimized for performance and fuel economy. ■

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



RIGHT ON

BRIGHTON MOTORSPORTS
CLASSIC CAR RALLY BENEFITS
THE SOJOURNER CENTER



The weather was utterly perfect on Sunday November 7, as Brighton Motorsports hosted its 3rd Annual Classic Car Rally, benefitting the Sojourner Center. Over 300 people attended the event, in which some 70 drivers and cars covered the route. There were highly restored Europeans, rods and customs, American muscle and more. Highlights among entries included everything from a 1957 VW convertible, to a GTO Judge, to multiple 289 Shelby Cobras, a Ferrari 330 GTC, and a 1955 Chevy Bel Air that was last year's Brighton Rally Best of Show People's Choice award winner.

THE RALLY ROUTE

We joined the group as festivities began at Brighton's restoration facility and classic car showroom in the Scottsdale Airpark, located between Power Ford North Scottsdale and Hacienda Harley-Davidson. From there, we headed down Frank Lloyd Wright Boulevard, east on Shea Boulevard, then north through Fountain Hills, to the highlight of the route, the hilly and winding McDowell Mountain Road, along the east side of McDowell Mountain Regional Park to Rio Verde. From there, the route headed west on Rio Verde Drive, becoming Dynamite Boulevard, then north on Pima Road to Carefree and Cave Creek. The final leg was down Cave Creek Road and Tatum Boulevard, then back to Brighton Motorsports.

The event covered some 70 miles in all. By the names of the roads on the rally route, you can tell there was plenty of boulevard cruising, as well as plenty of open mountain and desert two-lane highway. And this pack of classics turned many a head all along the way. The cars mostly did not run in a pack, rather taking their own time and picking up cards for a poker run component of the rally as they completed the route. This led to some serendipity for the drivers, as well, as every once in awhile, we'd come upon a great cluster of... ourselves. Magic.

The Jaguar Club of Central Arizona held their Saloons in the Old West Road Rally concurrently, following along with the Brighton rally route and participants. (And on Saturday, the day before the road rally, the club held a JCNA concours event, as well.)

The drive portion of the rally concluded with lunch and live rock and roll back at Brighton Motorsports, along with an opportunity to tour the shops and work in progress on a variety of top-notch restorations.

BRIGHTON MOTORSPORTS

What began as Shane and Karen Mustoe's shared passion for European and American collector cars has evolved into 20,000 square feet of showroom, mechanical repair and body shop space, otherwise known as Brighton Motorsports and Brighton Ranch Paint & Body. These two entities work together seamlessly under one umbrella to deliver an old-world commitment to excel-

lence while servicing your vehicle and assuring your complete satisfaction. If you haven't stopped by their facility, you will definitely want to make a point to do so. And bring your checkbook if you dare. Brighton Motorsports is a premium candy store.

The crew at Brighton Motorsports realizes and appreciates the community that has helped make it all possible, and they enjoy every opportunity we have to give back. This year's Classic Car Rally once again benefited the Sojourner Center.

SOJOURNER CENTER

Since 1977, Sojourner Center has provided shelter and support services to thousands of individuals affected by domestic violence. Their principle is that through empowerment, families discover hope and have the



Photos: Brighton Motorsports (5)

opportunity to build a new future free from violence. As the nation's largest domestic violence shelter, Sojourner Center is a tireless advocate for domestic violence victims and survivors. With the continued support of the community and events like the Brighton Motorsports Classic Car Rally, Sojourner Center can help women and children overcome the impact of domestic violence, one life at a time.

Brighton Motorsports

15650 N Northsight Boulevard
Scottsdale AZ 85260
480-483-4682
www.brightonmotorsports.com

Sojourner Center

PO Box 20156 - Phoenix AZ 85036
602-244-0997 - 602-244-0089 Hotline
www.sojournercenter.org ■

OUR RALLY CAR

Our chariot for the day was a 1968 Jaguar XKE Roadster with just 25,000 original miles, red over black, with a 4.2-liter V8 and manual transmission. This Jaguar E-Type roadster is commonly referred to as a Series 1.5 because it retains the same body and bumpers as the Series 1 car but has such Series 2 items as rocker switches, twin Stromberg carburetors, finned cam covers and an improved cooling system with a larger radiator and twin electric fans. While it does not have covered headlights, this body can be retrofitted with them if desired.

Brighton Motorsports is the third owner of the car. It was purchased new at Sunnyvale British Motor Cars in California, and the first owner kept the car in Fremont CA until 1977, when he sold it at 20,050 miles, after being stored from 1973-1977. The car went to Coburg, Oregon, where it was recommissioned and shown at some local venues but mostly stayed in the garage. The Sports Car Shop in Eugene OR had done a little work on the car and told Brighton about it. They acquired the Jaguar in 2005 at just 23,577 miles. Over the past five

E-TYPE
JAGUAR
4.2



years, they've driven the car just 1,139 miles. We added about 70 more.

The car is amazingly tight, and its great power and strong oil pressure reflect its low mileage. The suspension and brakes are both great, and this is really an enjoyable car to drive. The V8 gives perfect balance, better for most tastes than a V12.

Brighton adds that the car has never shown any rust, always kept nice and dry. They have receipts for all work done over the years (including some areas of the car where some small dents were repaired and spot painted with lacquer). While that paint looked pretty nice, there were some differences between the original paint and the touched-up areas. So, Brighton did a com-

plete tear-down, repaint and reassembly of the car with new moldings. Now the paint is stunning, while the original chrome and glass remain in great shape. The original seats were very decent as they arrived, though the team at Brighton Motorsports did note some wear on the back of the driver's seat from the top frame being dragged across it (a common user error). They had new leather seat covers installed but the rest of the interior is original to the car.

The original jack and tool bag are still with the car, as well as the owner's manual and service booklet. The Jaguar still has the original factory delivery stickers on the windshield including the Queen's Export Award dated 1967.

If you've ever had a jones for a classic Jaguar, this could be your new baby. —JS

dynamic hybrid

driving dynamics and energy management

Already the only luxury maker with five hybrids, Lexus launches the all-new 2011 CT 200h—the first and only full hybrid in the premium compact segment. We headed to New Orleans and Louisiana Bayou Country to drive near-production models.

Brian Bolain, Lexus National Marketing and Lifecycle Strategy Manager, reminds us that since their first—the RX 400h in 2005, Lexus has introduced a new hybrid each year. Most recent was the HS 250h (see our Jul/Aug'09 and Jan/Feb'10 issues). It would seem they have a pace to maintain, but Bolain says the real goal is to have something for everyone in hybrid form. With the CT 200h, they aim to show a hybrid with “no sacrifice.” Affordable to purchase and own, and fun on the road.

There are 530 million hybrids on the road worldwide, with three out of four of those on US roads, most from Toyota/Lexus. The company recognizes there are a variety of powertrain solutions in development, but this is a technology that is ready to go. The HS 250h, a four-door hybrid sedan closely related to the Toyota Prius, has had lower sales than expected, and to fewer younger buyers. The CT 200h, called a 5-door (not a hatchback), aims to

cure that. “C” stands for compact, “T” for touring, “200” rounds off 1.8-liters, and “h” is for hybrid. Stated competitors are the Audi A3, BMW 1 Series and Volvo C30. Hybrid-apples-to-gasoline-oranges, the CT 200h boasts the best fuel economy in the luxury market: 42 mpg combined (on regular gas), against 34 mpg for its nearest competitor. Higher than the HS 250h, this approaches the Toyota Prius, and with higher style and handling.

Bolain sees the CT 200h as a breakthrough in one simple sense: “Who would ever have said ‘fun to drive’ and ‘luxury hybrid’ in one sentence?” he asks. Bolain points out that while it may not offer “blistering acceleration,” it promises a “dynamic and engaging drive.”

DYNAMICS, MOODS AND MODES

Key to the CT 200h's sporting driving experience is its highly focused driver's cockpit, with a low driver's seat featuring enhanced lateral and lumbar support, a wide-grip steering wheel and high-visibility triple gauges. The driver's hip point is as close as possible to the vehicle's center of gravity, delivering a very balanced feel.

The CT 200h's highly modified platform incorporates

a number of exclusively developed body, chassis and full hybrid series/parallel powertrain control systems designed to provide two distinct driving moods—Dynamic or Relaxing—in conjunction with hybrid EV, ECO, Normal and Sport on-demand drive modes. The platform is Prius-based but is 4 inches shorter, closer to some European models, especially with its advanced suspension.

The Lexus CT 200h suspension design combines a proven MacPherson strut front system with a new fully-independent double wishbone architecture at the rear, for comfort, handling and package efficiency.

Handling stability is enhanced by the high structural rigidity of the bodyshell, a low center of gravity, and the minimizing of yaw through use of aluminum for hood, tailgate and bumper reinforcements. New to any compact Lexus, a lateral performance damper system absorbs and minimizes body vibrations, for a linear steering feel and enhanced ride comfort. Charles Hubbard, Lexus Product Education Administrator Senior for the University of Toyota, tells us only the high-performance IS-F and super-high-po LFA have as much steering control. We'll be putting the dampers to the test on the cobblestone streets of New Orleans. The body's high rigidity was achieved detail by detail, with specific reengineering of weld points and more rigid cross-members.

EFFICIENCIES AND PERFORMANCE

Bolain lists the CT 200h's unique combination of attributes as (a) being a hybrid, (b) having four modes for varying economy and sportiness, (c) delivering great handling and (d) having a comfortable interior.

Hubbard explains how this is achieved. The CT 200h is lightweight and efficient. A compact NiMh battery adds to luggage space. Lexus says this battery should last the life of the car (15 years). If not, or if someone



The CT 200h's size and weight are helped by an optimized hybrid powerplant and a compact NiMh battery pack. Contextual gauges show charging info with a blue glow in ECO mode, a tachometer and red glow in Sport.

keeps it longer, the battery or even a single cell could be replaced. In years of testing, they've experienced just one problem, with just one cell, several years ago.

And then there is the powertrain. With a total system output of 134 hp (100 kW), the CT 200h accelerates seamlessly from 0-60 mph in 9.8 seconds. At the same time, the CT 200h boasts remarkably low emissions, significantly less NOx and zero particulate emissions, compared to an equivalent diesel-engined vehicle. When operating in EV mode (for up to a mile at up to 28 mph), it generates zero NOx and zero particulates. Body and undercarriage aerodynamics deliver a Cd of 0.29.

Other green and energy-saving measures include low-powered LED lighting (up to 89 LED lamps, the most in any Lexus), lightweight air conditioning, audio with an energy-efficient amplifier and bamboo charcoal speakers, and other bio-sourced materials. The CT 200h interior is available in leather or standard NuLux—an alternative to leather that emits no volatile organic compounds, is lighter, emits no CO2 and has no dyes—and creates an interior that is 80 percent recyclable.

There are two audio systems, standard and premium, both claimed to be 50 percent better while 20 percent lighter. A universal holder (not built into our test prototypes) will accommodate everything from an iPod nano to freestanding navigation units.

SAFETY TECHNOLOGIES

The CT 200h is equipped with a comprehensive range of active, passive and pedestrian impact safety features, with an optional pre-emptive, Pre-Collision Safety system incorporating Adaptive Cruise Control, eight airbags

including driver and front passenger knee airbags, Whiplash Injury Lessening (WIL) front seats fitted as standard, an upgraded Electronically Controlled Braking-Regeneration system (ECB-R) incorporating Anti-Lock brakes (ABS), Brake Assist (BA), Traction Control (TRAC) and Vehicle Stability Control (VSC) and a hybrid version of the brake override system, Smart Stop Technology.

OUR CT 200H DRIVE

Lexus had four routes laid out for the press corps. Three were in New Orleans: one in the French Quarter, considered especially good for testing the EVO mode, one in the Garden District and one in the Esplanade. The fourth was much longer, across the river, through the bayou, marshes, oil and gas fields and 'gator-wrasslin' backwoods, and featuring “the one curvy road in all of Louisiana,” per our hosts. We opted for the open road first.

Traffic exiting the city and crossing the bridge over the Mighty Mississippi was thick enough that we drove the car absolutely normally (for us) for awhile, and we're happy to report that you can do this—you don't even need to know it has a very special drivetrain—just drive. As traffic opened up and the roads narrowed down to two lanes, we tried the various modes, with their compound adjustments to power, shift points, steering and suspension. On a straightaway, clicking back and forth between ECO and Sport, we found the steering noticeably different. If you're in Sport and wiggle the wheel a little bit, it's very stiff and solid and tracks straight ahead; if you're in ECO and wiggle the wheel, it rocks and rolls—verifying

KEEP RIGHT >>



BY JOE SAGE

LOOZIANA SCRAPBOOK





that the settings are functionally different, moreso than some multi-mode vehicles. We reached the tiny US Post Office at Kraemer LA, compared notes with colleagues traveling the same course, and turned around.

Next was that curvy stretch, delivered as billed. We thought we took a pretty hard run in one direction. A Ferrari it's not, but it performed pretty admirably here. We then swapped with our codriver, racing champ Denise McCluggage, who as always found some additional range, but not much by her standards.

As it turns out, construction and a very backed-up bridge made that route a wise first choice, as we ultimately arrived back late for lunch and with a decision to consolidate the three urban loops and the shores of Lake Pontchartrain into one comprehensive run. The main thing gained from our urban time was a feel for the suspension on rough surfaces, of which New Orleans has plenty. With four modes and two moods, anyone can surely find the ride they like best. For us, the most noticeable aspect was an overall firm but solid and comfortable

ride, normal and desirable for a "driver's car," with some firmness surely due to the 17-inch tires and wheels and their shallower performance sidewalls—again, what we'd want and expect in a dynamic car.

All in all, the CT 200h may be considered more tech than performance, but "dynamics" is what was promised, along with style and luxury touches, and it delivers.

HIGH TECH AT MODERATE COST

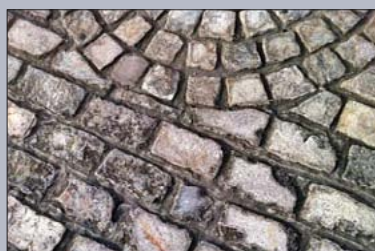
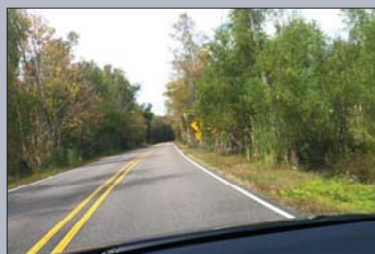
How did Lexus achieve so much in such a seemingly modest package? Partly, it was a convergence of determined engineers and willing management. Brian Bolain tells us the project's chief engineer came straight to the project from one of the more expensive cars in the Lexus lineup and "was not used to budgets." He saw to it that the team applied a lot of goodies.

And how much do all these goodies, with this performance and a highly-refined hybrid system, set you back? Pricing had not been determined when we were in New Orleans, but they hoped to stay in the low \$30s. Just as we went to press, pricing was released, and they outdid themselves—the 2011 Lexus CT 200h starts at \$29,120 (\$29,995 with \$875 destination fee, i.e. under \$30k). As Mark Templin, group VP and general manager of Lexus, says, "For just \$1,000 more than the cost of a non-luxury hybrid, buyers can indulge in a CT 200h with our proven Lexus Hybrid Drive technology." Options are minimal, but accessories are plentiful—24, the most ever—and can be installed by the dealer or at the port of entry (it is built in Japan). Also available are a line of "S" accessories.

The CT 200h is set for a global introduction—simultaneously in all Lexus markets, some 60 countries in all. (Hybrids represent about 5-6 percent of the US market, but as much as 45 percent in Europe.) The CT 200h should arrive at US dealers about the first of March. ■



LOOZIANA SCRAPBOOK



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GOODGUYS STARTS AND FINISHES ITS 2010 SEASON IN ARIZONA FOR FIRST TIME, AT WESTWORLD, SCOTTSDALE

For the opening of its 2010 season, Goodguys Rod & Custom Association, of Pleasanton CA, held their Spring Nationals at WestWorld in north Scottsdale for the first time. The Goodguys 13th Southwest Nationals closed the season here, as usual, November 19-21—making this the first year Arizona book-ended the entire Goodguys season.

Starting things off was the Goodguys Hot Rod Tour and Kick-Off Party, hosted by The Over the Hill Gang, with stops at points of genuine motorhead interest across the Valley from Cave Creek to Chandler and all points in between. Rods, customs, muscle cars and classics showed up at 9.30am on Thursday, November 18 with a full tank of gas at WestWorld to launch



STOP #1: AJ'S GARAGE, CAVE CREEK



KICK-OFF HOT ROD TOUR

Photos: Randall Bohl

STOP #1: AJ'S GARAGE, CAVE CREEK

The group gathered poolside at the spectacular residence of AJ Schwichtenberg, then toured his huge garage/shop, Goodfellows Classic Cars, a for-fun operation offering premium storage to enthusiasts, collectors, restorers and hobbyists, housing some 100 cars, with a variety of completed and project vehicles on hand. Schwichtenberg has another claim to fame: he built the furthest north racetrack in the United States, in Wasilla, Alaska.

623-465-0826

goodfellowsclassiccars.net

STOP #2: DESERT VALLEY AUTO PARTS, NORTH PHOENIX

This 40-acre salvage yard specializes in classic cars and parts from the '40s, '50s, '60s, '70s and some '80s. They boast the largest classic car yards on the Internet, but this day was all in person. DVAP is set to be featured on a TV reality show, taking a classic car from the yard, restoring it and selling it to collector auction.

23811 N 7th Avenue

Phoenix AZ 85085

623-780-8024 - www.dvap.com

STOP #3: CIADELLA INTERIORS, TEMPE

This factory specializes in original classic and custom Chevy interiors. Their highly trained classic Chevrolet cutters, sewers, door panel experts and carpet craftsmen have worked with Ciadella's for over 25 years. Ciadella Interiors strives to provide exact reproductions of Chevy interiors, high quality manufacturing and fast delivery, at affordable prices. For the crowd on the Goodguys Hot Rod Tour, they had customer cars on display, a shop walk-through tour... and lunch!

3116 South 52nd Street, Tempe AZ 85282 - 800-875-8390 - 602-454-8388 - www.ciadellainteriors.com



STOP #2: DESERT VALLEY AUTO PARTS, NORTH PHOENIX



STOP #3: CIADELLA INTERIORS, TEMPE



their drive. We went along for the ride.

Somewhere between 80-100 cars were flagged into position in the east parking lot at WestWorld by 9:30am. From there, they embarked on the first leg of the Hot Rod Tour, up Scottsdale Road to Carefree Highway and stop number one. By the time all six stops had been made (see below), everyone had logged about 110 miles, was well fed, and headed home to prep for the big weekend.

The show itself, Friday through Sunday, featured over 2,000 Rods, Customs, Classics and Muscle Cars thru 1972, as well as vendor and manufacturer exhibits, a swap meet and Cars-4-Sale Corral, a model and pedal car show, and a host of awards.

In addition to the Thursday Kick-Off Party, Goodguys held a TGIF Party at Hot Rods by Dean, near the Deer Valley Airport (Hot Rods by Dean is located at 1 W Lone Cactus Drive, Phoenix

AZ 85027 - 623-581-1932 - www.hotrodsbydean.com).

Special Parking Areas featured the Goodguys "Terrific 12," Ya Gotta Drive 'Em, Homebuilt Heaven, Mighty Muscle ('55-'72), Goodguys Builder's Choice and the Trick Truck Corral.

Special Awards included the Judy Murray Memorial Award, 2011 Muscle Car of the Year Finalist, PPG Dream Car, Street Rodder Top 100 Event and Goodguys Builder's Choice Awards.

Goodguys, along with KOOL 94.5FM and KPHO CBS 5, also gave away a gorgeous 1968 Pontiac Firebird, which is staying in Arizona, as it was won by a Tucson couple (see next page).

For full Goodguys 13th Southwest Nationals results and info, as well as information on the 2011 season (which opens at Scottsdale on March 11-13), visit www.southwestnats.com.

KEEP RIGHT >>



STOP #4: GARAGETOWN, CHANDLER



STOP #4: GARAGETOWN, CHANDLER

This garage community offers "car condos," highly adaptable to include the best of any collector's garage, including your own hanging-out headquarters. Private collectors store their vehicles and spend quality time with their favorite lifestyle highlights. Several owners opened their condos to the group. And really—who doesn't want one of these?

Arizona Ave & Ocotillo Road Chandler AZ

866-MYTOWN - 480-926-2844

www.garagetown.com

STOP #5: SPEED SPORTS, GILBERT

Better known as the "home of the fast guys," Speed Sports specializes in muscle cars, offering custom fuel injection, turbo systems and superchargers, EFI programming, custom exhaust, custom engine design and fabrication. Speed Sports gave everyone a sneak peak at their new building, then just about ready for its Thanksgiving weekend opening.

205 N Pasadena

Gilbert AZ 85233

480-539-4842

www.speedsportsaz.com

STOP #6: SQUEEG'S KUSTOMS, CHANDLER

The sixth and final stop of the tour served as the venue for the official Southwest Nationals Kick-Off Party. Since 1964, Squeeg's Kustoms has been turning out award-winning hot rods and custom cars, as well as motorcycles, boats, helicopters and more. Squeeg's is proud that they have never resorted to production work to keep their doors open: only one-of-a-kind custom paint "that sets trends and yet remains timeless." The crew uses state-of-the-art materials and equipment along with all the Old World craftsmen's tools of the trade. Squeeg's has a brand new shop in Chandler and showed off a variety of customer cars. Mexican dinner, beer and wine were served.

341 E Alamo Drive - Chandler AZ 85225 - 480-834-0324 - www.squeegskustoms.com



STOP #5: SPEED SPORTS, GILBERT



STOP #6: SQUEEG'S KUSTOMS, CHANDLER



GOODGUYS '68 FIREBIRD GIVEAWAY: TUCSON WINNERS



Photo: Goodguys Rod & Custom Assn.

Matthew Kaiser of Tucson was the lucky winner of a '68 Pontiac Firebird at the 13th Southwest Nationals. A power plant operator by day and car enthusiast on the weekends, Kaiser and his wife Margaret went wild when he turned the key to start his new bright yellow 'Bird. "This is the first time I've ever won anything," he said.

The Firebird went to a true car enthusiast. Kaiser drives his 1970 Chevy C-10 pick-up to work every day and also has a '39 Ford sedan as well as a '64 Karmann Ghia convertible. He plans to drive as well as show off his new 'Bird. He qualified as a finalist to win the car at the 1st Spring Nationals in Scottsdale in March. He drew key #9 during the giveaway ceremony. Ironically, his son Benjamin just turned nine years old on November 6, and instead of asking for presents, the son had gone on a fundraising mission to raise money for juvenile diabetes, as a friend of his suffers from that ailment.

The '68 Firebird is a real beauty featuring Goodguy Yellow paint, a potent 400 c.i. Chevy small block with a 4 speed manual transmission and an all original black interior, Intro Rally five-spokes (18" and 20") wrapped in BF Goodrich G Force KDW tires and accessories by Fesler Built. Goodguys extends a special thank you to KOOL 94.5FM and KPHO CBS 5 in Phoenix who partnered with them on this special giveaway car.

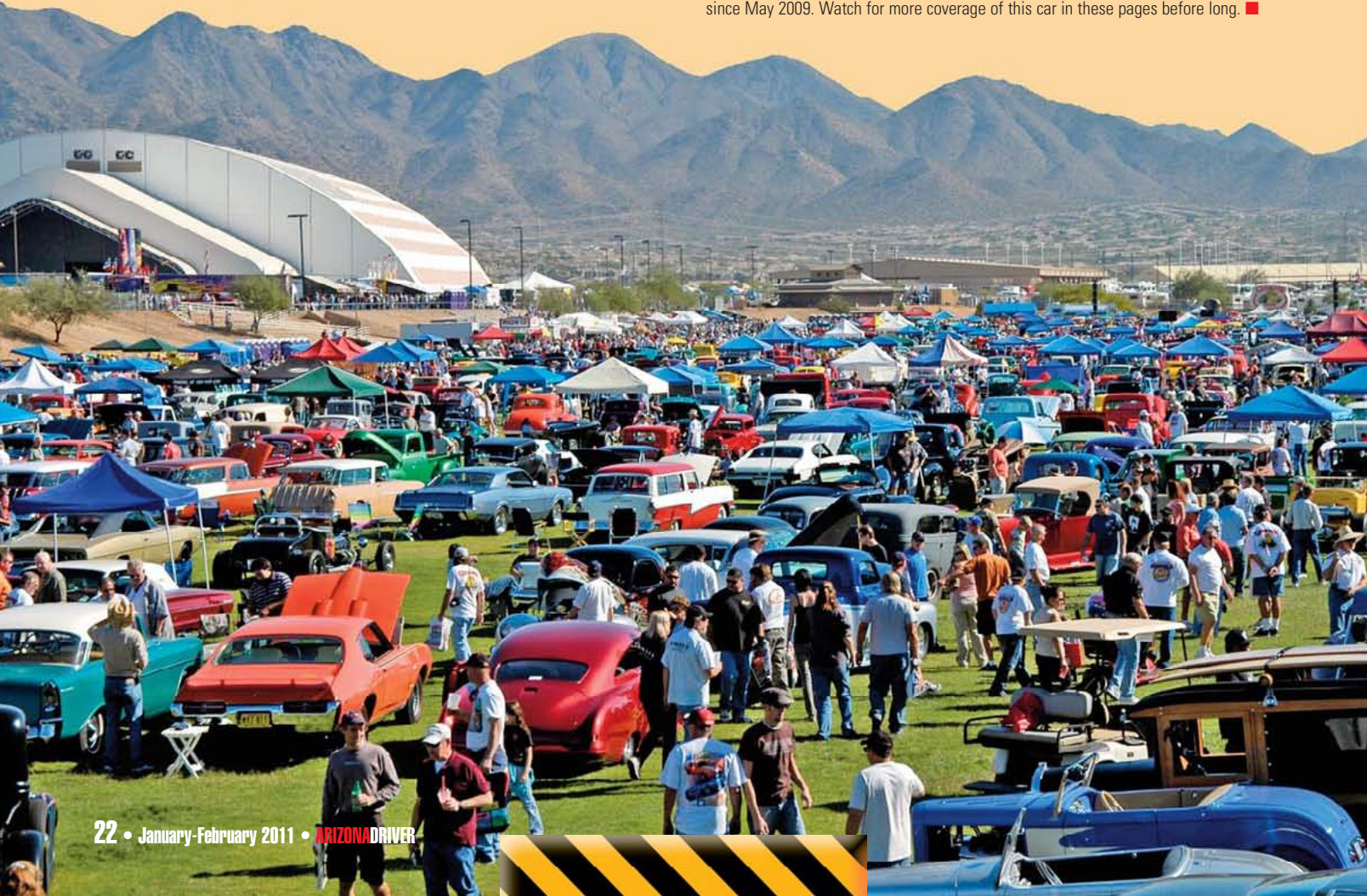
ULTIMATE GTO: STEVE DISCH MERGES A '64 WITH AN '06



Photo: Joe Sage

One crowd-pleasing favorite at the Goodguys 13th Southwest Nationals was this "Ultimate GTO," built by Steve Disch of Lakewood CO and Tucson AZ. Disch built his Ultimate GTO from a '64 LeMans body and new (but wrecked) '06 GTO chassis and powertrain. The GTO is finished in orange Porsche paint from the 2008 Limited Edition Boxster. Steve has driven this car some 12,000 miles from show to show since its completion ("it will never see a trailer," he says). The build is documented in a thorough one-off full-color bound book we were able to review at the show.

The car has quickly garnered high recognition. After the Hot Rod Power Tour 2010 in June, *Hot Rod Magazine*, in their October issue, called it "one of the most unique cars" on the tour. At the GTO Association of America (GTOAA) Nationals in Wichita in July, the car won Best of Show, Popular Vote, out of some 200 GTOs. The car has been featured on the cover of GTOAA's *The Legend* magazine twice in seven months. And in August at the POCI (Pontiac Oakland Club International) Nebraskaland show in Omaha, the car won Sponsor's Choice, First in Class and Best of Show. It will be on the T-shirt for that event next year, similar to the Brush, Colorado T-shirt this year. The car has actually won 12 Best-of-Show awards in the last year, as well as 30 additional awards since May 2009. Watch for more coverage of this car in these pages before long. ■



2011 GOODGUYS Rod & Custom Association

EVENT SCHEDULE

MARCH

March 11, 12 & 13 - Scottsdale, AZ 📍

★ **2nd SPRING NATIONALS**

WestWorld of Scottsdale. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

March 18, 19 & 20 - Ft. Worth, TX 📍 NEW EVENT

★ **1st SPRING LONE STAR NATIONALS**

Texas Motor Speedway. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

March 26 & 27 - Pleasanton, CA

★ **29th ALL AMERICAN GET-TOGETHER**

Fairgrounds - Pleasanton. All years American Powered Cars & Trucks. AutoCross, Vendors, Huge Swap Meet & Car Corral.

APRIL

April 1, 2 & 3 - Del Mar, CA 📍

★ **11th MEGUIAR'S DEL MAR NATIONALS**

Del Mar Fairgrounds. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

MAY

May 20, 21 & 22 - Nashville, TN 📍

★ **6th BRIDGESTONE NASHVILLE NATIONALS**

LP Field, Tennessee Titan Stadium. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

JUNE

June 3, 4 & 5 - Loveland, CO 📍

★ **14th COLORADO NATIONALS**

The Ranch Events Complex. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

June 4 & 5 - Pleasanton, CA 📍

★ **18th SUMMER GET-TOGETHER**

Fairgrounds - Pleasanton. All years American Powered Cars & Trucks. AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

June 24, 25 & 26 - Rhinebeck, NY

★ **20th EAST COAST NATIONALS**

Dutchess County Fairgrounds. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

JULY

July 1, 2 & 3 - Des Moines, IA 📍

★ **20th HEARTLAND NATIONALS**

Iowa State Fairgrounds. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

July 8, 9 & 10 - Columbus, OH 📍 THE BIG ONE

★ **14th GOODGUYS PPG NATIONALS**

Ohio Expo Center. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Friday Nite Drags, AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

July 22, 23 & 24 - Puyallup, WA

★ **24th PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATIONALS**

Puyallup Fair & Events Center. Rods, Customs & Classics thru '72. Friday Nite Drags, Show 'n Shine, Vendors & Swap Meet.

AUGUST

August 12, 13 & 14 - Joliet, IL 📍 NEW DATE

★ **5th PEAK CHICAGOLAND NATIONALS**

Chicagoland Speedway. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

August 19, 20 & 21 - Spokane, WA

★ **10th GREAT NORTHWEST NATIONALS**

Spokane Fair & Expo Center. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

August 26, 27 & 28 - Pleasanton, CA

★ **25th WEST COAST NATIONALS**

Fairgrounds - Pleasanton. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

SEPTEMBER

September 2, 3 & 4 - Kansas City, KS 📍

★ **10th MID-WESTERN NATIONALS**

Kansas Speedway. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

September 16, 17 & 18 - Indianapolis, IN 📍 NEW EVENT

★ **1st WIX FILTERS SPEEDWAY NATIONALS**

Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Rods, Customs, Classics & Trucks thru '72. Show 'n Shine, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

OCTOBER

Sept. 30, Oct. 1 & 2 - Ft. Worth, TX 📍

★ **19th LONE STAR NATIONALS**

Texas Motor Speedway. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

October 28, 29 & 30 - Charlotte, NC 📍

★ **18th SOUTHEASTERN NATIONALS**

Charlotte Motor Speedway. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

NOVEMBER

November 12 & 13 - Pleasanton, CA 📍

★ **22nd AUTUMN GET-TOGETHER**

Fairgrounds - Pleasanton. All years American Powered Cars & Trucks. AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

November 18, 19 & 20 - Scottsdale, AZ

★ **14th SOUTHWEST NATIONALS**

WestWorld of Scottsdale. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

November 25, 26 & 27 - Del Mar, CA 📍 NEW EVENT

★ **1st FALL DEL MAR NATIONALS**

Del Mar Fairgrounds. Rods, Customs, Classics, Muscle Cars & Trucks thru '72. AutoCross, Vendors, Swap Meet & Car Corral.

★	— National Events
📍	— AutoCross

Goodguys Schedule as of 10/20/10. All dates subject to change.

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Down and dirty in Ford's all-new crown jewel

Joe Sage

It might seem that reinventing the Ford Explorer would be a matter of engineering and styling, but job one is to identify the market. The Explorer has one of the most-recognized names in the automotive industry, with 96 percent of the population knowing the name and product. That's a good thing, but at the same time means extra effort is needed to ensure that everyone knows this Explorer is new, new, new.

Consumer surveys revealed five goals, keywords or areas of focus among potential buyers: fun, family, Ford, adventure and SUV. To be king of a segment, you might think any one vehicle has to be able to accomplish anything and everything that all vehicles in the segment do. By that measure, the Explorer might have to match everything from a Jeep Wrangler, to a Suburban, to a Dodge diesel pickup. In fact, however, their customer research reveals "no rock climbers" and less towing need than anticipated, which has its own interesting statistics. Of their buyers, a full 85 percent never tow. Another 12 percent tow under 5000 pounds. 2.6 percent have another vehicle dedicated to towing anything over 5000 pounds. This leaves just 0.4 percent of potential Explorer customers who might want to own an Explorer and use it to tow, well, anything—including over 5000 pounds. Thus, the new Explorer is engineered to tow up to 5000 pounds, perhaps losing that 0.4 percent, but providing the other 99.6 percent with an SUV that costs less, weighs less, handles better and helps achieve one of Ford's prime objectives: better fuel economy.

With the 2011 Explorer, Ford proudly claims SUV class-leading fuel economy, as well as performance. High-tech powertrains include a standard powerful and fuel-efficient 3.5L V6 with twin independent variable camshaft timing (Ti-VCT). For top fuel economy, there is an optional 2.0L EcoBoost™ inline-4, which Ford says delivers V6-like power. Each engine has its own six-speed automatic transmission, to optimize performance and driving dynamics as well as maximize fuel economy. The V6 improves fuel economy over the prior Ford Explorer by about 20 percent, or roughly 4 MPG. With the EcoBoost 4, improvement is expected to top 30 percent, or about 6 MPG. The V6 still delivers 290 hp and 255 lb-ft of torque, while the EcoBoost 4—which Ford will introduce globally—offers 237 hp and almost the same torque—250—with peak torque generated from a low 1700-4000 RPM. This four can tow.

And what might you have to pay for all this enhanced technology and anticipated fuel saving? Amazingly enough, Ford has been able to deliver the all-new Explorer for \$1100 less than the old 2010 model—while adding 80 horsepower, 4-6 MPG and a third row.

The base Explorer with 6-speed automatic and AdvancTrac® with Roll Stability Control™ starts at \$28,190. The XLT upgrades to a 6-speed SelectShift Automatic™ and adds a Reverse Sensing System, along with broad feature and style upgrades, starting at \$31,190. And the Limited, adding MyFord Touch™ and Sony audio with HD Radio starts at \$37,190. Option pricing has also been address, with some major add-ons dropping by as much as 33 percent.

We've driven to, from, in and around San Diego

KEEP RIGHT >>

FORD EXPLORER: A ONE-VEHICLE CONSUMER ELECTRONICS SHOW

Ford introduced SYNC at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit, in 2007, and implemented it on a dozen 2008 models. SYNC is a factory-installed, fully-integrated in-vehicle communications and entertainment system that allows users to make hands-free telephone calls, control music and perform other functions with their eyes on the road ahead—using voice commands. Computer programs and user interfaces were developed by Ford and third-party developers running on the Microsoft Windows Embedded Auto platform.

MyFord Touch™ (and MyLincoln Touch™) were introduced in 2010 in the 2011 Ford Edge. The MyFord Touch and SYNC names seem somewhat overlapping, although the general idea is that SYNC is the underlying OS for MyFord Touch, the user interface.

Besides voice control, the MyFord Touch system includes touchscreens—which intuition welcomes—and a five-way-button control on the steering wheel, matching controls of many devices. Various screens and gauges are reconfigurable or context-sensitive, providing vastly more information, personalization, and again working intuitively. The system's memory can lock in not only music and phone preferences, but the driver's preferred climate settings.

We spent the first hour or so of our San Diego presentation being introduced to the various technologies, each installed in its own dedicated vehicle and with personnel from each developer on hand to demonstrate that company's particular wares. Sony, HD Radio, Nuance, Gracenote, Telemann and others, as well as Ford themselves, gave us one-on-one demos, some smooth as silk, some with the occasional hiccup, a couple at times requiring more attention than a hand-off system ideally might, but all showing great promise and creating a solid basis for additional development.

Ford also includes internet connectivity for up to five passengers through a WiFi Mobile Hot Spot, either by password-protected LAN using a compatible USB broadband modem, or Personal Area Network using Bluetooth® tethering and a smartphone.

SD-card-based navigation includes easily updated maps, 3D landmarks, SIRIUS TravelLink, Wcities for enhanced POI information, and Eco-Route to apply a database of speed, distance and traffic to find an economical way to reach your destination.

Put it all together, and you find a system that can handle just about any task—routine or unexpected. Catalog and store contacts, destinations, music including such add-ons as album art, your favorite temperature and fan settings, and they are all available at the touch of a steering wheel button, a touchscreen interface, or—the tour de force of SYNC—a voice command. It's powerful, very complete, intuitive—so intuitive, we remain surprised they work with Microsoft and not Apple. Imagine the level of intuitive control if the systems were, well, in sync with the iPod, iPhone, iPad and Mac.

For more information on MyFord Touch and SYNC, visit ford.com/technology/sync/myfordtouch





County plenty, but we'd never been on the highway route we took for the Ford Explorer launch. And it had been many years since we'd driven through a lion and tiger sanctuary. The combination of the two gave us broad experience in Ford's all-new SUV. While we didn't have to actually fend off the big cats, the sanctuary had been adapted to provide courses including rough roads, off-road, hill descent, deep water, a sand pit and more. And the combination of four-lane freeway, 'round-town and most of all challenging two-lane mountain highways put paved roadworthiness to the test.

Highway time reveals a vehicle that, despite its SUV capabilities, is a fine "car." The interior is superb (modeled with benchmark Audi interiors in mind): fit and finish are tops, soft-touch surfaces and comfortable leather abound, electronics and controls (see sidebar, prior page) are convenient, and seating is very comfortable. Handling is great, belying its SUV stature. If you never take the Explorer off-road—and that's common enough among owners—you will still enjoy it daily.

Our visit to Lions Tigers and Bears Big Cat Rescue, near Alpine CA, up in the mountains north of I-8, gave us a chance to try the Explorer's prodigious handling technologies. Key among these is something the Explorer has picked up from the all-out Ford Raptor purpose-built off-road pickup—this despite the general lack of "rock climbers" in the Explorer demographic. This is Ford's Terrain Management System, which doesn't need a Moab rock rally to be of value.

Available on V6 Explorers as part of an intelligent 4WD system, the Terrain Management System is "situation-selectable," taking the guesswork out of four-wheel-drive range choices. "Simpler and more convenient for SUV veterans, the system will be a confidence-builder for drivers new to the segment," says Ford. Gone are the transfer case, with its HI and LO settings, which had been revealed to confuse more customers than help them. Instead, the driver need only turn a console-mounted knob to one of four settings: Snow, Sand, Mud or Normal. Also included (and also Raptor-derived) is a Hill Descent mode.

Our courses included challenges for all, and we ran some of them multiple times. We were told many of us had been taking one particularly rough two-track trail at slower speeds, as we took it at normal speed on our second pass—in total comfort. Hill Descent kept us from ending up in a creek with hot brakes, which is where most vehicles would have been. One long and deep water trough was no obstacle to the Explorer, which not only passed right through it, but never seemed to have any risk of stalling due to depth. A large sand pit was perhaps everybody's favorite: this mini-Sahara was very challenging in the Normal setting, though a normally skilled driver could conquer it and even have some fun; but in Sand mode, the driver gains total control of the vehicle—and yes, still has fun.

Many thanks to Lions Tigers and Bears for letting Ford and a pack of unrehabilitated automotive journalists take over their terrain for the day.

We could fill a whole brochure with more details of the 2011 Ford Explorer, but Ford has already done that. The new Ford Explorer is at dealers now. One thing for certain: the new Ford Explorer is one vehicle we would always take out, but never kick out of our garage. ■

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Barrett-Jackson

40th Annual Collector Car Auction Event

Monday-Sunday, January 17-23, 2011 - Kickoff Saturday, January 15
WestWorld - northeast of Frank Lloyd Wright Blvd. and AZ Loop 101 - Scottsdale

In 1967, Russ Jackson and Tom Barrett presented *Fiesta del Auto Elegance*, a fundraising show for the Scottsdale Library and other local charities. In 1971, they put together a classic car auction, at which they sold Barrett's own Mercedes-Benz 770 Phaeton for \$153,000 (some 5-13 times that in today's dollars). 2011 marks 40 years since that first auction. Boasting the longest and most comprehensive schedule, the week starts early, on Saturday, with a Road Rally and Barrett-Jackson Night at the Pavilions, then the auction launches with a Family Value Day benefiting charities and continues all week, with auction excitement rounded out by a wide range of food, booths, displays and other events. SPEED will capture the action during 40 hours of live coverage.

BARRETT-JACKSON KICKOFF EVENTS: 2ND ANNUAL ROAD RALLY

Barrett-Jackson will kick off its 40th anniversary week-long event with the 2nd Annual Scottsdale Road Rally on Saturday, January 15. More than 100 Hot Rods, Resto-Mods, classics, new collectibles and muscle cars will participate in this all-day celebration of the collector car hobby. The rally begins at the ASU SkySong parking lot on the southeast corner of Scottsdale and McDowell Roads. Participants will gather at noon for a parking lot Cruise-In, giving spectators a peek at the rally cars, with live entertainment and giveaways, plus food and beverage for sale. Scottsdale Police will conduct a safety presentation for all rally participants, and the Road Rally will depart at 3pm and travel north on Scottsdale Road, then east to The Pavilions, at Indian Bend Road between Pima Road and the 101 Freeway.

BARRETT-JACKSON NIGHT

Barrett-Jackson Night at The Pavilions is a chance for participants and the public to enjoy an evening of live entertainment, prizes, giveaways and much more. Steve Davis, president of Barrett-Jackson, and Gary Bennett,

vice president of consignment, will be on hand during the evening to pass out three "Barrett-Jackson Choice Awards" and one "People's Choice Award." Barrett-Jackson Night activities begins at 4pm and lasts until 8pm. You'll also be able to buy Barrett-Jackson merchandise and discounted tickets to the auction event.

The Road Rally spots are sold out, but the public is welcome to attend the full day of activities for free, at both the Cruise-In and Barrett-Jackson Night.

FEATURED CONSIGNMENTS: KEITH HENDERSON COLLECTION

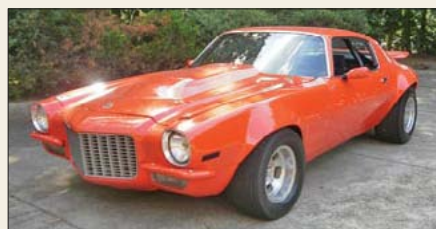
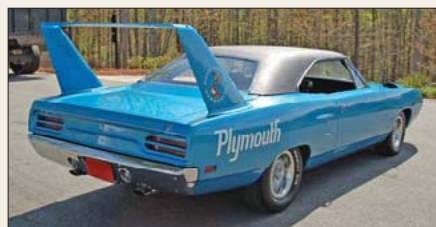
Barrett-Jackson will sell a pristine collection of nine American muscle cars from leading collector Keith Henderson at No Reserve. The group will highlight some of the most coveted GM and Chrysler muscle cars in the world from the 1960s, '70s and today, including big blocks, HEMIs and "one of ones."

Henderson has consigned multiple vehicles with Barrett-Jackson through the years. In 2004, he starred in the Barrett-Jackson TV show, "Barrett-Jackson's Car Search," a contest between teams from across the country to find, restore, then sell vintage cars during one of the Barrett-Jackson auctions. Henderson played an integral part in the Atlanta team's win that year.

The collection that will take the stage in Scottsdale features a 1971 Plymouth HEMI 'Cuda coupe, 1970 Chevrolet Camaro "Stage II" Cheverra, 1969 Chevrolet Camaro Z/28, 1970 Dodge Challenger T/A, 2010 Dodge Challenger, 1969 Chevrolet Corvette Convertible, 1970 Chevrolet Berger Camaro RS/SS, 1970 Plymouth HEMI 'Cuda coupe and 1970 Plymouth Superbird coupe.

TICKETS AND INFORMATION

Established in 1971 and headquartered in Scottsdale, Ariz., Barrett-Jackson specializes in providing products and services to classic and collector car owners, astute collectors and automotive enthusiasts around the world.



Photos (5): courtesy of Barrett-Jackson Auction Company

The company produces "The World's Greatest Collector Car Auctions™" in Scottsdale, Palm Beach, Fla., Las Vegas and Orange County, Calif. Barrett-Jackson also endorses a one-of-a-kind collector car insurance offering for collector vehicles and other valued belongings. For more information about Barrett-Jackson, visit www.barrett-jackson.com or call (480) 421-6694.

Ticket prices vary by day, from \$12 for an adult on Family Value Day (Monday, January 17) to \$18-43 for an adult on other days of the weeklong event. There are discounts for seniors, military, students and children. An All Week Pass is \$120 for adults, \$100 for military, students and seniors. Barrett-Jackson hosts annual auctions in Scottsdale in January, Palm Beach FL in spring, Orange County in summer and Las Vegas in fall. For tickets or schedule info, visit www.barrett-jackson.com. ■

Gooding & Company

4th Annual Scottsdale Auction

Friday-Saturday, January 21-22, 2011 - Viewing Thursday-Saturday, January 20-22
West end of Fashion Square - Camelback Road and 68th Street - Scottsdale

This is the fourth year in Arizona for Gooding & Company, who have quickly established themselves as a major player here, selling the most valuable car among Scottsdale auctions three years in a row. Viewing runs three days: 9am to 6pm on Thursday and Friday and 9am to 5pm on Saturday, and the auction runs two days, starting at 11am both Friday and Saturday.

FEATURED CONSIGNMENTS:

1930 DUESENBERG J DUAL COWL PHAETON

This LeBaron-coachbuilt Duesenberg Model J Dual Cowl Phaeton, engine No. J-243 (shown below), has an unbroken ownership history and is one of the best surviving barrel-side Phaetons—one of the few that has managed to retain its original chassis, engine and body. Past owners include Jim Hoe, America's foremost post-WWII Duesenberg mechanic and restorer, and Rick Carroll, a renowned Duesenberg and Rolls-Royce collector. For the past several decades, this fine example has resided alongside the most important Duesenbergs in existence and remains in lovely condition. (Est. \$1.2-1.6 million.)

1948 TUCKER, NO. 1010

Believed to have disappeared many years ago, Tucker Serial No.1010 has re-emerged after more than 50 years tucked away in a private barn. Originally delivered to its first owner in Waltz Blue, this 1948 Tucker is in near-original, unrestored condition, having traveled only 10,000 miles since new. It is believed this car raced at Bonneville in the early 1950s, achieving a top speed of 134 mph while defying the harsh elements of the Salt Flats. A very exciting discovery for collectors around the world, this car is expected to bring in excess of \$1 million.

1933 STUTZ DV-32 DUAL COWL PHAETON

The last model ever built by Stutz Motor Company, the DV-32 was one of the very best high-performance chassis of the classic era. Formerly the property of the prestigious Harrah's Automobile Collection, this example is the only known Dual Cowl Phaeton surviving on a legendary DV-32 chassis. A stunning and sporting Ameri-

can classic, this LeBaron-bodied Stutz will command a great deal of attention. This important Full Classic is estimated to sell for \$500,000-650,000.

1953 FIAT 8V SUPERSONIC

One of the most spectacular designs to emerge from Italy's Carrozzeria Ghia during the Jet Age 1950s was the Fiat 8V Supersonic, an extremely rare sports car embodying the best of the era's American and Continental design. Chassis No. 106.000035 was the first Supersonic of only 12 created and has long been specifically regarded as the finest example in existence. Treasured by its current owner for the past 55 years, this phenomenal car has only been driven a mere 17,000 miles since new and remains in exceptionally well-preserved condition with its original engine, maroon paint, complete interior and even the original Pirelli tires intact. This museum-quality automobile will be a heroic contender in any preservation class. (Est. \$1.1-1.4 million.)

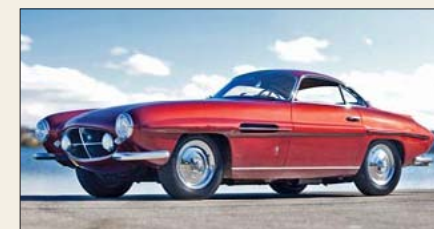
2005 SALEEN S7

Dazzling in its copper paintwork, this one-of-a-kind performance car was featured in the 2008 movie *Iron Man* with Robert Downey Jr. Its high-tech design combines with a powerful twin-turbocharged 1,000-hp V8 engine to deliver an audacious modern collector car. This California-built supercar offers tremendous performance for value and is estimated at \$300,000-400,000.

RARE ROAD AND RACING FINDS:

1960S-ERA "TIME CAPSULE" CARS

Five spectacular 1960s-era cars will be auctioned both Friday and Saturday: a barnfind 1964 Shelby Cobra, a 1964 Porsche 904, a 1965 Ferrari 275 GTB, a B-Production National Champion 1965 Shelby GT350 R and what is believed to be the lowest-mileage unrestored Mercedes-Benz 300SL Roadster in existence. "Our market today is ripe with exciting cars that are surfacing after years in private storage, because there is a growing demand around the world for quality and originality," says David Gooding, president of Gooding & Company. "From the 'time cap-



sule' 1962 Mercedes-Benz 300 SL Roadster and barnfind Cobra to a significant racing Porsche 904, these spectacular cars will be major highlights."

ADMISSION AND FURTHER INFORMATION

An auction catalog for \$80 admits two to the viewing and auction. General admission to the viewing and auction is \$30 per person. Children under 12 are free.

Gooding & Company sold more than \$114.7 million in collector cars and achieved six new world records during its 2010 auctions (including an intellectual property auction in March which grossed \$14.3 million). Gooding & Company is the official auction house at the Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance near Monterey each August. Last spring marked their first event at Amelia Island, Florida. For information, call 310-899-1960 or visit www.goodingco.com. ■

KEEP RIGHT >>



Photos (5): Pawel Litwinski © 2010 courtesy of Gooding & Company

RM Auctions

12th Annual Automobiles of Arizona

Thursday-Friday, January 20-21, 2011 - Preview Thursday-Friday
Arizona Biltmore Resort and Spa - northeast of N 24th Street and E Camelback Road - Phoenix

RM Auctions arrives in Arizona with new bragging rights: \$275 million in sales in 2010, the best performance in the history of the hobby. Their record-setting sales run included 1613 cars at 12 auctions in three countries, with a 92 percent sales rate at catalog events and a 100% sell-through rate at Hershey in October. RM has been confirmed as the official auction house for the 2011 Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este.

THURSDAY, JANUARY 20: "THE BRITISH ARE BACK"

RM's 2011 auction kicks off on Thursday with an exclusive "The British Are Back" evening sale before the traditional Friday sale. Celebrating a host of great British marques, notable early entries include a 1921 Rolls-Royce 40/50HP Silver Ghost Phaeton (est. \$350,000-475,000); a 1959 Aston Martin/Jaguar C-Type Roadster (shown upper right); and a 1932 Rolls-Royce Phantom II Newmarket Sport Phaeton (est. \$300,000-450,000).

FRIDAY, JANUARY 21: 11 FERRARIS INCLUDING RARE 166 MM

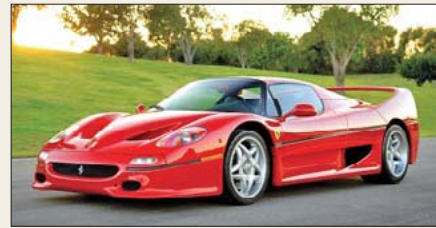
Originally commissioned for the 1949 Paris Motor Show, and painted in the Argentinean racing colors of yellow and blue, this race-bred 1949 Ferrari 166 MM Touring Barchetta, chassis number 0024 M, is considered one of the rarest and most historic early Ferraris, owned and raced by many notables. The tenth of just 25 examples featuring striking "Barchetta" coachwork from Carrozzeria Touring of Milan, it made its racing debut at the 1950 Mar del Plata in Argentina, finishing first overall. It was also raced in period in the 1951 Mille Miglia, driven by well-known female driver Aprile Palmer, who purchased the car shortly after. The subject of a complete and total restoration, 0024 M is today finished in red and fitted with its original components, including chassis,

numbers-matching engine, gearbox and differential. As an original entrant in the famed Mille Miglia it is eligible for nearly any event open to historic Ferraris.

The 166 MM (shown below) will be joined by 10 other Ferraris, including a 1973 Ferrari 365 GTB/4 Daytona Spyder, s/n 16835, from the collection of Baseball Hall of Famer Reggie Jackson (est. \$800,000-1,000,000); a fully-certified 1966 Ferrari Superfast Series I, s/n 5989 SF (est. \$900,000-1,100,000); a fully-restored 1950 Ferrari 166 Inter Berlinetta, s/n 043S, displayed at the 1950 Turin Motor Show and one of just 37 produced (est. \$400,000-600,000); the 1995 Ferrari F50 Show Car, s/n 99999 (shown at right), used to introduce the F50 to the world and the last Ferrari with a five-digit chassis number (est. \$700,000-800,000); and a 1967 Ferrari 330 GTC Coupe, s/n 10199 (est. \$220,000-250,000).

OTHER FEATURED CONSIGNMENTS

- A multiple award-winning 1933 Packard Twelve Sport Phaeton by Dietrich, the 1933 New York Show Car and previously part of the famed Otis Chandler Collection (est. \$1,500,000-2,000,000);
- A meticulously-restored, multiple award-winning 1939 Bugatti Type 57C Three-Position Drophead Coupe (shown at right), boasting an intriguing World War II provenance (est. \$750,000-850,000);
- A 1964 Dodge Hemi Charger Concept Car (shown at right), the ultimate of all muscle and concepts cars and likely the most important Hemi-powered car in existence (est. \$750,000-1,000,000);
- A superbly restored 1966 Shelby 427 Cobra, CSX 3259 (est. \$650,000-750,000); and,
- A pair of Mercedes-Benz 300SL Coupes, including an early production example from 1954 formerly owned by Benihana founder, Rocky Aoki (est. \$450,000-550,000); a beautifully restored 1955 model presented in Graphite Gray with a red leather interior (est. \$700,000-800,000).



ADMISSION AND FURTHER INFORMATION
An official auction catalog is available for \$120 and admits two people to the preview. Bidder registration is \$200 and includes an official auction catalog and admission for two to the previews, reception and auctions. For those unable to attend the event in person, Internet, absentee, telephone and iPhone bidding options are available, and the auction will stream live online at www.rmauctions.com to provide real-time coverage.

RM Auctions is the official auction house of the Amelia Island Concours d'Elegance and now also the Concorso d'Eleganza Villa d'Este, and presents auctions worldwide all year. For full information and details, visit www.rmauctions.com or call 519-352-4575. ■

Photos: Ferrari - Hugh Hamilton; Dodge Shooterz.biz; Bugatti Darin Schnabel; Ferrari Tom Maule Studios Princeville, Aston/Jaguar Darin Schnabel - ©2010 courtesy of RM Auctions

Russo and Steele

11th Annual Sports and Muscle in Scottsdale

Wednesday-Sunday, January 19-23, 2011
N Scottsdale Road and E Mayo Boulevard at AZ Loop 101 - Scottsdale

Russo and Steele is upgrading infrastructure this year. "Our clients can prepare for a dramatic change to the event site," says auction owner Drew Alcazar, "featuring our new Losberger main auction structure. Manufactured in Germany, this new structure will afford an 'all encompassing environment' in which to hold all the event elements."

FEATURED CONSIGNMENTS:

1968 SHELBY GT500KR KING OF THE ROAD

In April 1968 Shelby American and Ford announced the GT500KR "King of the Road." Legend says that Carroll Shelby heard Chevy was going to make a "King of the Road" Corvette, so he had his attorney secure the trademark first. The difference between a GT500KR and GT500 is mainly its 428 Cobra Jet engine, producing over 400 hp. Ford allotted 3.5% or 159 GT500KRs to have Special Paint; of those, 86 were Special Yellow Fastbacks. This sample also has the original 4-speed manual transmission, one of only 38 produced and received the Concours Gold Award at the 2010 SAAC National Convention in Napa CA.

1965 SHELBY COBRA 427 CSX1001

This limited edition CSX1000 series Cobra began in England with a hand-formed AC aluminum body, one of only 12, then shipped to Shelby America. The CSX1001 was the only one completed as a Semi Competition Cobra for Carroll Shelby by Shelby America with the new all aluminum Shelby 427 Engine based on the original FE Engine Design. The new owner will receive the original title showing Carroll Shelby as the first owner of 1965 Shelby AC Cobra CXS1000.

1970 HEMI 'CUDA CONVERTIBLE

Top-tier collectible Plymouth muscle machines really began with the 1970 model built on an entirely new E-body platform with its huge engine bay and the introduction of Chrysler's hydraulic-lifter Street Hemi for the 'Cuda. This example is one of only 14 1970 Hemi 'Cuda Convertibles built and one of only 9 built with an automatic trans-

mission. Finished in correct FC7 white over a red interior, this Hemi 'Cuda Convertible is a verified, one-of-one with 425-hp 426-cu.in. Hemi V8 and Hemi-specific TorqueFlite 727 3-speed automatic transmission. With just 19,000 miles from new, it is as well-optioned as when it left the factory, with power steering, power front disc brakes, power windows, Rallye gauge package and more, and had a rotisserie restoration just over two years ago.

1970 NASCAR GRAND NATIONAL CAR #93

Grand National NASCAR owner Harold Furr, ambitious but underfunded, worked a deal for this 1970 Chevrolet Monte Carlo new at a dealer and sent it straight to Mack Howard's Garage to convert to race trim. A significant NASCAR veteran, its story takes so many twists and turns, you will want to hear it from Drew at sale. It has run as #93 and #00 at Talladega, Rockingham and Dover. In 2005, the car was restored as originally built: sheet metal, roll cage and even the drum brakes. The fuel container is original as is the dated fuel bladder. Even the air cleaner and driver's seat are original. In 2008, it ran 60 laps at the Darlington Festival of Speed.

1973 JAGUAR E TYPE V-12 ROADSTER

From its inception in the early 1960s, the Jaguar E-Type offered the perfect marriage of sleek beauty and performance. To many, the ultimate was the Series III 5.3-liter V12, with a longer wheelbase and four disc brakes. Rated at 272 hp when released, a new method of calculation in 1972 rerated it 112 hp., but the dual SU carburetors were unchanged and these beauties were just as powerful as the earlier editions. Just 7,990 Series III V-12 Jaguar convertibles were produced. Offered at no reserve, this 1973 Jaguar E-Type roadster has been

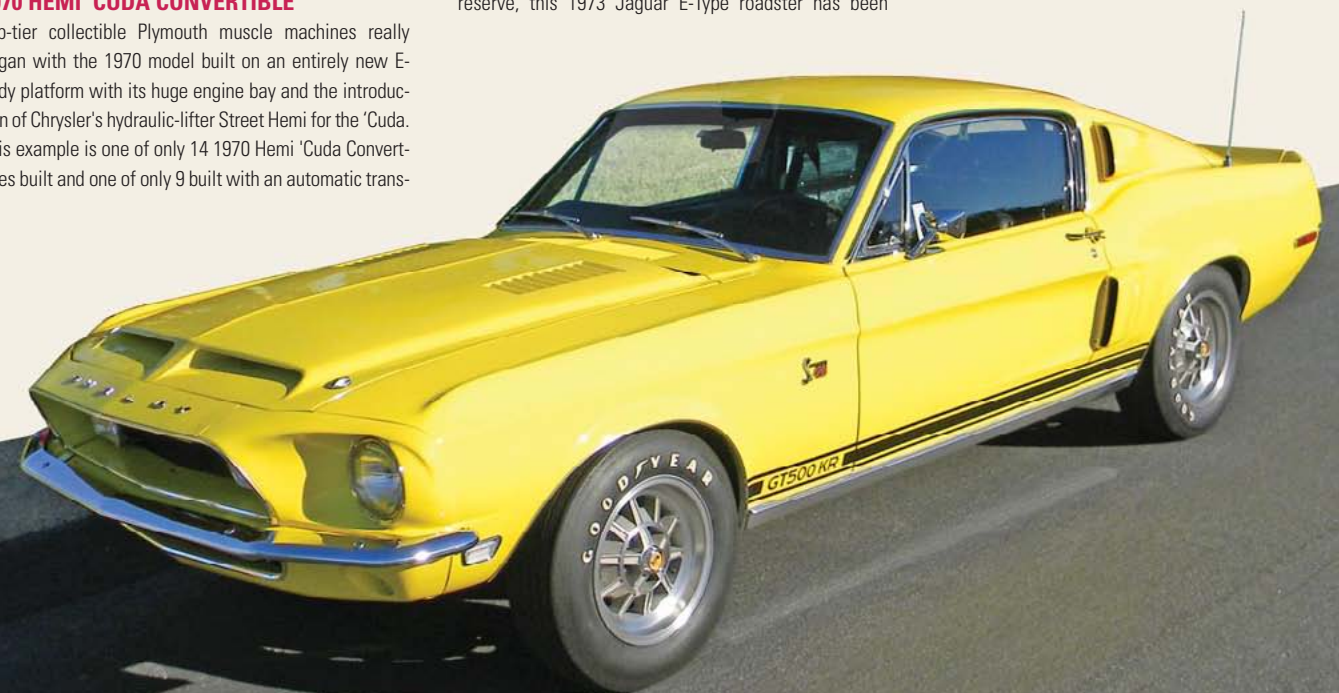


completely and professionally restored to show condition and as such is ready for any JCNA event.

ADMISSION AND FURTHER INFORMATION

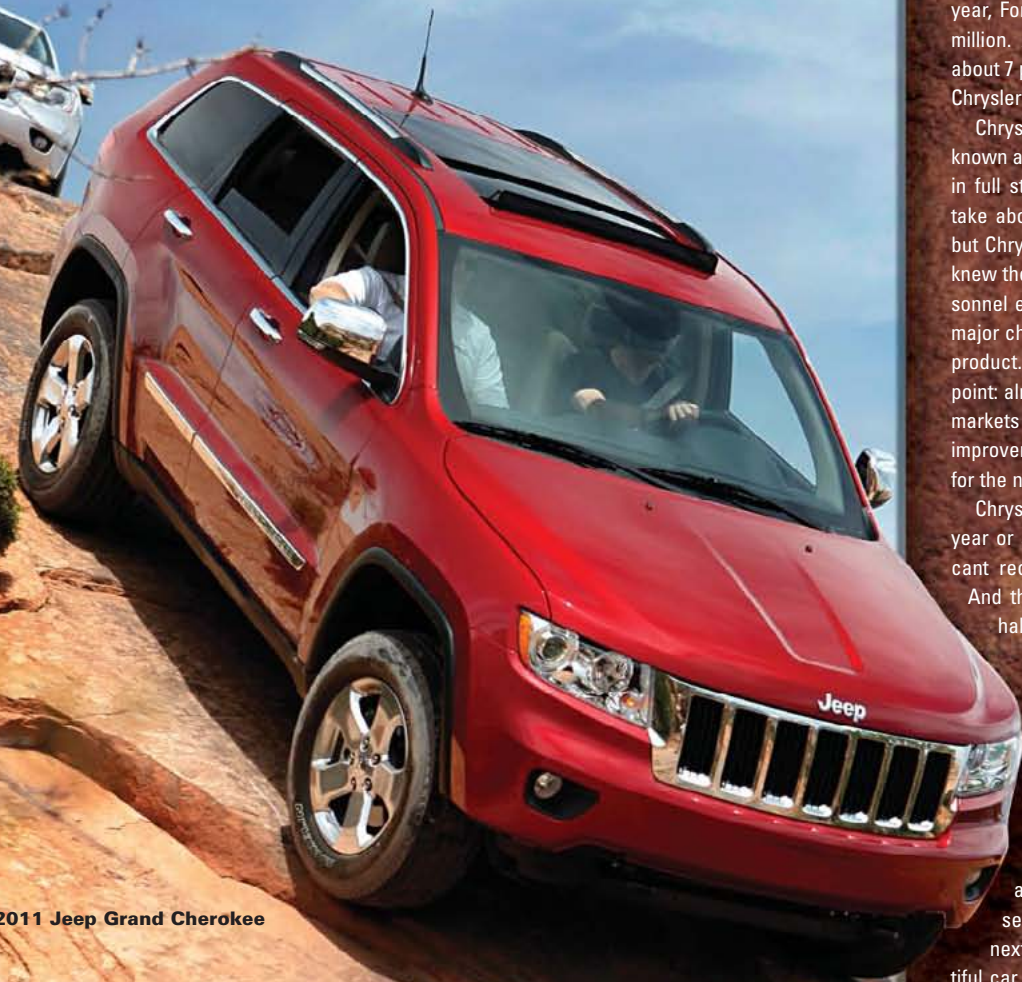
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Photos (5); courtesy of Russo and Steele



"Best ever" Grand Cherokee leads big upgrades from Jeep®

by Joe Sage



2011 Jeep Grand Cherokee

Arizona is major Jeep® country. Jeep folks tell us Airpark Chrysler-Jeep is one of the biggest Jeep dealers in the US. So when they have big news, they like to bring it here first. We met Jeep engineers and managers in Paradise Valley recently for a runthrough of what's new with not one, not two, but three iconic Jeep products.

Everyone knows GM and Chrysler utilized federal loans during the onset of the financial crisis, while Ford made it through having leveraged all its assets just beforehand. Chrysler is the smallest of the three: GM posts about 2 million unit sales a year, Ford about 1.7 million and Chrysler under a million. As markets recover, GM's sales are up about 7 percent for 2010, Ford over 21 percent, and Chrysler about 16.5 percent.

Chrysler's smaller size has long made them well known as very nimble, bringing concepts to market in full style and record time. Most new vehicles take about 4.5 years from concept to showroom, but Chrysler often beats that. In these times, they knew they had to move faster than ever. Jeep personnel explain to us that a new CEO has brought major changes in people, processes, culture... and product. The new Grand Cherokee is a case in point: already well along in development when the markets tanked, they invented new ways to make improvements "on the fly" that may have waited for the next model, in the past.

Chrysler had seemed pretty quiet for the last year or so, but with a purpose. There are significant recent releases from Chrysler and Dodge. And they have been especially busy with their halo Jeep brand. Now, the wraps come off three Jeeps with big, big changes.

2011 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE

We've heard "all new" before, and here are those magic words again, but Jeep marketing chief Chris Ellis adds emphasis: "every bit." Recognizing the Grand Cherokee is their top-of-the-line model, and that people are ready to part with some serious cash for one (see pricing in sidebar, next page), Jeep set out to make this "a beautiful car, thoroughly modern, and competitive with any luxury make." That's a tall order, when coupled with the requirement that it still be "at a glance, a Jeep." And how have they done? Extremely well.

The company says this is their most capable Jeep ever (which implicitly means off-roading, another tall order given the presence of the Wrangler), while also being the most refined Jeep on-road, ever. Does the combination mean trade-offs on either? Ellis makes it clear there is zero compromise either on- or off-road.

Development of the new Grand Cherokee began before the Daimler divorce was final, so there are certain structural elements in common with the Mercedes-Benz ML-Class. But Ellis makes clear that all has been revised and/or enhanced to become a Jeep. Electronics have been changed,

as have the drive systems and the structure itself. The two were "separated at birth," he says, and no-one would ever mistake the two.

The Grand Cherokee's comes with a 5.7-liter V8 or the all-new 3.6-liter Pentastar V6 (the first application of this engine). The V6 boasts a range of about 500 miles per fill-up. Since you can take this vehicle anywhere whatsoever, this is a plus.

There are three different four-wheel-drive systems: Quadra-Trac I, a one-speed transfer case, Quadra-Trac II, a two-speed transfer case, and Quadra-Drive II, a fully-automatic full-time system with locks for both the front and rear axles. A Selec-Terrain system sets suspension and tractive capability for rock, sand/mud, snow, sport—or auto. And Quadra-Lift active air suspension provides additional ground clearance of 2.6 inches on demand—10.7 inches total—and automatically lowers at highway speeds. The Grand Cherokee's on- and off-road pedigrees are ready to tackle any surface, or even speed bumps and driveways. The raised suspension can also help with everyday ingress and egress. Access is further enhanced by keyless entry and start, wider front and rear doors, and a door opening angle of 73 degrees. The rear adds four inches of knee and legroom. And cargo volume has been increased by 19 percent—all while maintaining the all-important Rubicon Trail width overall. Rear cargo space is accessible through a full gate or a flip-glass rear window—the only such vehicle left in this class.

One more example of the Grand Cherokee's serious off-road character is its steel skid plates. When cross-shopping, Jeep says "ask about skid plates—or don't—you'll find out sooner or later." The engineers love driving their creation, and they like to challenge themselves: Ellis tells us they have not yet found a place the Grand Cherokee will *not* go—but they keep trying, "just because it's fun." For the most serious off-roading, the entire front fascia can be easily removed, using just six clips and no tools. The Grand Cherokee also sports two frame-attached front tow hooks—rare anymore on any SUV.

The Grand Cherokee boasts all-new front and rear suspension, body stiffness that is 146 percent higher than its predecessor, and radically reduced NVH (noise-vibration-harshness) specs. There is a full-size spare, stowed inside (along with a tool kit), where it's clean (tuxedo time) and accessible (when stuck in snow or mud or hooked up to tow).

Towing? With its V6 engine, the Grand Cherokee is rated for 5000 pounds; with the V8, 7400 pounds. One sweet detail is the inclusion of both 4- and 7-prong plugs, built-in and weatherproof.

Ellis saves his favorite for last. "Finally, we have an interior that's appropriate to the Grand Cherokee," he says, from the basic Laredo (start-

ing at \$30,215; see sidebar) to the Overland (\$41,910 base) with its stitched leather armrests and instrument panel. The steering wheel is new (on all Jeeps), with more controls to keep your hands on the wheel.

From mud ruts to ballroom valet, the new Grand Cherokee seems ready to tackle it all. Flexibility—the ability to "use it however you want," in Ellis's words—is deeply embedded in the Grand Cherokee's DNA.

2011 JEEP WRANGLER

Nothing in the Jeep lineup is more iconic than the Wrangler, and updating an icon is one of the more terrifying tasks a design and engineering team faces. The Wrangler "has always been and will always be the most capable off-road vehicle in the world," says Ellis (who lets us know he used to work for Land Rover). The biggest changes for the 2011 Wrangler are an all-new interior, an optional color-matched hard top, and power mirrors, handier than ever when navigating the rocky narrows.

The factory body-colored hardtop (available at first on the Sahara models only), "changes the character of the car as much as anything we've ever done," says Ellis. Reactions have been positive, so much so that dealers are getting requests already—"very wealthy requests"—to make this available on the top-of-the-line Rubicon. Expect this to happen. The color top is, of course, removable, the only caveat being that you'll have to be a little more careful with it, as it can scratch more easily.

Windows are enlarged on the sides and in the back. There is an entirely new instrument panel,



2011 Jeep Wrangler, Patriot and Grand Cherokee



2011 Jeep Wrangler Unlimited



2011 Jeep Wrangler



KEEP RIGHT >>

including a center stack with new knobs, not as recessed, and more precise controls overall. One-touch up/down windows may sound like a luxury, but can prove extremely useful in challenging off-road conditions. The external side mirrors are not only powered, but heated. Power means no more stopping, reaching and opening the windows to adjust. The locking console has soft-touch surfaces. A grab bar includes "since 1941" to recall the Jeep's early military heritage.

In the face of these new conveniences, the Wrangler's capabilities are in no way diminished. You can remove the top, remove the doors, fold the windshield flat—and it's still street legal (and off-road king). Drain plugs under the carpet let you use the Wrangler as intended and still hose it out up to instrument panel level.

The main difference between the 2-door and 4-door Wranglers is the breakover angle (approach angles are the same) and overall length. You'll also want to compare towing capacities. The 4-door Wrangler Unlimited has performed its own magic, bringing more high-income customers to the brand. Interestingly, the 4-door Wrangler Unlimited not only doubled Wrangler's sales volume, but the split has gone from 50/50 to 60/40 in favor of 4-door Wrangler Unlimited sales. Ellis tells us the 2-vs-4 option is "not a tough decision for most people."

If you're sold on the new Wrangler, be advised you're not alone. The plant is running at full capacity, and there are no incentives. Order now. Or maybe wait, as they tell us to stay tuned for another major change on the Wrangler in 2012.

2011 JEEP PATRIOT

"The Patriot should be better known," Ellis tells us right off the bat. Jeep claims this is "the most capable off-road vehicle" and delivers the best fuel economy (less subjective) in its class. They've been tackling its identity deficit; for example, the Patriot was on display and available for demos at the Easter Jeep Safari in Moab UT last year, where it was voted "Most Fun." And Moab voters are as tough as they come. They've already seen a significant sales increase on the prior model.

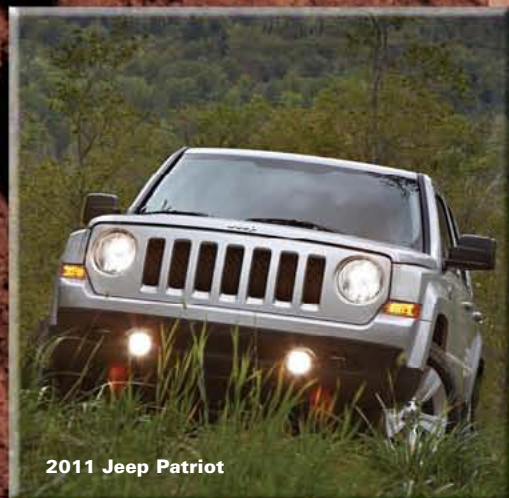
While the team was in Moab, they decided to put it to extreme tests themselves—to "try to break it," as Ellis puts it. They tried to find anything the Patriot could *not* do. Nada. Actively *trying* to break it (the engineers love this sort of thing), all they could do was bang it up a little.

Jeep spokesperson Kathy Graham tells us the Patriot is "truly a Jeep, part of the family," and that it fits well between the Grand Cherokee and the Wrangler. The Jeep lineup has expanded considerably over the past several years—Grand Cherokee, Patriot, Liberty, Compass, Wrangler—so we're not surprised if there may be a bit of confusion or overload in the marketplace. But it's easy to place the Patriot in the lineup if you think of it as a replacement for the classic un-grand Cherokee. At least that's how we tend to see it—affordable, well-appointed and totally capable—and evoca-

tive of the old Cherokee's styling.

Graham tells us the 2011 Patriot has minor front and rear fascia changes, but it looks very different overall because it has received a black lower body treatment all around, which at the rear emphasizes the vehicle's off-road exit angle. This is a great update—simple but very strong. Another detail in the rear: Ellis tells us his wife actually saw a prior Patriot in traffic in Michigan and inquired, "why is that gas tank hanging down?" Epiphany. That was the muffler assembly, and it is now black (with bright metal exhaust tips).

The Patriot has improvements in its structure, NVH, ride and handling, plus one inch more ground clearance for better off-road performance. The



2011 Jeep Patriot



2011 Jeep Patriot

interior has been revised with soft-touch materials, and new larger wheels are available.

EENY MEENY

Compare the fundamentals in the sidebar at right, and you may be able to pick the best Jeep for your needs. You may balance base-level specifications against options—e.g. a base Grand Cherokee for less than a tricked-out Liberty. But factor in seats, towing, horsepower, even style and feel ... and it all starts to come into focus. Then head to the dealer and slip behind the wheel. ■

PICKING YOUR JEEP®

There are models and options other than those below, but for comparison we're showing the base (4x2 on all except all-4x4 Wrangler), then top trim models (with 4x4, because, after all, these are Jeeps). There are other tradeoffs possible, but we sought to max out the cost here. For that reason, we even chose automatics on Wranglers, which we'd never really do. On some, we chose an up-priced color, even if not our favorite. We chose leather seats, though maybe less practical for good mudding. We maxed towing capacity on each. The overlap between function and options is as intriguing as always, but you'll Jeep has lots of possibilities well covered.

2011 JEEP GRAND CHEROKEE

Horsepower290 to 360 hp
 Seats5
 Towing capacity7400 lbs
 Est. fuel economyup to 23 mpg
 Starting price\$30,215
 Overland 4x4 starting price\$41,910
 Maxed out, approx\$48,520

2011 JEEP LIBERTY

Horsepower210 hp
 Seats5
 Towing capacity5000 lbs
 Est. fuel economyup to 22 mpg
 Starting price\$23,250
 Jet Unlimited 4x4 starting price\$29,245
 Maxed out, approx\$34,125

2011 JEEP PATRIOT

Horsepower158 hp
 Seats5
 Towing capacity2000 lbs
 Est. fuel economyup to 29 mpg
 Starting price\$15,995
 Latitude X 4x4 starting price\$24,595
 Maxed out, approx\$30,330

2011 JEEP WRANGLER

Horsepower202 hp
 Seats4
 Towing capacity2000 lbs
 Est. fuel economyup to 19 mpg
 Starting price\$22,045
 Rubicon 4x4 starting price\$29,995
 Maxed out, approx\$37,400

2011 JEEP WRANGLER UNLIMITED

Horsepower202 hp
 Seats5
 Towing capacity3500 lbs
 Est. fuel economyup to 19 mpg
 Starting price\$25,545
 Unlimited Rubicon 4x4 st. price\$32,745
 Maxed out, approx\$40,115

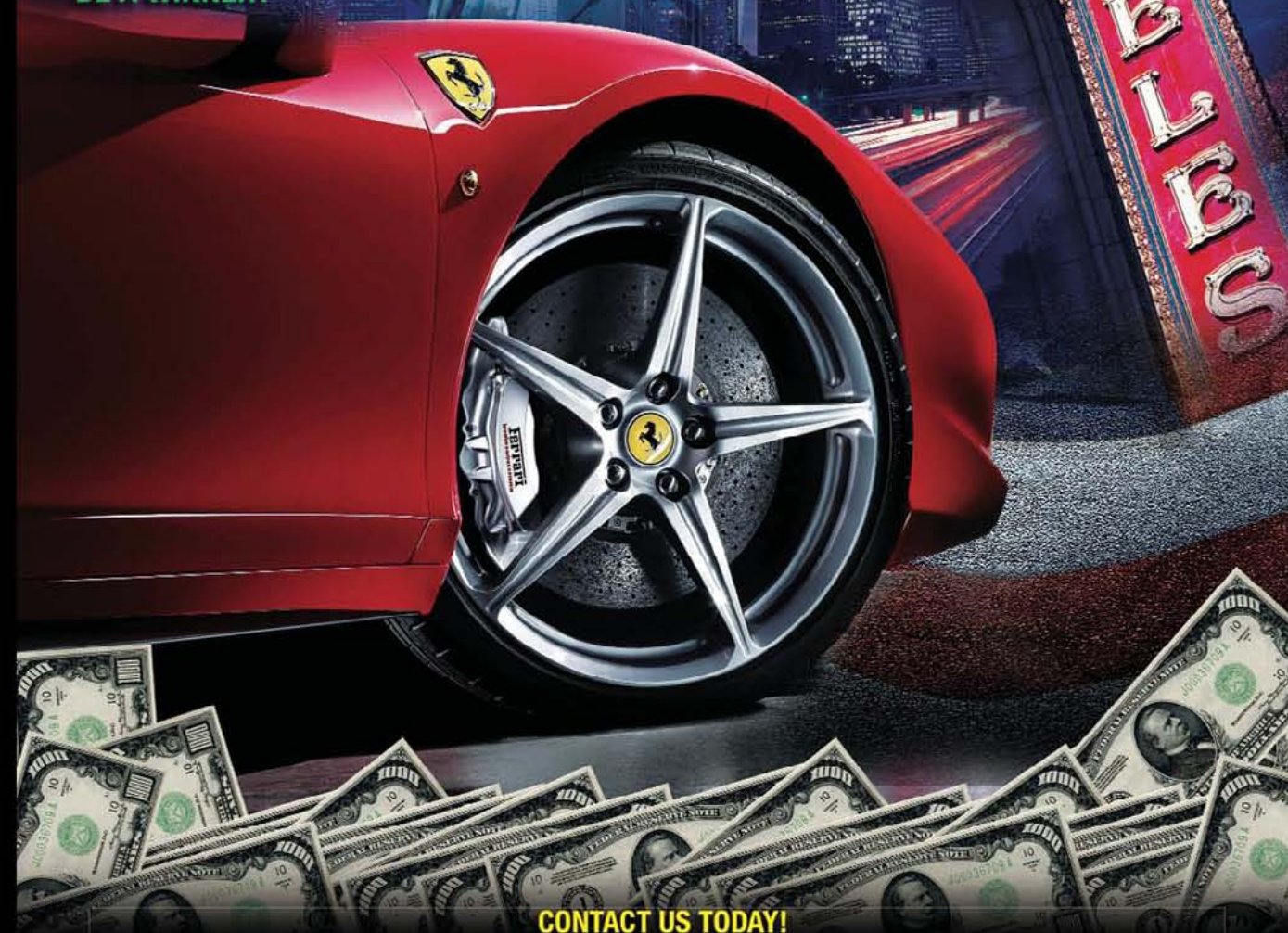
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Climate-friendly ragtop revisited

We covered the all-new 2010 E-Class sedan and coupe launch in Las Vegas, had a followup E-Class for a week and covered the also-all-new E-Class Cabriolet launch in the Smoky Mountains last spring, where a rainy and chilly day put this "four-season convertible" to the test. But any E-Class is a treat, and we welcomed a full week with the E350 Cabriolet in Arizona. We were still curious about a couple of things.

AIRSCARF® AND AIRCAP®. The AIRSCARF, already introduced with the SL roadster, pushes warming air from the headrests around the front occupants' necks. The AIRCAP, new with the E-Class Cabriolet, extends an airfoil above the windshield frame, calming the flow of air in the cabin, especially notable in the back seat.

HOT WEATHER. We had wondered whether the cocoon effect, with windows up and AIRCAP deployed, would help maintain some semblance of an air-conditioned open cabin with the top down, even at, say, 110 degrees. (The AIRSCARF and seats provide heat, but not cooling, just ventilation.) Last spring, we had inquired with one of the Mercedes-Benz engineers on hand in North Carolina. He had explained that actual cooling in the seat and neck areas can cause muscle fatigue, so active ventilation is their approach. A feed of cooler air from below the seats is intended to keep you dry on a really hot day. "Even when it's 117?" we asked. "Even when it's 117," though even he had to laugh at the possibility.

CHILLY WEATHER. It was raining so hard at times in the Smokies, we had to keep the top up during the chilliest times. These systems help with temperature and

wind, but not so much with rain. So we still could benefit from trying some dry but cool and windy weather.

ANY WEATHER. In Arizona, we could conceivably have all extremes in the same week, you never know.

We received the car in late October, cold and rainy. It was 106° a couple of weeks prior, but now 60°. We thought, take a convertible out, in this?! But it's all about the AIRSCARF and AIRCAP, we reminded ourselves, so if it would at least stop raining hard, we'd have the cool weather to give it a try. It never got hot during that October week, so we still hope to try the 100-plus-degree experiment—but for now we could guess.



E350 CABRIOLET LOGBOOK

- The AIRSCARF comes on at max level (3) like a good heated seat; hit again to bring it down to 2, 1 or off—the best design.
- Just two weeks after temps in the 100s, we think 73° is chilly, but there's not much effect from the AIRSCARF's flow, which is probably not much warmer. In the evening, though, we come to a traffic light and feel the warmth from the AIRSCARF quite readily. We're sure the effect would be dramatic a month or so later, at 50° or so.
- Raising the AIRCAP also raises the rear headrests and deflector. We reach our arm back and definitely feel more turbulence till raise the AIRCAP, on surface streets; on the freeway, we feel less difference.
- We raised the AIRCAP after more rain, to show a colleague, who noticed the screen was chock-full of dead bugs—with aroma.
- Our notes confused AIRSCARF and AIRCAP at times; we may not be alone on this.
- "What, no AIRMUFFs?" asked one friend.
- The car came without active ventilated seats, so between that and our timing, we have our Phoenix summer E-Class Cabriolet hot weather experiment yet to perform.
- 5300 miles of test drivers, but nobody had adjusted the audio: everything was at neutral. We boosted bass and treble a little, set the fader one step toward the rear, and most significantly turned on the Logic 7 Surround Sound. Bingo: way better sound.
- About 20 seconds to lower the top and 22.7 to raise it, depending how you deal with windows. You can start raising while still in motion at lower speeds, a big plus.
- This smaller 350 is plenty peppy; we find ourselves 5 mph over the limit without even trying; pulling the driver's seat back a hair solved that. Idles so smoothly, we almost started it a second time. A definitely likable car, features galore. Nice above-average suspension, firm on pavement seams, comfortable on speed bumps. The Cabriolet is a great member of the E-Class family. ■

JOE SAGE



Russian Roulette.



When is a cell phone a weapon? Whenever you drive a car and use one. It's that simple. And that deadly. Last year, nearly 6,000 fatalities and over half a million injuries were caused by distracted drivers. In fact, texting behind the wheel is so dangerous that it can impair a driver's response time by 18% - or the seconds-it takes to miss a stop sign, run an intersection and broadside a family.

Whatever you have to say can wait. Unless it's goodbye.™



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MOUNTAIN GOAT

BY BILL SCHAFFER

As the small twin-engine prop plane circled on final approach to the Telluride Regional Airport, I began to get a sense of what the next three days would be like. Located at 9,070 feet above sea level, this is the highest commercial airport in North America, and about 50 yards to the south of the runway, I saw that the mesa drops more than 1,000 feet to the valley below—frightening and beautiful all at the same time.

The next morning, Bob Burns, Land Rover's chief driving instructor and the head of our Colorado expedition, began briefing the 16 members of our group, telling us we would be driving about 80 miles in two days. We would be on paved highways for about 15 miles, and the rest would be dirt, rock and an occasional stream. What he failed to say was that the last couple of miles of the trip, we would be dropping about 2,000 feet down the face of a cliff.

An hour later, I was turning off a paved Telluride street onto Tomboy Road, driving a supercharged 510-horsepower Land Rover Range Rover. Burns explained on the two-way radio that this rough narrow path was originally a stagecoach road, cut over the mountain by miners in the late 1880s to haul supplies in and gold and silver out of the San Juan Mountains.

The road climbed up the side of the mountain, passing through an occasional tunnel cut through the rocks and providing spectacular views of the Telluride Valley below Bridal Veil Falls. At the recommenda-

tion of the Land Rover driving instructor assigned to me, I turned the Range Rover's Terrain Response® dial to the "Grass-Gravel-Snow" setting, which was designed for firm surfaces with a coating of loose materials like the gravel we were experiencing. This automatically raised the vehicle ride height for better clearance, shifted the transfer case to low range and switched on the Hill Descent Control system.

Tomboy Road was like a time machine, leading us through the ruins of mining camps and fields of ore tailings that more than 100 years ago produced millions of dollars' worth of gold and silver. (That doesn't seem like much now, but remember gold was \$21 per ounce then, and today it's over \$1,300 per ounce.) After a couple of hours bumping up the rocky road, traversing rocks and climbing up a few steep sections, the ten Land Rovers reached the saddle of Imogene Pass. At 13,114 feet elevation, we had a panorama of mountain peaks and a view of Telluride about 4,300 feet below.

The shiny Land Rovers with their posh leather, wood and aluminum interiors were a stark contrast to the rocky, treeless mountain. The vehicle was so comfortable and easy to drive, it made me almost feel like an armchair spectator to my own adventure.

We paused for a half hour to soak in the view, stare down at where we had been and drink more water. At this altitude, not consuming mass quantities of water can lead to dehydration and altitude sickness.

Moving down long steep slopes on the northern side of Imogene Pass, we

stopped beside a creek for lunch under the watchful eyes of several deer. Then it was a downhill run on better dirt roads through Camp Bird and Thistledown to our destination of Ouray and a night in the historic Beaumont Hotel.

The Beaumont opened in 1887 during the height of the Colorado gold boom and was the social and business hub of the area. After being boarded up for more than 35 years, it was purchased at auction and went through a five-year restoration, returning it to its original elegant state, including furnishings, wallpaper patterns and carpeting. Owners Dan and Mary King did add modern conveniences like air conditioning, television and wireless internet service to make the 12 rooms more comfortable for modern travelers when it reopened in December 2003.

At its prime, the Beaumont played host to travelers like Theodore Roosevelt, Herbert Hoover, Sarah Bernhardt and King Leopold of Belgium.

After drinks in the Voodoo Lounge and an excellent dinner in the Tundra dining room, I retired for a good night's sleep.

For the second part of our adventure, I switched to the new Land Rover LR4, powered by a 375-hp 5.0-liter V8. This mid-level model has nearly all the same drivetrain features as the flagship Range Rover I had driven the day before, but it's not quite as luxurious. Of course, luxurious is a relative term, and the LR4 is still nicer and more capable than nearly any other SUV on the trail or the road.

Day two started with our Land Rover caravan driving south out of Ouray on the Million Dollar Highway, which was originally a toll road built in 1883 to reach the mining districts around Red Mountain Pass between Ouray and Silverton. In typi-

cal Land Rover style, we quickly exited the paved road onto the Alpine Loop, which was essentially a back road to Silverton.

After a few hours of challenging Alpine Loop roads, we arrived in Silverton for an excellent lunch at the Handlebars Restaurant. The popular restaurant was packed with tourists who had just arrived on the D&SNGRR (Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad) that runs back and forth each day between Durango and Silverton.

Sitting in a valley at 9,305 feet above sea level, Silverton is the product of the miners and sturdy souls who ran the businesses and services used by the miners. This was a difficult place to live, especially in the harsh winters. The cemetery documents extensive deaths from snow slides, consumption, pneumonia, influenza and most of all mining accidents.

Leaving Silverton, we drove a few more miles on pavement, going north this time, on the Million Dollar Highway to Red Mountain Pass, elevation 11,018 feet. Turning off the pavement on to Black Bear Pass the first thing you see is a sign that reads:

Telluride

City of Gold

12 miles – 2 Hours

You don't have to be crazy to drive this road – but it helps.

Jeeps Only

In the world of off-road vehicles, Jeeps are king, but the Land Rovers are even better.

After a short steep drive, we reached the top of Black Bear Pass at the 12,840-foot level and stopped to take photos of the group before starting our descent into Telluride, just over 4,000 feet below.

I started down the hanging valley on the road, which is labeled "One Way." I'm used to one-way streets in cities, but don't expect this type of traffic control on a mountaintop. However, as I would soon see, the road is cut back and forth across the steep face of a mountain, and there is barely room for one vehicle, let alone two. One day each summer, the direction is reversed for an annual Jeep Jamboree, however.

Initially, the road parallels Ingram Creek as it flows toward the end of the hanging valley. Suddenly, the valley disappears and I am on the edge of a cliff looking down more than 2,000 feet toward Telluride. The road drops over the edge and becomes a narrow pathway cut into the side of a steep rock covered cliff. As if that's not scary enough, the path's surface is covered with loose rock. Now I'm hoping that the improvements to the Terrain Response system are as good as they say.

The 2011 Land Rover Terrain Response system is equipped with a new Hill Start Assist

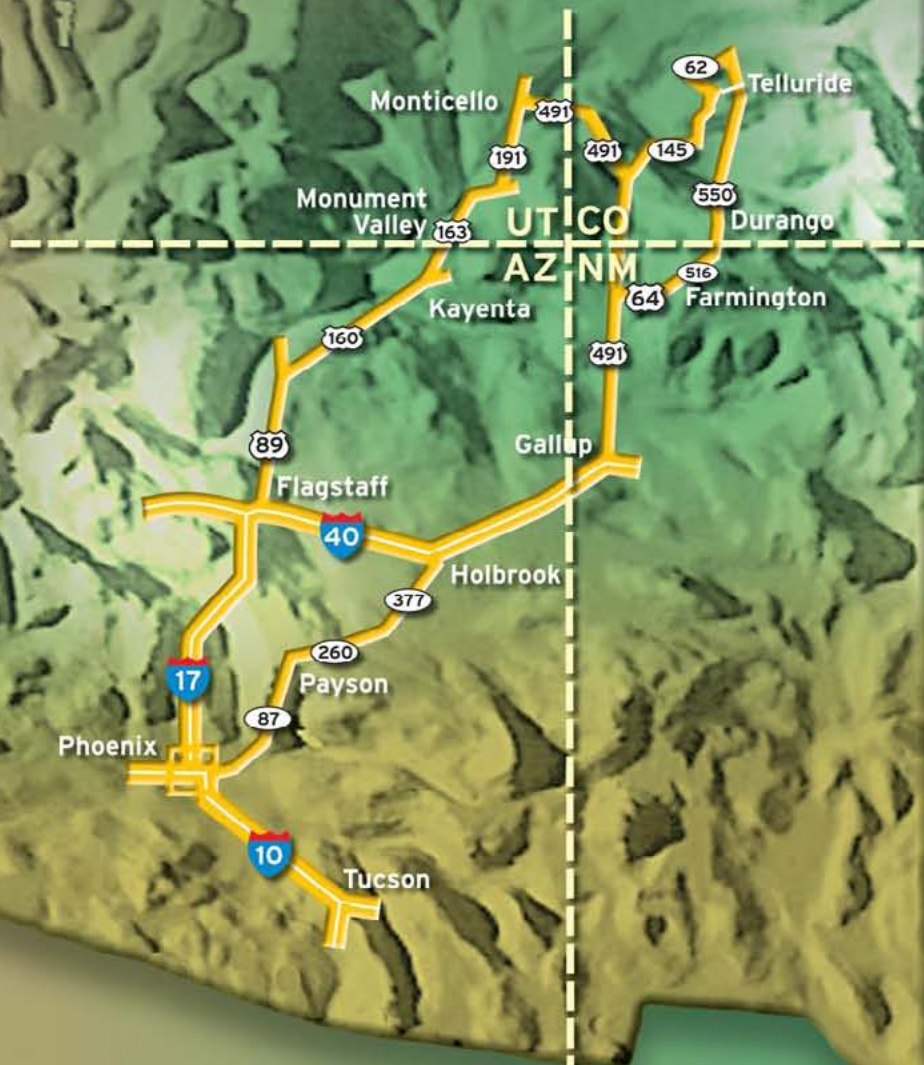
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DRIVING TO OURAY, SILVERTON AND TELLURIDE

- One of the wonders of living and driving in Arizona is that Colorado is a neighboring state (touching at just one geometrical point, at Four Corners), yet there is no one major highway between the two. It would be a very different world had they built an Interstate from Denver to Phoenix, and not necessarily for the better, as the various ways to get from Arizona to the northern and central Rockies are all among the finest drives anyone could find, anywhere.
- We've done all these drives countless times, and it generally boils down to whether we're headed to northwest Colorado or Denver. But going to southwest Colorado can be done with a little of either of the above—or both. Routes described here are from metro Phoenix, but it's not hard to adapt them to your own map, if you're starting in a different part of the state.
- To get to northwest Colorado, there is one best route: north to Flagstaff, north on US 89 from there for a bit, east to Kayenta, then north through one of the most iconic parts of the American West, Monument Valley, which is on the Navajo Nation, straddling the Arizona-Utah border, but despite its iconic Arizona style, actually mostly in Utah. Time your trip so you have daylight for Monument Valley—it's a sight to see—then depending on your timing, you can

- stay in Bluff (check out the Desert Rose Inn) or Monticello (a variety of small-town motels). For Monument Valley alone (plus for more wide-open desert highway time), this is also a great way to head to or from Telluride, at least in one direction.
- When driving to northern New Mexico, central Colorado or sometimes Denver, unless you are a fan of Interstates-first-and-always, we recommend a dash up the Beeline Highway, Arizona 87, from Mesa or Fountain Hills to Payson. After that, the route numbers change a few times, but the route itself is straightforward: through the Ponderosas, then across the piñons, meadows and edge of the Painted Desert to Holbrook. From there, it's I-40 to Gallup, New Mexico.
- From Gallup north, you can stay on US 491 past Shiprock NM, or you can turn east toward Farmington and enter Colorado near Durango. Either way, you're on your way to the loop of state roads that leads to the turnoff to Telluride. US 550 north of Durango will take you over Red Mountain Pass through Silverton and Ouray, though—a stretch you won't soon forget.
- And yes, as long as you're in that neck of the woods, you can cruise over to the Four Corners monument and put your hands and feet in four of our favorite states all at once. —JS



and Gradient Acceleration Control. Right now, the Hill Start Assist isn't as important, but the Gradient Acceleration Control could be a big help on the steep slippery path. It's a safety device that activates on severe inclines when the Hill Descent Control is not engaged. It pressurizes the brakes to slow the vehicle to a speed limit determined by throttle position when descending a slope in Drive or Reverse. If, for example, I accidentally canceled the Hill Descent Control, this would restrict speed to no more than 3 mph for 20 seconds, thereby allowing me to re-gain control.

As I inch my way down the steep path, it's a dangerous balancing act. Get too close to the hill, and I scrape the vehicle and possibly cause rocks to fall, or get too close to the downhill side and have a tire slip off, which could send me on a thousand foot drop and likely death. (I did read earlier that the last deaths on the pass were in 2004.)

At the end of the first leg, the LR4 needs to be turned 180 degrees on a very small rocky ledge. This is where the driving instructors are invaluable in spotting how far I can go before having to back up. The sharp 37.6-foot turning radius of the LR4 is a big help, too. That's one sharp hairpin turn down and eight to go. Some turns are so sharp it's necessary to back up a couple of times to make the turn.

A fear of heights is out of the question on this trip. When I was on the downhill side of the vehicle, I was looking straight down onto one of the other Land Rovers below me. There would be no place for me to stand, if I had to get out of the vehicle—the path is so narrow, the tires on the downhill side are just inches from the edge.

However, the view from the face of Black Bear Pass was amazing, as I actually looked down on the 365-foot-high Bridal Veil Falls and the house with the electric generating plant that sits on a rock next to the falls.

With the mountain-goat-like surefootedness of the LR4, I zigzag my way down the 2,000-foot cliff. At the bottom, I am reminded of what my friend David Schmidt, a fellow auto writer, says each time he gets out of a car: "We cheated death again!"

On a recent trip to Southern California I was in awe at the number of Land Rovers on the streets, especially the high-end Range Rover models. I wonder if those people realize what their vehicles can actually do. ■

BILL AND BARBARA SCHAFFER drive more than 150 new vehicles annually, covering automotive launches, tests and events. Bill grew up in a small Ford dealership in Montana; after college, he worked in newspaper advertising, publishing and printing. Barbara spent her early years in newspaper advertising before migrating into real estate. Along the way she has owned a '36 Ford five-window coupe, a 1963 split window Corvette Stingray and a Mercedes-Benz Gullwing.



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electric cat

FOUR-WHEEL-DRIVE ELECTRIC SUPERCAR CONCEPT
0-TO-60 IN 3.4 SECONDS • 1180 LB-FT OF TORQUE
68 MILES ELECTRIC-ONLY • 205 MPH TOP SPEED
560 MILE RANGE WITH TWO MICRO-GAS TURBINES

The stunning Jaguar C-X75 range-extended electric supercar concept is further evidence that alternative powertrains are not to be feared and in many cases deserve high anticipation. The C-X75 was revealed at the Paris Motor Show, to celebrate 75 years of the marque and provide a glimpse into Jaguar's future and its commitment to beautiful, fast cars powered by sustainable means.

HERITAGE : The flowing lines and elegant forms of the Jetstream Silver C-X75 are inspired by the 1950s Jaguar C-Type and D-Type racers and 1966 XJ13 Le Mans prototype—described by Design Director Ian Callum as “arguably the most beautiful Jaguar ever made.”

Shorter and lower than current supercars, the car has a simple central fuselage and prominent wheel arches. In the absence of a conventional engine, designers and engineers had freedom in placement of components.

PROPULSION : The 205-mph four-wheel drive supercar is capable of running in purely electric (zero tailpipe emissions) mode for 68 miles on a six-hour domestic plug-in charge. Innovative, lightweight micro gas-turbines can

also very quickly and efficiently recharge its lithium-ion batteries, for a theoretical range of 560 miles. Developed with Bladon Jets, the miniaturized turbine blade—the first viable axial-flow micro-turbine—increases compression and efficiency to the point at which these can be a realistic power source. Each weighs just 77 lbs and produces 94 bhp (70kW) at a constant 80,000 rpm.

POWER : Energy is transmitted to the road by four independent electric motors, giving advantages in weight, distribution, packaging and efficiency. Each weighs just 110 lbs but produces 195bhp (145kW) and astonishing combined total torque of 1,180 lb-ft. The C-X75 is therefore four-wheel-drive without the weight of a purely mechanical set-up and with the ability to vector torque to each wheel across the full speed range, for improved stability, control and infinitely adjustable traction.

DRIVER-FOCUSED CABIN : The steering wheel, controls, main binnacle and pedal box all adjust towards the driver. The seats are attached to the bulkhead as in a single-seater racing car, and air to feed the turbines passes smoothly around them via channels in the body structure. A new driver interface uses high-resolution TFT touch-screens. Needles float on the periphery of twin cowls and sweep round the outer edge to display the status and rpm of the two turbines. The design team combined instrumentation ideas from the new XJ with

those from fighter aircraft to create virtual 3D “gimbals” the gauges wrap and rotate around for status updates.

ALUMINUM : Jaguar's expertise in aluminum goes back more than 50 years through the first XK120s, lightweight E-Types, the XK and all-new 2010 XJ. In the XJ, Jaguar fully realized aluminum's benefits to performance, agility, economy and sustainability in a luxury car. The C-X75 follows the same construction with an extruded and bonded aerospace-inspired aluminum chassis and body panels. Not only does this save weight, but aluminum is one of the most easily recyclable metals available.

AERODYNAMICS : Late Jaguar designer Malcolm Sayer elevated aerodynamics into an art form in cars such as the XJ13, the prototype from which the C-X75 draws inspiration. Jaguar has increased the design's aerodynamic efficiency dramatically by opening the front grille and brake cooling vents only when necessary. At the rear corners, vertical control surfaces engage at higher speeds to direct airflow aft of the rear wheels for increased stability and efficiency. The carbon-fiber rear diffuser includes an active aerofoil, lowered automatically as speed increases. Vanes in the exhaust ports then alter the directional flow of the gases to further increase the effectiveness of the Venturi tunnel. The car's elegantly simple fuselage section remains stable at very high speeds. And that, we'd like to try. ■



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RACE WEEK OFF-TRACK

Photos by Randall Bohl (www.randallbohl.com)

DANICA PATRICK AND MARK MARTIN field questions from fans. • A reproduction Wood Brothers Mercury Racecar, to be auctioned at Barrett-Jackson in January, raising money for the Darrell Gwynn Foundation, was unveiled before the race. • \$10,000 is presented to Kurt Warner's First Things First Foundation by PIR President Bryan R. Sperber, NASCAR champ Dale Jarrett and Arizona Diamondbacks pitcher Brandon Webb, shown with Kurt and Brenda Warner.



Quite a few things happen during the week before the first flag ever drops at Phoenix International Raceway. Fans, celebrities and celebrity fans mingled for a combination of fun and fundraising in the days leading up to November's NASCAR Kobalt Tools 500 weekend.

"OFFSPEED" HONORS KURT WARNER PHILANTHROPY

Former NASCAR champion driver **DALE JARRETT**, Arizona Diamondbacks Cy Young Award-winning pitcher **BRANDON WEBB** and Phoenix International Raceway President **BRYAN R. SPERBER** teamed up to host the annual "Offspeed" charitable fundraiser on November 10, where former Super Bowl MVP **KURT WARNER**—who retired earlier in the year after five seasons with the Arizona Cardinals—was honored for his community service. Warner, who led the St. Louis Rams to a Super Bowl championship in 1999, has been well known for philanthropic efforts during his playing career, and he continues to serve the community in retirement through his First Things First Foundation. Warner recently received the Payback Award for his contributions to the game and society, at Peyton Manning's annual charity event.

"Offspeed" was held at Frank and Albert's at the Arizona Biltmore Resort and benefitted The Dale Jarrett Foundation and Webb's K Foundation, both dedicated to helping children and families.

"It's not every day you can get a Daytona 500 winner, a Cy Young Award winner and a Super Bowl MVP together in the same room," Sperber said. "The fact that they will be joining forces with me to help raise money for children's charities makes this event even more special."

DRIVERS VISIT WITH RACE FANS AT PIR

Valley racing star **DANICA PATRICK**—driver of the #7 GoDaddy.com Chevrolet for JR Motorsports in the NASCAR Nationwide Series—and Mark Martin—driver of the #5 GoDaddy.com Chevrolet in the Sprint Cup Series—participated in a fan Q&A at Chase Field on Thursday, November 11. While Patrick has raced Indy Cars at PIR, November marked her NASCAR debut in Phoenix. Patrick had looked forward to returning to Phoenix. "It's a place I thought was cool in an Indy Car," she said. "It will be nice to sleep in my own bed. Phoenix is a great track ... challenging, and even more challenging in a stock car with less grip."

On Friday, November 12, PIR's Budweiser ROLL-BAR stage was open to all ticketed race fans, with a special section reserved for PIR season ticket holders, where Patrick and other drivers were on hand.

On Saturday, former motocross champion **RICKY CARMICHAEL**—competing in PIR's NASCAR Camping World Truck Series and NASCAR Nationwide Series events—appeared in ROLL-BAR and PIR's Octane Lounge, while former NASCAR Sprint Cup champion **RUSTY WALLACE** and son **STEVE WALLACE**—a NASCAR Nationwide Series driver—made fan appearances in PIR's Trackside Club.

RYAN NEWMAN, winner of April's SUBWAY Fresh Fit 600™ at PIR, and popular Sprint Cup driver **KASEY KAHNE** appeared inside the Budweiser ROLL-BAR Club on Sunday morning, November 14, for Q&A sessions with ticket-holders.

HOSPITALITY VENUES AT PIR

Just 50 feet from the track, overlooking PIR's backstretch, **TRACKSIDE CLUB** has unmatched views of racing action as well as the surrounding scenery, from its outdoor terrace. Catered meals, pre-race pit passes, VIP parking, and commemorative race tickets are all part of the experience at Trackside Club, with full weekend packages available.

OCTANE provides a full-service concierge and high-end dining, from hand-carved meats and fresh pastas to a sushi bar. Event packages include unlimited food and beverage, and wine tasting in

plush accommodations.

BUDWEISER ROLL-BAR is PIR's newest hospitality venue, just behind the Bobby Allison Grandstands at the west end of the track, with live entertainment, all-inclusive food and drink tickets during event weekends and a custom beer garden showcasing the #9 Budweiser car.

DARRELL GWYNN FOUNDATION

The **DARRELL GWYNN FOUNDATION** unveiled a custom-built Wood Brothers Mercury Racecar prior to the Nationwide Series WYPALL* 200 at PIR. The car is a replica of the one Hall of Fame-Elect **DAVID PEARSON** drove to defeat Hall of Fame Driver **RICHARD PETTY** at the 1976 Daytona 500—in one of the most memorable finishes in NASCAR history. The car was built by Gateway Classic Mustangs and will be auctioned off in January at Barrett-Jackson, to benefit the Darrell Gwynn Foundation, whose mission is to provide awareness, prevention, support and ultimately a cure for paralysis.

NASCAR AND NASA: GEARS AND GALAXIES

NASCAR driver **MICHAEL MCDOWELL**—whose home town is Glendale AZ—and former NASA astronaut **WILLIAM GREGORY** met fans and answered questions about the thrills and challenges of their respective fields during Gears and Galaxies Night on Wednesday, November 10, at the Challenger Space Center in Peoria.

Gregory, a retired USAF lieutenant colonel who piloted Space Shuttle Endeavour flight STS-67, described the evening as "speed, excitement, and a whole lotta noise ... like NASCAR in two dimensions and a shuttle launch in three." The family-oriented event ran from 4-8 pm, with Gregory and McDowell hosting a Q&A from 6-7 pm. Valley TV and radio motorsports personality Wally Cahill served as emcee.

The Gears and Galaxies event featured the unveiling of a new on-loan NASA exhibit displaying an authentic Space Shuttle tire, a NASCAR tire and a replica lunar rover tire, along with items flown in space from Gregory's personal collection. PIR's Official Pace Car was on display in the parking lot.

The Challenger Space Center rounded out the evening with fun family activities including space-themed movies, an Extreme Space Weather demonstration, arts and crafts projects, prize giveaways and more. Among the prizes were a pair of reserved grandstand seats for the Subway Fresh Fit 500 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series Race coming up February 27, including two pre-race pit passes, courtesy of Phoenix International Raceway. ■

NASCAR ACTION

The Kobalt Tools 500 weekend, November 11-14, included races in four different NASCAR series: Sprint Cup, Nationwide Series, Camping World Trucks and the K&N Pro Series West. Here are a few highlights.

PURSLEY TAKES CLIFFHANGING K&N PRO SERIES WEST

New NASCAR sponsor 3 Amigos Tequila got its money's worth on Saturday night, November 13, as the **NASCAR K&N PRO SERIES WEST** put on a slam bang show with multiple yellow flags, three red flags, and three-wide racing in front of the Bobby Allison Grandstand between turns one and two. Checkered and caution flags flew together at race's end as

GREG PURSLEY took the win. Pursley, who started on the pole, had to survive 125 miles, as barely a car finished undamaged. David Mayhew led most of the second half, but chose the outside lane for a restart on lap 111, and Pursley slipped by. On lap 118 restart, Pursley took the outside lane in his GPM Performance Parts/Star Nursery Ford, as a rallying Johnny Borneman battled Ty Dillon side-by-side for second. Pursley stressed patience, saying "We had to take our time making our way up to the front." Borneman took second, Dillon slipped to fourth and Mayhew finished eighth. Two-time Daytona 500 winner Michael Waltrip, the most experienced driver in the event, rallied from an early pit road mishap with Wes Banks' Ford and piloted his Toyota from 31st place to a finish of third. "I might have won in one more lap," Waltrip said. "It was getting to be fun at the very end."

EDWARDS WINS THRILLING KOBALT TOOLS 500, BREAKING 70-RACE DROUGHT

CARL EDWARDS staged a fierce battle with NASCAR Sprint Cup Series points leader Denny Hamlin for six thrilling laps and won a fuel gamble in the closing stages to win the **KOBALT TOOLS 500** on Sunday afternoon. Edwards locked up a victory when the fuel mileage held up in his Aflac Ford and Hamlin had to pit for fuel with 14 laps to go. Edwards giddily dashed into a stunned but overjoyed crowd of grandstand fans as he celebrated the end of a 70-race victory drought. Edwards of course treated the faithful fans to his signature victory back flip on the front stretch. Ryan Newman finished second and Joey Logano third when second-running Juan Pablo Montoya ran out of fuel on the last lap. Hamlin, in position to create a considerable points lead over contenders Jimmie Johnson and Kevin Harvick, finished 12th and, despite a dominant FedEx Toyota for most of the day at PIR, saw his Chase lead trimmed to 15 points over Johnson, who finished fifth, and 46 points over Harvick, who finished sixth. One race remained—the season finale at Homestead-Miami Speedway the next Sunday—where Johnson placed 2nd, becoming the 2010 Sprint Cup Champion—for the fifth time in a row. ■

CARL EDWARDS racing to a win in his #99 Aflac Ford during the Kobalt Tools 500 on Sunday, November 14, 2010.



PHOENIX INTERNATIONAL RACEWAY TICKETS FOR THE 2011 SEASON

The **SUBWAY FRESH FIT 500™** will kick off PIR's 2011 event season, featuring races in NASCAR's three top series. The SUBWAY Fresh Fit 500™ event weekend features the Bashas' Supermarkets 200 NASCAR Nationwide Series race on Saturday, February 26, the NASCAR Camping World Truck Series race on Friday, February 25, and the SUBWAY Fresh Fit 500™ NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race on Sunday, February 27—the Series' second stop of the season following the Daytona 500.

The **KOBALT TOOLS 500** brings NASCAR back to Phoenix in November, featuring the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series semi-final race in the Chase for the Sprint Cup, Sunday, November 13. The Kobalt Tools 500 event weekend will also feature the WYPALL*200 NASCAR

Individual Sprint Cup tickets start at \$25, Nationwide Series \$15 and Camping World Truck Series \$7, with free parking, entertainment and interactive Midway fun. New GO Value packages start at \$40 for two days, \$47 for three. Season tickets start at \$99 and include many benefits. Complete info: www.phoenixraceway.com. ■

Wood Brothers photo: Barrett-Jackson

ARIZONAFLYER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE ON THE WING

60 minutes over Phoenix

By Joe Sage
Photos by Randall Bohl



Any company being as generous as Goodyear has been, contributing many thousands of dollars' worth of highly collectible racing tires for auction sales, to generate funds for the Support Our Troops program, is also thoughtful enough to put some icing on the cake. Thus, they brought the Goodyear Blimp to Phoenix, so local military veterans could get an aerial view of Phoenix International Raceway, on Friday of the Kobalt Tools 500 NASCAR race weekend. And they invited the press along. Lucky us.

Flights, appropriately enough, were from Phoenix Goodyear Airport in the southwest Valley, located 6.7 miles northwest of PIR. The town of Goodyear was established in 1917 when the Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company purchased 16,000 acres of land to cultivate cotton for tire treads. Goodyear became a town in November 1946 and a city in 1985. There are still plenty of cotton fields in the area, though many are for sale and no doubt destined to sprout new HOAs.

There are three Goodyear Blimps in the fleet: the

Spirit of Goodyear, based in Akron, Ohio, Goodyear's headquarters city; the Spirit of Innovation in Pompano Beach, Florida; and the Spirit of America in Carson, California, between Long Beach and Torrance, just east of the 405 at the 110. The Carson blimp was assigned to our Arizona duty.

As we headed to our rendezvous from the north Valley, we spotted the blimp high in the sky, as we all often have. But this was the first time it was headed to meet us, a distinctively neat thought as we continued down AZ 101. Another half hour or so brought us to our precision rendezvous and boarding.

The pilot and the ground crew of 16 have a few minutes of intense focus during the landing. Despite the apparent complexity of it all, pilot Jon Conrad takes it in stride: timing is pretty precise, he says, but it's more subject to the craft's own power than to any wind. The only thing that slows it down is passengers arriving to take off, but Conrad tells us arrival time for a landing is very predictable.

As the craft lands, we receive simple but firm instructions. Stay in a group. Let the crew land the airship, then we're going to walk out there single file. We will board one at a time. Get on board, find a seat. No smoking, no cellphone usage, no seatbelts (the third seems unusual but is not explained). We're given the okay for cellphone photos, just no calls and no texting. Everybody receives a headset, for hearing protection and voice-activated communications.

In the days after our flight, a number of people said, oh, it must have been so peaceful just floating up there. Well, no. As pilot Conrad said at the time, feel free to take videos, but your audio will be nothing but RRR-RRRR-RRRRRRR. Right he was. The engines are right outside the lightweight gondola the passengers and crew ride in. We had in fact entered a few key factoids on voice recorder during the flight, but there was only zero to maybe two percent audibility for any voice.

Joining Conrad and the two of us on the ride were Steve Post of Motor Racing Network on Sirius NASCAR Radio, Christie Poe of Bakersfield, and two others: a photographer from phxspotters.com and one passenger from Boise. We ascended over Goodyear and headed southeast toward PIR. There's no mistaking a change in direction in a blimp: Conrad skillfully angled us down

KEEP RIGHT >>



Photos (2) courtesy Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company

GOODYEAR, NASCAR, TROOP NEWMAN AND PIR

GOODYEAR AND RYAN NEWMAN BENEFIT SUPPORT OUR TROOPS PROGRAM

The famed Goodyear Blimp was brought to Phoenix in November in honor of Veteran's Day, to provide rides to Armed Forces veterans. Last summer, Goodyear held an online auction of race-used, driver-autographed Eagle Racing tires featuring a red, white and blue color scheme reading "Support Our Troops." The Kobalt Tools 500 weekend's races at Phoenix International Raceway marked the culmination of the Goodyear Support Our Troops program. With the proceeds of the red, white and blue tire auction, Goodyear made a sizeable donation before the weekend's races to the nonprofit organization, Support Our Troops.

Ryan Newman, winner of the last Sprint Cup Series event at PIR and driver of the #39 US Army/Tornados/Haas Automation Chevrolet, teamed up with PIR to create Troop Newman. The program, part of PIR's Salute to Military Families initiative, sent some 500 military troops and their families to the Kobalt Tools 500 NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race on November 14—Veteran's Day weekend—free of charge. Newman also visited National Guard



units at the Papago Park Military Reservation in Phoenix to donate race tickets funded by Troop Newman. Race fans and military supporters who made a donation to the Troop Newman program were entered to win a private meet-and-greet session with Newman during the weekend and were recognized on PIR's website. Large donors received a photo op in Gatorade Victory Lane and an exclusive PIR patriotic hat.

The US Army and Stewart-Haas Racing created special graphics for Newman's #39 Soldiers' Car. Veterans, families, friends and loved ones could submit photos online to become part of the car's art. "It's an honor for me to represent more than a million soldiers on the racetrack each weekend," Newman said. "Obviously, Veteran's Day is a very special weekend, and I think the fact that we are going to recognize some of the brave men and women of the US Army by carrying their faces on the #39 car is a pretty powerful statement." ■





A ground crew of 16 handles the Goodyear Blimp's landing and takeoff. It's a lot of beast to secure, even briefly, so passengers load quickly. • The heart of our mission was to fly above Phoenix International Raceway. • The route passed over University of Phoenix Stadium as the playing field was being rolled back inside after catching its daily dose of natural sunshine. • Photographer Randall Bohl appeared to be caught up in the general exuberance of the flight, but later told us this is when he realized his headset cord was tangled in the door handle. No seatbelts. His next shot might have been his most memorable. • Our host: Captain Jon Conrad, whose background as a helicopter pilot has turned out to be such an asset for this different kind of flying, Goodyear now recruits more of the same.

over the Salt River toward the racetrack, where we experienced our own Super Bowl view of the crowds and crews gathering for the big NASCAR weekend. From there, we swung north, gaining a surprisingly close view of a daring small aircraft pilot dragging an advertising banner toward PIR, then passing over the Arizona Cardinals' stadium, spring training fields and plenty of west Valley neighborhoods en route back to the field. You can hear the aforementioned engine noise and catch the general thrill by checking out our final approach video at www.adzoneaz.com/goodyearblimp/IMG_6475.MOV.

Even from the relative proximity of Southern California, having a blimp show up in Phoenix for our joyride is no mean feat. The crew not only flew one hour-long tour after another all day, but also performed about an 11-hour flight over from Carson CA and another one back. Ground support follows along, with rendezvous opportunities en route if need be.

Fixed-wing pilots say flying consists of "hours of sheer boredom, punctuated by moments of stark terror." Our Goodyear Blimp ride had neither. Only 1000 people a year go up in the Goodyear Blimp, so with three in the fleet, that averages less than one person a day, overall. A very nice opportunity. ■



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SWEET SPOT

Every car enthusiast should surely own a Corvette at some point. Its bang for the buck is hard to beat, offering exhilarating power and performance at a very reasonable price—considering the number of times it's been successfully pitted against the likes of Ferrari in comparison tests—and it delivers the fuel mileage of an economical midsize sedan.

The first decisions in choosing a favorite Corvette are simultaneously the easiest and the hardest. Coupe or convertible? Manual or automatic? What is your budget, and how fast do you want to go? Track time? And, only a bit more subjectively, is there a pecking order in your neck of the woods?

We'd go for a manual, which with the Corvette is a win-win, delivering slightly higher fuel mileage than the automatic. But to each their own.

The coupe/convertible decision is tough with a

lot of cars: with a Jaguar, Aston Martin, Porsche 911 or many others, the sleek styling of the coupe is hard to beat. But there's no substitute for top-down fun. Most convertibles add significant weight to the car—often hundreds of pounds—partly from the mechanisms, but mostly from extra structure needed for body rigidity. In the Corvette, conceived to be either from the get-go, the weight penalty is just 13 pounds on the standard car, and surprisingly a 22-pound advantage with the convertible in the Grand Sport.

On paper, we'd have a hard time deciding this one; but having driven the GS Convertible for a week, we'd almost surely go ragtop. If you're after a Z06 or ZR1, those are coupe-only. Anybody would love a ZR1 (with or without track use, but especially with), and anybody would love a Z06, but they're pricey.

But good news.

JOE SAGE



REASONABLE MIDDLE GROUND

Enter the Corvette Grand Sport. It has panache, power and a great price. A Z06 starts more than \$25,000 higher than a base Corvette, and the ZR1 more than \$62k higher (more than double the base model's price). But for just \$5000 more on the convertible (or under \$6k more on the coupe), you can have the Grand Sport. The engine is the same, the horsepower is the same, the weight is actually a bit higher. Yet the Grand Sport shaves a quarter second off the base Corvette's zero-to-60 time. Handling is enhanced, it tricks out some style points, and it adds several amenities.

The Grand Sport has wide-body styling (including specific front fenders with integrated Grand Sport badges), a wider track, racing-bred suspension, wider wheels and tires, revised suspension including shocks, stabilizer bars and springs. There are specific gear ratios on manual transmission models and a specific rear axle ratio on automatic-equipped models.

Skidpad performance is an impressive 1g. GS coupes with a manual transmission are uniquely outfitted for track events, too, with a dry-sump oiling system, differential cooler and rear-mounted battery. Magnetic Ride Control is available and manual-transmission models include Goodyear F1 Supercar Gen 2 tires. Eighteen-inch front and 19-inch rear wheels, in painted finish or optional chrome, carry the rubber. Tires are 275/35ZR18 in front and 325/30ZR19 at the rear.

Put it all together, and the Grand Sport approaches the Z06, but it also does a couple of things the Z cars can't: the coupe includes a removable roof (Z06 has a fixed roof), and it's also available as a convertible (not so the Z06 or ZR1). And if an automatic transmission is your preference, the Grand Sport's paddle-shift six-speed again gives you an advantage over the Z06 or ZR1, which have only a manual available.

OUR WEEK WITH THE GRAND SPORT

This Jetstream Blue Metallic Tintcoat beauty arrived at our offices just after your correspondent's own blue convertible had been trashed by hail. We fell for it immediately (who says you can't find love on the rebound?).

PERFORMANCE AND HANDLING: The GS has a good roar when you start it, not so much when you drive it. The engine is smooth and quiet, delivering less V8 rumble than we'd expect. Nice for the neighbors, we suppose. Its low center of gravity delivers exceptionally flat cornering. You feel the width and shallow walls of the high-performance tires, but that's normal and ultimately desirable. Especially at low speeds, we feel some roll and yaw. By the second day, we're used to its particular tracking and firmness. It has a great stance and it holds its lane beautifully. We expect to feel wheel hop, but don't. We enjoyed carving sweeping turns. Very accurate, very strong. We found the first few gears in the automatic quick to 3rd but with hesitation and gaps. We change from D to S, which helps. We vow to use the paddle shifters. Push either paddle for up, or pull for a down-shift. To exit this mode, press both paddles. Bartlett Lake Road gave us a great test drive, with lots of twisties, hills, and at the time lots of sand in the road from recent storms and flash flooding. The car handled all of it



superbly, sandy patches included. We had a nice sporty ride. Not underpowered not overpowered.

CONVERTIBLE TOP: Fully 25 percent of our logbook notes are about the convertible top, and mostly it's a series of annoyances—motions to release the handle at the top of the windshield frame, having to yank *really* hard to secure when closing—and so on. We only have a week; when the car is yours, you will figure things out better, they'll become second nature, and/or you can ignore them. One thing that would be hard to ignore in Arizona, though, is the top's release handle: on a 93-degree day, it is red hot—you'll seriously want to keep a glove handy. Or just leave the top down. As you expect with a small top, it goes down pretty fast, in about 15 seconds. It takes about 19 seconds for the power cycle to bring the top up, plus latch yanking time.

BODY: We like the body-colored with Corvette V logo between the seats. Neat with the top up; super neat when the top is down. A hump on the trunk that generates forward from the third brake light is a great style feature (on the coupe, it blends into the rear glass). The low nose is vulnerable, a downside for just about any driveway or drainage trough in metro Phoenix, even at low speed. We learn to back it into the garage, to clear the curb. The Corvette loves an open road, but hates a driveway.

FEATURES AND AMENITIES: Seats are electric for forward and up/down, but the seat back has a manual latch. We visited the manual more than with most cars, but maybe we were just more interested. But as with most GM vehicles, you quickly realize there are a number of personalization settings you can set and forget, and they work really well. Heads-up display is always a nice feature. This has a digital representation of an analog tach, digital speed readout, turn signals and a quick glimpse of audio settings without looking down. It's hard to see the nav screen with the sun out and the top down. Push button start, keyless access and locks are a bit different from most, but you'll learn. We have to set the mirrors again, every time we get in; we never find the way to get their positions into memory, but are sure you can. The side windows are one-touch down but you have to hold the switch to bring them up, another minor inconvenience with the convertible top.

AUDIO: The car arrived with presets we didn't care for, but audio quality seemed subpar. We dialed in some better tunes and did some adjustments. For new presets, we had to seek through hundreds of stations one by one, typically enough. We located an automatic volume control off/on; we tried that while parked, top up, and it made no noticeable difference. We figured it's valuable with the top down at different speeds, so we left it on. We worked with bass-treble-midrange (and fader, even though it's a 2-seater). We really didn't achieve any audible difference, to our trained ear. If it had a great engine sound to listen to, that'd be one thing, but it doesn't. The audio is plenty loud with the top down, though murky. We turned the midrange down a bit—a little sharper, a little better.

PECKING ORDER: We become aware of our fellow travelers. A red Corvette, a Honda S2000 and a Porsche Cayman all seem simpatico. We are oddly contested by big American sedans and little Japanese SUVs. But on the open road, it's all thumbs up—literally—from motorcycles, pickups with boats, Jeeps, sports cars, other Corvettes. We don't recall ever getting this many thumbs and waves in an expensive European roadster.

FOR QUITE A FEW DOLLARS LESS

If you want a juiced up Corvette for just a few thousand dollars more than the base model, and especially if you want a convertible, or removable hard top, and/or an automatic—the Grand Sport solves every problem and saves you an easy 25 grand over the Z06. Even if you want the manual, and a coupe—an easy 25 grand. Compare the basics in the chart at the right, and compare in depth at www.chevrolet.com. Unless you have money to burn, an insatiable lust for one of the Z 'Vettes, or an ego that can't bear to see a ZR1 next to you at the stoplight and you don't have one—you owe it to yourself to look into the Corvette Grand Sport.

We made a point of one last drive before the car was picked up, just a quick one. We put the top down, had it on sport setting, started to head to the office on surface streets—couldn't resist the freeway ramp—couldn't resist blowing past the office exit—a little more freeway time, a little more top-down time, a little more boulevard time, and we definitely took the long way home. ■

CORVETTE COMPARISONS

CORVETTE COUPE

Engine.....	6.2 Liter V8
Horsepower.....	430 hp
Weight.....	3208 lb
0-to-60.....	4.2 sec
EPA Hwy (manual; auto = -1).....	26 MPG
Base price.....	\$48,950

CORVETTE CONVERTIBLE

Engine.....	6.2 Liter V8
Horsepower.....	430 hp
Weight.....	3221 lb
0-to-60.....	4.2 sec
EPA Hwy (manual; auto = -1).....	26 MPG
Base price.....	\$53,600

CORVETTE GRAND SPORT COUPE

Engine.....	6.2 Liter V8
Horsepower.....	430 hp
Weight.....	3311 lb
0-to-60.....	3.95 sec
EPA Hwy (manual; auto = -1).....	26 MPG
Base price.....	\$54,790

CORVETTE GRAND SPORT CONVERTIBLE

Engine.....	6.2 Liter V8
Horsepower.....	430 hp
Weight.....	3289 lb
0-to-60.....	3.95 sec
EPA Hwy (manual; auto = -1).....	26 MPG
Base price.....	\$58,600

CORVETTE Z06

Engine.....	7.0 Liter V8
Horsepower.....	505 hp
Weight.....	3175 lb
0-to-60.....	3.7 sec
EPA Hwy (manual).....	24 MPG
Base price.....	\$74,305

CORVETTE ZR1

Engine.....	6.2 Liter Supercharged V8
Horsepower.....	638 hp
Weight.....	3175 lb
0-to-60.....	3.4 sec
EPA Hwy (manual).....	20 MPG
Base price.....	\$111,100

OUR TEST GRAND SPORT CONVERTIBLE

Base price.....	\$58,600
4LT Premium Equip. Group: Leather, Bose, XM, head-up display, upgraded steering wheel, seats, power, memory, power top, remote and more.....	\$9,700
GSport Heritage Package: Two-tone leather seats w/ logos, fender stripe.....	\$1,195
Nav package with audio upgrade.....	\$1,795
Paddle shift automatic.....	\$1,250
Exhaust: dual mode performance.....	\$1,195
Jetstream Blue Metallic Tintcoat.....	\$850
Pedal covers, automatic trans.....	\$270
Destinatia charge.....	\$950
TOTAL STICKER.....	\$75,805

PROGRESS *in* POSITIONING

LINCOLN MKX BECOMES MORE LINCOLN

JOE SAGE



Lincoln is making great strides—especially as Mercury fades into the sunset—to differentiate its products and image from Ford’s eponymous standard lineup. And don’t think this can’t be done—witness the Cadillacs of today versus the rebadged and reskinned Oldsmobiles of just a decade ago.

LINCOLN MKX AND FORD EDGE

There had been little mistaking the Lincoln MKX as a rebadged, reskinned and luxury-detailed Ford Edge, since their basically simultaneous introduction in 2006 as 2007 models. But for 2011, that skin has been heavily redone—bringing a far more distinctive shape and overall look and feel to the MKX. Especially with its waterfall grille, it now at least looks all Lincoln, all the way.

Built on the CD3 platform derived originally and evolved from the Mazda6 G platform, the Edge created a new category, while Ford kept the Explorer. For Lincoln, however, the MKX replaced the Explorer-derived Aviator.

In late 2006 and through 2007, the Ford Edge did quite well, selling over 132,000 units, while the more-selective-market Lincoln MKX sold just under 40,000, about 30 percent of Ford’s total. Slumps throughout the economy brought sales down in 2008 and 2009, but Lincoln’s MKX dropped pro-rata against the Edge, to more like 23 percent. In 2010, the Edge rebounded, to almost 120,000 units as estimated at press time, while the MKX was set to total just over 20,000, about a 16 percent ratio. Time for something to be done. Whereas the vehicles are set to be completely redone as soon as 2012 (using Ford’s new EUCD or EUCD2 global platform), the 2011 Lincoln has had a significant freshening.

MKX AND EDGE TODAY

The Ford and the Lincoln remain much the same vehicle for 2011. Both weigh in at just over two tons. Both are available as front-drivers or with all-wheel drive. The Ford introduced an inline-4-cylinder EcoBoost engine this year, but also has a 3.5-liter Duratec V6, while the sole engine for the Lincoln is a new 3.7-liter Duratec V6. Suspension and four-wheel anti-lock disc brakes are common to both. Whether MyFord Touch or MyLincoln Touch, electronics are essentially the same.

The Ford Edge starts at \$27,455 but can easily be outfitted to the mid-\$40s for a top-dog Sport with AWD and all the fixings. The Lincoln MKX starts at \$39,375 and can be optioned up to the mid-\$50s. In other words, a comparison that starts with the Lincoln about 44 percent higher drops to more like a 16 percent difference when tricked out. This seems to make the Lincoln a clearly better choice for the feature-hungry buyer, especially with several of its options not available on the Ford.

OUR WEEK WITH THE LINCOLN MKX

Our test Lincoln was a pre-production model, arriving with incomplete sticker pricing. Inclusions in the base model are extensive: power mirrors and rear liftgate, various lighting upgrades, dual exhaust, leather seats, heated-cooled 10-way front seats, MyLincoln Touch and SYNC, a capable AM/FM/Sirius/CD/MP3 audio system, dual-zone climate control, keyless entry and start plus remote start, backup sensing and much more. To this,



our front-wheel-drive vehicle added a Rapid Spec Premium Package with ambient lighting, rear camera, HID headlamps, voice-activated navigation, panoramic roof, blind spot monitoring and 20-inch chrome-clad aluminum wheels, all for \$7500. White Platinum Metallic Tri-coat paint adds \$595, and adaptive cruise control \$1295. A couple of other notes were indecipherable, but based on all that, this was about a \$50,000 MKX.

As we get in for first time, the instrument panel is the first thing that greets us, a minimalist presentation with just hatchmarks where the speedometer will be, and blue fades in the center screen and to the left and right of that. Electronic displays include MyLincoln Touch in the center, and next to the speedo a graphic readout that evolves from what we first saw in the Fusion Hybrid. Basically all context-sensitive variable-screen information—a concept that makes the iPhone so usable. (Why Ford hasn’t partnered with Apple instead of Microsoft is beyond us.) Let’s give it a try. The start button is right where we thought it would, in the dark. Intuitive. Great.

Size and shape are perfect; we’re sold on the overall format of the vehicle within about a quarter block.

We step outside to check the mail and find the engine noise or probably fan noise is noticeably loud. Stepping back in, we like the sill panel with Lincoln all-caps lettering illuminated. Classy. As soon as we close the door, we are back to enjoying a very silent cabin.

Despite streamlining outside, the MKX has great visibility inside, with its big open greenhouse and an enormous rear window (though with headrests in the view).

Taking it out for the first time at night turns out to be a fun idea. We parked, got out, checked the passenger side door to see whether something had slid off the seat, which it hadn’t. We closed the door and touched it with the back of our fingers and locked it, right where we expected to. If you have driven any current teach-heavy cars, you’ll find the MKX extremely intuitive, and if you haven’t, you’ll simply find it a feature wonderland.

The more technology, the harder the user experience, often enough. We decide to tackle the audio and find its design to be slick as all getout. Volume (and also climate control, just below) are controlled with very subtly lit touch bars; adjustments are made by stroking your finger across the bar. Puts a smile on our face every time.

The vehicle looks somewhat tall and bulky, but it corners just flat and beautifully. Impressive. We cautiously tried a U-turn at a T-intersection. Wow. It’s hard to believe the interior volume of this vehicle, yet how tight it turns (a 38.6-foot turning circle).



Lincoln-specific sheet metal in the front is vastly improved and surely hints at a more individualized future for the brand. We’re not as nuts about the dead-on rear styling, though from a 3/4 rear view, it looks great.

The Duratec V6 produces 305 hp, plenty powerful. The MKX is also plenty maneuverable, easy to get in and out of, and has ample stopping power. It was a pleasure to drive any distance, as well as on point-to-point errands with lots of parking mixed in with driving.

What Ford has done with an interim update is impressive. The Lincoln looks all-Lincoln now, though it does remain a reskin of the Edge, with luxury upgrades and a few other features. As 2012 draws closer, we’ll be watching for the timing of the next generation. But that’s out of ongoing curiosity. There is no reason not to shop for this MKX, now. Unless you want a real stripper of a Ford Edge, the Lincoln MKX, already tricked out, is only about 10 grand more than a nicely outfitted Edge. ■

LINCOLN MKX LOGBOOK

- We love how intuitive most of the controls are, even clever and complex ones. The touch swipe for volume and fan speed seem Applesque. The screen itself, though, looks like a PowerPoint org chart, with little to intuitively show hierarchy or function.
- Side mirror controls are not lit, hard to find in the dark till you learn. A plus: lens-switch one-touch ceiling lights, our favorite.
- Buttons and touchscreen both beep a lot; we’d hope this can be turned off.
- Backup camera is not one of the best: grainy, off color, can spot a white Suburban at night, maybe. Path indicators are straight, unlike e.g. Audi’s, which curve to actual path.
- Wish the shifter lit up, so you could tell whether you have shifted into D at night.
- Would like the fan for some quick inside air, wish it weren’t touchscreen-dependent. We were, however, able to turn on recirc or max a/c easily, easy touch buttons and an immediate difference.
- Turn signal sounds like the crocodile that swallowed the clock in Peter Pan, maybe louder, noted by third parties as well.
- Not sure the touchscreen ‘maps’ correctly; we seem to get stations we didn’t choose.
- Buttons for tuning, temp, seek and so on are touch buttons, but raised like pushbuttons, so they give tactile ability to find them.
- We had struggles with radio presets, lots of menu digging, inconsistencies between satellite and FM, odd alerts between items.
- If you get in and start before you get your seatbelt on, you get a four-tone repeating alert, on the one hand a bit subdued but on the other hand adequately annoying to make you do the job; a backwards win-win.
- The power point for charging things, in this case our phone, is in what would once have been an ashtray in the middle, and it’s a whole SYNC area, with three RCA jacks, color-coded for its purposes, two USBs, and an SD ... oops there was a card in there ... (beep-beep) ... oh shoot, navigation SD card fault. Well, that’s way too easy to take out. So there’s a power point inside the console storage bin, which has two sides to it, split but operating as one, an oddity. Another power point is around the right side of the center stack, reachable with a stretch while parked, but you have to peek around because to hinge a cover off it and plug in.
- Our favorite little feature, the slide volume control, reveals an oddity: if we use our left hand, it just keeps going up. Odd.
- We tried to tilt the steering wheel, and the only control we could find was on the left side but it started moving the seat. Once we stopped, we tried it again, and sure enough it does tilt and telescope the steering wheel. A late preproduction bug?

Maximum Altitude and High Altitude

APPROACHING INFINITI, AT SUBORBITAL PRICES

The Nissan Maxima full-size sedan looming on our test vehicle calendar hadn't captured our imagination the way, say, an Aston Martin might. But we soon learned what a great car this is. That, in turn, ensured higher anticipation when the Nissan Altima was scheduled a few weeks later: imagine the Maxima in an even more affordable package. In fact, imagine the offerings of an Infiniti in an even more affordable package, and you're on your way to appreciating both these Nissans.

Platform derivation and sharing sounds seductively simple—body swaps, badge engineering—but it seldom is. We expected to find the Maxima sharing with the Infiniti M and the Altima with the G. There is plenty of cross-pollination among all of them, but the Maxima and Altima, and the Infiniti M and G, share more with each other than across marques. This makes sense, given one factor that distinguishes the Nissans from the Infinitis: the Infinitis are rear-wheel- (or all-wheel-) drive, while the Nissans are front-wheel-drive. The other biggest difference is Nissan's use of CVTs.

We think we see more new Infinitis on the road in our area and more Maximas that are a few years old. Bad comparison. The new Nissans have progressed to where an aspiring Infiniti shopper with a lower budget would be remiss not to try these, too.

The Nissans are well equipped, have high fit and finish, horsepower that cost at least twice as much in high-end Europeans 10-15 years ago, and—espe-

cially in the case of the Maxima—a new level of high style. We're especially impressed with the dramatic "Liquid Motion" curves of the Maxima's hood, a far stronger application of shapes than a number of brands that apply so many effects to side panels that they start to look like shower curtains. This is one elegant beast. And once you have an appreciation of the more obvious Maxima styling, you realize how well executed the Altima body is, as well.

2011 NISSAN MAXIMA

The Nissan Maxima is billed as a Four-Door Sports Car (4DSC), a bit of a stretch, but not entirely inappropriate. This is a driver's car, if you want it to be (or just a very capable sedan if you don't). Does it compare with the German performance sedans? It's a rare vehicle that can be all things to all people. But drive it and decide. We were impressed.

Choosing your Maxima is a relatively easy process. There are two models (plus two packages on the higher SV model, including the SV Premium Package version we drove). Differences among the four are straightforward feature upgrades—25 pounds and \$2720 worth between the S and SV.

The base Maxima 3.5 S has a 290-hp V6, 18" aluminum-alloy wheels, power moonroof, smart key and push button start, multiple audio inputs and Bluetooth®, dual zone climate control, power front seats, piano-dot trim and Vehicle Dynamic Control (VDC) with Traction Control System (TCS), starting

barely out of the 20s, at \$30,810. The 3.5 SV is the same basic car but with fog lights, side mirror turn signal indicators, a 9-speaker Bose® digital audio system, XM® satellite radio, HomeLink® transceiver, leather-appointed seats with driver's thigh support extension and power lumbar support, even a digital compass in the rearview mirror, all of which bumps the price to \$33,530, a differential that the audio system alone more than justifies.

There are two available packages for the SV.

The Sport Package adds tuned suspension, 19" wheels with wider tires, rear spoiler, paddle shifters, HID xenon headlights, dark chrome grille, smoked headlights and interior metallic-link trim, all of which adds just about two grand, at \$35,610.

The Premium Package (as on our test vehicle) brings a dual-panel moonroof with power retractable sunshades, rear-window power sunshade, premium mood lighting, color display with rear monitor, a 2GB Music Box® (800 MB for music storage), USB connectivity and—echoing Infiniti—eucalyptus wood-tone trim, all at \$36,760. The Maxima, even maximally equipped, still comes in at 22 percent lower cost than an Infiniti G with nothing added. Or a base Maxima S comes in just under the base Infiniti G, but with significantly more power and presence.

OUR WEEK WITH THE MAXIMA

The Nissan Maxima has a 3.5-liter 290-hp V6, but it growls like a powerful V8.

It also has a CVT (continuously variable transmission). It's not completely seamless, with slight stages electronically set for mental comfort. Yet it's very smooth. We notice at some speeds, we feel a shift point but the RPMs don't change, and vice versa. We experiment with the paddles. We're in



DRIVE	LENGTH (IN)	INT. VOL. (CU FT)	WEIGHT (LB)	ENGINE	HP	BASE PRICE	
INFINITI M : 7-speed automatic w/ manual mode							
M37	RWD	194.7	103.6	3858	3.7L V6	330	\$47,050
	AWD	"	"	4063	"	"	\$49,200
M56	RWD	"	"	4028	5.6L V8	420	\$58,450
	AWD	"	"	4224	"	"	\$60,950
NISSAN MAXIMA : CVT w/ manual mode and DS mode							
3.5 S	FWD	190.6	95.8	3540	3.5L V6	290	\$30,810
3.5 SV	"	"	"	3565	"	"	\$33,530
INFINITI G : 7-speed automatic w/ DS mode							
G25	RWD	187.9	96.5-99.0	3534-3552	2.5L V6	218	\$31,400
	AWD	"	"	3746	"	"	\$34,400
G37	RWD	"	"	3618-3701	3.7L V6	328	\$35,400
	AWD	"	"	3812	"	"	\$37,000
NISSAN ALTIMA : CVT							
2.5	FWD	190.7	100.7	3180	2.5L I4	175	\$19,910
2.5 S	"	"	"	3192	"	"	\$22,070
3.5 SR	"	"	"	3357	3.5L V6	270	\$24,750

4th, going 60mph, just under 4000rpm. We shift up, the sound changes, it drops to 3000, shift again it drops to 2000. We slow from 60 to 40, but are still in 6th. When you come to a stop, it goes back to 1st, but meanwhile you're lugging along at 1500rpm. Economical, but low on engine braking. Ultimately, we enjoy this CVT. We use it most for the first four gears or so, then knock it over into D and forget about it.

The brakes are strong and quick. At lower speeds, the big Nissan gave us a slight feeling of yaw, but minimal for a front-driver. Aside from any absolute preference for rear- or all-wheel drive, we found that any front-wheel-drive torquiness in the Maxima is largely eliminated.

Audio is well above average. We noted that its nine speakers put out such clarity and strength, it seemed like a 12-channel system.

The backup camera has a delay we wish it didn't, making it too easy to ignore. And the door locks' details needed some mastering.

The Maxima feels large, but as you can see from lengths and volumes in our chart, it has an efficient size. Maneuverability and nimbleness in traffic are outstanding. In our logbook, we noted it reminded us of an Audi A8, without as much bulk and certainly at a third of the cost. Is it a "Four-Door Sports Car"? This is basically a positioning statement against dowdier sedans. But it's potent and fun.

We kept coming back to the Infiniti (or other luxury brand) comparison. What the Nissan Maxima delivers for \$30-35 grand is unbelievable. We actually found joy in the relative simplicity of the controls and electronics of the plainer-jane Nissan. Our Crimson Black test car was a visual knockout. Check it out. You'll find the Nissan Maxima delivers an extremely high-end experience at a very reasonable price. ■

2011 NISSAN ALTIMA

We received the Nissan Altima at night, noting it didn't seem as sexy as the Maxima outside, although the hood has an elegant compound shape. Keyless entry and pushbutton start. Inside it was very nice. As with the Maxima, controls and instruments were refreshingly straightforward: one-touch lights, separate climate controls, intuitive pushbuttons, a small and useful screen, three vents in the center and vents on the sides, three main instrument dials (tach, speedo, fuel/temp and a couple of digital readouts). Steering wheel controls on the right are cruise control, on the left audio and phone. Off we go.

The Bose system is light on channel separation but very good. Separate HVAC couldn't be easier: dual on or off, and numbers in the center of both knobs display temps. The glove box is huge and uncluttered. The trunk is sizable, but audio components seem vulnerable in its upper reaches. For iPod connectivity, bring your own cable and plug into USB way in the bottom of the center console, a weak detail. Another ergonomic point: even with the arms of someone over 6 feet tall, reaching for the fully-open door grab to close the door is an extreme stretch.

An MPG digital bar readout below the speedo ranges 20-40-60—optimistic and spurting up to 60 every time we let off the gas. (Note: there is also an Altima Hybrid, which we've had twice as a rental elsewhere, very transparent to operate and very economical.) The Altima is front-wheel-drive, but we feel no torque steering at all. As with the Maxima, we find the CVT delivers perfectly normal performance, and if you need to downshift, slide it over and do so.

If this is what Nissan can do in an inexpensive car with CVT and FWD, we're impressed. Check the prices in our chart to the left. We don't know about your ego, but it's all the car your id will ever need. The Altima has more than adequate power, more than adequate performance, all the capability you need to get the job done ... a perfectly good daily driver... well beyond that, in fact. ■



JOE SAGE

High Fives

Big brothers S5 and Q7 offer plenty, but A5 and Q5 show that sometimes indeed less is more

2011 Audi A5 Cabriolet

The Audi S5 hit the market as a 2008 model and particularly caught our attention. Any S or RS quattro does. The S4 could be had with a manual transmission, but not the S6 or S8. The A4 body type is on the road in large numbers, but here was something new: half the price of an S8, with a V8 and stick, and in a sexy coupe format.

The Audi A5 was introduced at the same time, and its V6, compared with the V8, offered better fuel mileage, while its body was very close in appearance.

Then a possible tie-breaker was announced: the Audi A5 Cabriolet with quattro all-wheel drive (there is also a front-drive version). With its distinctive coupe roofline chopped off, it looked less the 5, most readily distinguished at a glance by its two doors versus the 4's four.

Joe Sage

Was this a waste of a great concept? No. The price point and features of the A5 still bring a lot to the table.

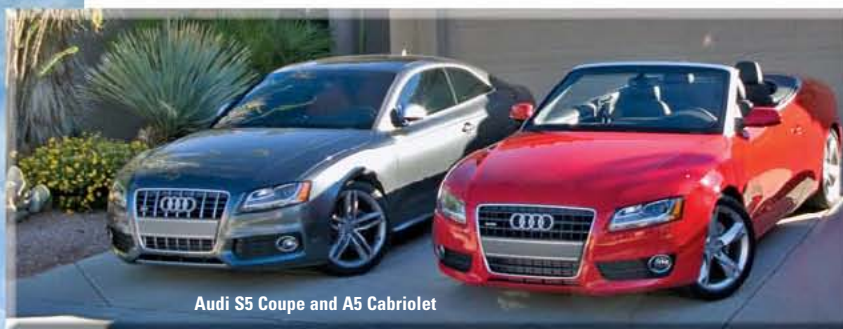
The Audi S5 quattro coupe still has its original powerful and throaty 4.2L V8, with 354 hp and 325 lb-ft of torque at 3500 RPM. The A5 quattro coupe now has a turbocharged intercooled inline-4 with just 211 hp but 258 lb-ft of torque (and at higher RPMs, 4200-5100). The S5 coupe states fuel economy of 16/24 with Tiptronic or 14/22 with 6-speed manual, city/highway, while the new A5 coupe promises 21/29 Tiptronic or 21/31 manual. With the additional weight of a convertible (about 350 pounds), the A5 Cabriolet comes in at 21/29.

Against the S5, the A5 has about 25-37 percent better fuel mileage but 40 percent lower horsepower (though just 20 percent lower torque). S5 0-to-60 time is

4.9 seconds (manual or Tiptronic). The A5 coupe clocks at 6.4 manual or 6.7 Tiptronic, while the A5 Cabriolet quattro (Tiptronic only) hits it in 7.5.

The A5 coupe has a base price of \$36,900 (in Premium, the lowest of three base packages), the A5 Cabriolet \$42,000 and the S5 \$53,650. Typically enough, the more you add to the A5, the closer it gets to the already more heavily loaded S5. But the base comparison is about a 28-45 percent premium for the S5 over the A5.

We've spent quite a bit of time with the Audi S5. Bottom line, it's a beautiful coupe, well-appointed inside and out, has V8 power and the sound effects to go with it, has an available manual transmission, but comes with a gas guzzler tax for a reason: our average over long term testing was about 11 MPG. The manual trans-



Audi S5 Coupe and A5 Cabriolet



mission is great, but if you're going to drive in 6th gear to save gas, what's the point? We were very interested in the A5. (Jumping ahead, we averaged about 14 MPG in one full tank with the A5. Okay, none of these have fuel economy as their prime directive.)

Our week with the A5 Cabriolet revealed a real winner. Despite many prior miles in the S5, we generally didn't feel we were lacking for power. The S5's V8 sound effects are great, but not essential. The convertible top is so tight-fitting and so well insulated, with the top up you can forget you're in a ragtop: no motion, no noise. The shape isn't as elegant as the steel-topped coupe, but it's more elegant than many other convertibles. The top goes down in about 15 seconds, our gold standard. It's a hair under 18 seconds to put back up (plus about 2.5 more to bring the windows up, after that).

We liked the A5 so well, we started to bargain with ourselves about living without the option of a manual transmission, otherwise our preference. We'd noted that when we slow to turn fairly aggressively at an intersection, the power drops and then surges. As we were now rationalizing the automatic, we decided that may be a good thing: you're back on top of your power as soon as you get through the corner. But then we find ourselves behind a slow truck, check the mirror, change lanes, give it gas... and wait... and it surges. More masterful application of the Tiptronic could probably conquer this.

So that's settled. We loved the A5. We didn't lack for power, despite the numeric difference on paper. The higher torque ratio may have helped a lot. It may have been partly the Brilliant Red paint and black leather, but we didn't find ourselves lacking for presence among our peers. We wish it came with a manual.

But... what if they were to bring out an S5 (or RS5) with a manual transmission and all that horsepower, maybe with a twin turbo V6? What if? Well, the S5 is a low-volume vehicle, so changes come in stages. Now available is an S5 Cabriolet, indeed equipped with a smaller engine, a 3.0L V6 with dual intercoolers and supercharger. Horsepower drops just a little, to 333, while torque remains 325 lb-ft. 0-to-60 time is 5.2 seconds. But it comes only as a Tiptronic. Base price is \$59,050 (or \$64,950 as Prestige). So there's our final irony, or perhaps ultimate conclusion: driving the A5 Tiptronic, we got at least 50 percent comfortable with the idea of forgoing the manual. Now we have the S5 Cabriolet that might have solved all this, but it's pricey and automatic-only. If cost is less important and you prefer the automatic, check out the S5 Cabriolet. It loses a little power and V8 rumble, but gains fuel mileage on a par with the A5 (21/29). If you like to drive a stick, and if you like to save some dough, the A5 quattro Cabriolet has a 30 percent lower price than the S5 Cabriolet. Tough as it might be to lose the S designation, we think that's where we'd end up. And yeah, we kind of like the red over black. ■

2011 Audi Q5 2.0T quattro

We drove and reviewed the all-new Audi Q5 in May/June 2009 and again a year later. We had driven the Audi Q7 at its launch, impressing us on extremely rough forest roads and high-speed mountain highways worthy of a sports car. The Q5 turns out to be more than just a downsized Q7. Unless you need the specific seven-seat capacity or interior volume of the Q7, the Q5 stands on its own.

The Q5 offers Audi's usual three package levels, with a TFSI 2.0L turbo (2.0T) available on the lower model, a normally-aspirated 3.2L V6 on the top model, and either on the middle model. Base prices range from about \$35,000 for Premium, to just under or just over \$40,000 (depending upon engine) for the mid-grade Premium Plus, to about \$50,000 for Prestige. Our test Q5 was the 2.0T Premium Plus with 8-speed Tiptronic transmission. Add metallic paint (\$475), MMI nav-audio package (\$3000), B&O audio (\$850) and destination for a total of \$44,500.

The B&O sound system features GALA (graduated audio level adjustment) to optimize interior sound in varying conditions. The Tiptronic gives us our best results in S and with some application of manumatic control.

We noted some torque-ish tracking, despite its being a quattro, but the Q5 corners really well. The chassis is well balanced, and the vehicle overall has a nice size and feel. Top-rated Audi instruments and controls are fully implemented. Audi remains the uncontested champion of the backup camera: top image quality and a useful display on your turning track. We were happy with the 2.0T, a 211-hp engine achieving 20/27 MPG and a 0-to-60 of 7.1 seconds, compared with the 3.2 V6, at 270 hp, 18/23 MPG and a 0-to-60 of 6.7, at \$3100 higher purchase price. After just a few days, we realize we have really started to "move into" this vehicle, moreso than we do with many one-week vehicles.

Make yourself at home. ■



Ford hatches 5-door Fiesta

Joe Sage



We drove the 4-door Fiesta six months ago. "Ford has found another recipe for hotcakes," we noted. We were pleasantly surprised by a wide range of amenities we'd expect in a much more expensive car—keyless entry/start, heated seats, leather, perimeter alarm, comfort package and more. The control layout was superb, and mood lighting gave it a combination night club/fighter jet feel. Though not powerful, it was peppy, holding its own quite adequately in aggressive metro traffic. Visibility was great. The audio system was a real rocker. We were also pleased with the Fiesta's spaciousness, and our main feature by Barbara Schaffer noted the hatchback holds even more. Time to find out.

The Fiesta 5-door Hatchback is actually 13.5 inches shorter than its 4-door sedan counterpart. That's a whopping 7.5 percent on a car this small (160.1 inches overall for the hatch, 173.6 for the 4-door). All the occupant dimensions are the same, with the exception of an extra 0.1" for rear seat headroom in the hatchback. Total passenger volume is the same for both: 85.1 cu.ft.

But the sedan's 12.8 cu.ft. of cargo volume ("luggage capacity")—which, again, we had found surprisingly large last summer—is trumped by a whopping 26 cu.ft. of cargo volume in the hatch from the front seat back, or 15.4 cu.ft. even with all seats up. Add liftgate convenience, and you have a compelling argument for a hatchback. Think again about 13.5 inches of short-bodied maneuverability and parking ease, and again the hatchback calls your name. On top of that, the hatch is 41 to 53 pounds lighter than the 4-door (depending on transmission: the automatic adds 38 pounds to the hatchback or 50 to the sedan). Our car this time, the 5-door hatch with manual transmission, weighs 2537 pounds, the lightest of the four possibilities.

We've heard so many times that Americans won't buy a hatchback. We're not so sure that's true. So we asked on Facebook, "Anybody here an ardent fan or detractor of the concept?" Answers included: [a] "Love hatchbacks. They just make sense." [b] "Hatchbacks sell like hotcakes in the mountains of Colorado, skis fit perfectly since they've become short and fat." [c] "I'm a big fan of 3 door hatches. All of Ford's new models I've encountered have a feeling of quality to them."

Powertrain, fuel mileage, pricing and options

Connected to a 1.6-liter TiVCT Duratec DOHC 120-hp gasoline inline-four, the automatic transmission brings you a Fiesta rated at 30 mpg city and 40 mpg highway. Going with the manual saves you \$1070 at purchase, though MPG drops to an estimated 29/38 city/highway. We'd go with the manual, as our test hatch was equipped.

Base price for the 5-door hatchback is \$15,120, compared to \$13,320 for the 4-door sedan, in SE trim (our test hatch was the base SE). Upgrade to the 5-door hatch SES, adding SIRIUS satellite radio, 16-inch premium wheels and Ford's SYNC® connectivity system, and you're at \$17,120 before options. Our Blue Flame Metallic test car—SE, manual—had a RapidSpec package added at \$1245, bringing SYNC, premium audio, sport appearance package, cruise control, front parking lamps and painted aluminum 15-inch wheels. Add ambient lighting and SIRIUS radio (\$370) and a winter package (\$195), and you're at \$16,930, or \$17,605 with \$675 destination charge—basically for an SES but with 15-inch wheels. Cleverly outfitted.

Our time with the 5-door Hatchback

In our week with the hatch, we noted that even with the manual transmission, it was predictably short on acceleration, but picks up pep on the power curve quickly. The manual transmission gave us an early up arrow. We were at 2000 rpm against a red-line of 6, and the car was telling us to shift up. Pff. We've found more useful torque at higher revs. The audio impressed us, as it had on the sedan—sounding as good as a \$5000 upgrade audio in a \$55k car, and it's all part of a \$15k car. If there's one single thing that makes this Fiesta look like a far more serious contender than its predecessors (the old Fiesta, even the Aspire), it would be these 15-inch wheels; go with the 16-inchers and it'll be all the moreso.

Our bottom line? Our logbook notes concluded, "Really, you could live with this car indefinitely; the only thing is that it could use a little more power. But it is what it is (and that's quite a bit!)." The longer we had this Fiesta, the more we liked it. Once you get used to the amount of power you do have, you can do quite a bit with it. You won't dust any Ferraris, but we surprised people all the time. It handles great, you get a lot of pep with the manual transmission, you can rip through corners at intersections and leave people wondering what the heck this new Ford's all about. ■

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THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS

■ The Paris Auto Show brought out big design changes for the Bavarian Motor Works top coupe that may redefine the brand's future styling direction. The **BMW** Concept 6-Series coupe took on a more traditional-look with a sexy design language moving away from the so-called Bangle-era look that dominated the brand's cars for the last decade. Interior elements are dressed in soft two-tone leathers, elegant wood trim and glassy black accents. The digital cluster features a big screen (10.2-inch) iDrive display and tunes are played through a 16-speaker Bang and Olufsen audio system. Engine offerings are still beneath a closed hood, but media speculation includes a 300-hp inline turbocharged six-cylinder, 400-hp 4.4-liter V-8 and down the road a 570-hp twin turbo V-8 for an M6 version. Pricing is expected to stay close to the current model levels, which start at \$79,000, when it arrives in the US.



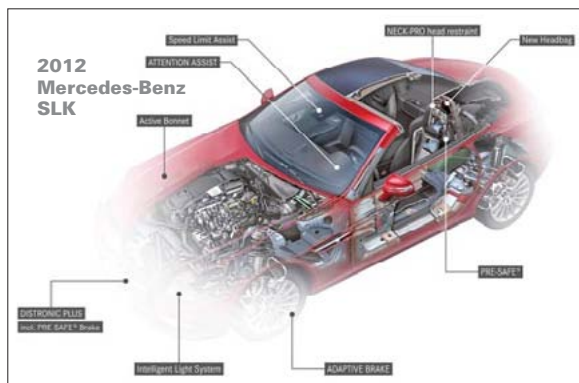
BMW Concept 6 Series Coupé

■ **Smart** plans to double its model lineup in 2011 with the addition of a five-door gasoline-powered small car. In September, Penske Automotive Group and Nissan signed a memo of understanding giving Penske, which distributes smart in the US, the right to procure and distribute a five-



smart 5-door

■ When the **Mercedes-Benz** SLK debuts this year, one of the more interesting options will be the Magic Sky Control Roof. In a normal mode, the glass roof will produce a screen-like effect on the interior, but when the driver wants to change the interior, a roof-mounted switch is pressed which passes electricity through the glass roof, changing position of particles in the glass so light can pass through, in effect making the roof clear, or it can be switched to totally dark. When the car is shut off, the roof automatically also goes fully dark and blocks UV and infrared so the car will stay as much as 50 degrees cooler than with a standard glass roof on a sunny day. The option is expected to cost about \$2,500.



door hatchback built by Nissan. The new vehicle is expected to be available at smart dealers during the fourth quarter of 2011. The new smart and a Nissan version will be built in Mexico on the automaker's new global V platform that will also be used to replace the Micra subcompact sold outside the US. The Micra is almost two feet shorter than the current Nissan Versa.

■ **BMW** uncovered a corner of the BMW 1 Series M Coupe at the BMW Car Club of America's annual Oktoberfest in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin, last fall, confirming its production. The full car is to be unveiled at the North American International Auto Show in Detroit in January.

■ **Audi's** mid-level executive sedan, the A6, is due for a full-scale facelift for 2013, and we are told to expect a larger car with more intensive use of weight-saving aluminum. The new model arrives in Europe in 2011 and in the US about a year later. Base European models will likely have the outstanding 200-hp, turbo four-cylinder, but the four-cylinder still has some stigma with US buyers, so we may look for a new 2.8-liter V6 in that car. The new 3.0T supercharged V6 will be in the middle, with a 372-hp V8 in the top model. All models will probably have quattro all-wheel drive and a seven-speed dual-clutch S-Tronic transmission. European customers will get an optional clean diesel, a hybrid model with a 3.0-liter supercharged engine and eight-speed automatic transmission. Look for an optional air-suspension and touchpad-entry navigation system, live Google, active cruise control and other features from the new A8.



Jaguar C-X75

■ **Jaguar** is considering limited production of the C-X75 electric concept recently introduced in Paris (see full page elsewhere in this issue). The 205-mph four-wheel-drive supercar is capable of running in purely electric mode for 68 miles on a six-hour plug-in charge. The Jag is driven by four wheel-mounted electric



Subaru Impreza concept

motors, with the batteries being charged, to give the car a theoretical range of 560 miles. C-X75 is capable of reaching 205 mph and sprinting from 0-62 mph in just 3.4 seconds. Each electric motor weighs just 50kg but produces 195 hp of power and combined torque output of 1,180 lb.ft. Because each wheel is driven by its own electric motor, the C-X75 is four-wheel drive—with all the traction, grip and safety benefits that entails—without the weight disadvantages. With the seats fixed, the steering wheel, controls, main binnacle and pedal box all adjust towards the driver. Production is expected to take from five to seven years, if the plan is approved.

■ If the design concept shown at the recent Los Angeles Auto Show is an accurate depiction of the future Impreza styling, **Subaru's** popular compact car is going from "ho-hum" to "wow!" From the front, the Impreza Design Concept is clearly recognizable as a Subaru, with a hexagonal grille with spread wings in the

center and hawk eye-style headlights. The front view previews a new direction for the brand's design, with the hood, grille and headlights designed to project three-dimensional character. In profile, the Impreza Design Concept shows a sleek, continuous line from the A-pillar, along the roof and through the C-pillar. The design yields both a roomy four-passenger cabin and excellent aerodynamic performance.

■ One of the joys and jobs of owning a classic car is working on it. Tom Benford has written a new book as part of the Motorbooks Workshop series entitled *Weekend Projects for Your Classic Corvette 1953-1982*. A freelance journalist for more than 35 years, Benford contributes regularly to several national magazines and has written 16 books including a dozen on the Corvette and other automotive subjects. In a new 224-page book, with 657 color photos, Benford outlines a year of projects (52) for a classic Corvette owner. The book is \$29.99 and is available online at www.motorbooks.com.

■ With the early popularity and critical review of the new Jeep Grand Cherokee, Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne says the same platform is currently being considered for future **Maserati** and **Alfa Romeo** SUVs. The Grand Cherokee platform was originally developed jointly with Mercedes-Benz, when Chrysler was still owned by Daimler. It is being used on the latest generation Mercedes-Benz ML-Class SUVs and under the redesigned 2011 Dodge Durango. Marchionne said that a Maserati SUV using the Jeep architecture could be paired with the powerful 4.2-liter and 4.7-liter V8 engines built by Ferrari for use in current Maserati passenger cars. SUVs have never been a part of the Alfa Romeo and Maserati offerings in the past. Alfa is expected to be back sometime in 2011.

■ **Hyundai** plans to take the next generation Azera even more upscale than the



2011 Hyundai Sonata

current model. The large, front-wheel-drive sedan will be an all-new design from the Hyundai "fluidic sculpture" design language used for the Sonata. The design should have a stronger appeal to buyers in northern and Midwest parts of the country where snow and ice are factors. The Azera will compete with cars like the Toyota Avalon. No details about features, drive trains or availability dates were released; however Krafcik, Hyundai CEO, said the launch date was not far away. The Azera, which has a starting price of \$26,290, was originally launched late in 2005 replacing the top Hyundai model, the HG350. ■

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

UPCOMING FEATURES

Chevrolet Volt launch in Santa Monica



Lucas Oil Off Road Racing Series at Firebird



Photo: Tim Sharp

Auction highlights and results



Infiniti QX56 revisited



Volvo S60 AWD



Ford Police Interceptors



2012 Ford Focus



SWIGZ Electric Superbike



Photo: Jensen Beeler, Asphalt and Rubber Magazine



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1931 MARMON SIXTEEN 2/4-PASSENGER COUPE
by LeBaron
Chassis No. 16141694



1929 DUESENBERG MODEL J DUAL COWL
PHAETON *by Derham*
Engine No. J116



1956 JAGUAR XK140 DROPHEAD COUPE



1939 BUGATTI TYPE 57C THREE-POSITION
DROPHEAD COUPE *by Letourneur & Marchand*
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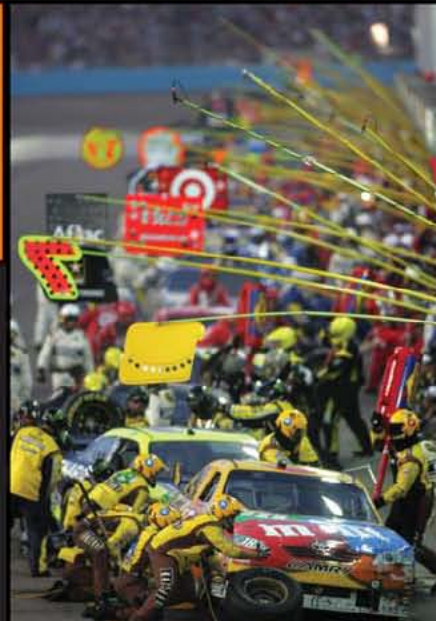
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