

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 16 NUMBER 4
JULY-AUGUST 2017



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ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

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COVER: Ram 2500 Power Wagon, which we run through multiple major off-road adventures in this issue.
 Photo: Fiat Chrysler Automobiles.



Most of our content breaks down into obvious and sometimes somewhat overlapping categories. New vehicle impressions are what some people would call test drives (but with no scopes, gauges or crash testing involved). New vehicle introductions usually have a travel undercurrent, as we get a first look and first drive of upcoming new vehicles. These can take us far afield (Canada in this issue), and many break outside our Arizona borders, while some are held in-state, and all fall within our collective mindsets.

There are road trips, often not vehicle-specific, and things can overlap here. Most generally have a vehicle involved, while some are purely about the destination. In this issue, we fly to Tennessee to build a second Habitat for Humanity house with Nissan, sort of a non-driving road trip, though with Nissan Titan pickups on site.

We have personalities, business, technology, auctions and shows, and related news. We have multi-vehicle events—in the dirt, in the mud, on the track, on the open road—often also considered a comparo, as most, but not all, generate trophies.

We have motorsports, which in this issue overlaps with business, special events and comparos. We have motorsports in the form of racing—Phoenix Raceway's open wheel weekend this spring—but also in the form of business, as we update you on their \$178 million redevelopment. We have motorsports crossed with special events, as the Grand Prix of Scottsdale returns to its Old Town Scottsdale street course. We also have comparos in both Texas and the Pacific Northwest, with the Texas event motorsports related, as it was held on the track at Circuit of the Americas.

This issue's Ram Power Wagon features are vehicle events, but also special event-related, tied in with Overland Expo West, and are road trips of a sort (or off-road trips), as they take you places you are going to want to go, too, either by armchair or behind the wheel.

Enjoy the ride.

Joe Sage - Publisher/ Executive Editor



Photo: Brenda Priddy

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Nissan and the media build again

Life is full of second chances, and we jumped at this one. by Joe Sage

Last fall, Nissan invited automotive media to their home turf in Nashville to build a house with Habitat for Humanity—a second House The Media Built. Four waves built for a day each, going from concrete slab to a fully enclosed new home ready for finish work. Last fall, we worked on day one, installing and plating wall framing and the first roof truss, giving a head start to wave two.

This spring, we picked up where we had left off, but on an entirely new house—this time, setting and hurricane-proofing roof trusses, sheathing the exterior and installing about half the windows.

Habitat began as a grassroots effort in Georgia in 1976. It is now a global nonprofit in 1,400 US

towns and over 70 countries. These homes are not giveaways. Believing everyone needs a decent place to live, Habitat partners with people to build or improve a home and to help arrange an affordable mortgage. Selected future homeowners learn construction skills, first working on other homes, then build their own homes alongside volunteers.

Nissan's work with Habitat began in 2005, with 50 donated trucks and employee volunteers to rebuild after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. By now, Nissan has donated almost 150 vehicles, and employees have volunteered almost 100,000 hours with Habitat on scores of homes across the US.

A new \$1 million grant is expanding the Habitat

vehicle fleet for disaster recovery and contributing toward the cost of building homes in areas where Nissan has an operational presence. Nissan's cash contributions to Habitat for Humanity in North America total over \$14 million to date.

The new owner of the home we built this year is Rochelle Grigsby (upper right, below), a lifelong Nashville resident who retired five years ago from the insurance business and found housing unobtainable as the area booms, now that she was on a fixed income. As the only person in her family who did not own a home, Rochelle says, "I love that Habitat teaches you how to keep your home. With all the homeownership classes, you really are prepared for the biggest investment of your life." She thanks Habitat for this chance to realize the American dream of owning a home. ■



Lower left inset photo above: Sherri Tilley of TheFlashList.com by Scott Tilley.
Lead photo below by Joe Sage.
Other photos © Habitat for Humanity of Greater Nashville.



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AUTOMOTIVE NEWS UPDATE



Kia Stonic

▼ The **2018 Kia Stonic** is an upcoming, eye-catching new compact crossover with European design flair, inspired by the form and function of larger Kia SUVs. The name combines “speedy” and “tonic,” referring to the first degree and tonal center in the musical scale, supporting its image as a fresh, agile new vehicle for the segment. A sweeping roofline and wind-swept roof rack add to the vehicle’s flow. The vehicle blends sharp horizontal lines with softer sculpted surfaces and a low center of gravity. Kia Stonic’s European-designed cabin echoes the exterior, with straight lines, smooth surfaces and geometric design forms. The interior places technology and ergonomics at its heart, with smart packaging maximizing space for all occupants, and a “floating” HMI (human-machine interface) seamlessly blending smartphone access with the car’s own functions. On sale in the second half of 2017, Stonic will be the most customizable Kia ever, inside and out.

▼ **Kia Motors Manufacturing Georgia, Inc.** (KMMG) celebrated production of the plant’s one-millionth Sorento CUV at its West Point, Georgia facility in May. With an investment of over \$1.1 billion, KMMG launched Sorento production here in November 2009, joined by the Optima midsize sedan in 2011. Including on-site and local suppliers, KMMG has created more than 15,000 jobs in the region. To date, KMMG has produced almost 2.4 million vehicles. The one-millionth Sorento is

a snow white pearl 2018 Sorento SXL, put on display at Atlanta’s Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport. KMMG, located on 2,200 acres in West Point, Georgia—the first North American manufacturing site for Korea-based Kia—has an annual capacity of 360,000 units, building the Sorento CUV and Optima midsize sedan, two of the brand’s top selling models in the US.

▼ The fleet supporting the 43rd G7 Summit, held in Taormina, Sicily, Italy in late May, was made up of vehicles from **Fiat**



FCA and Iveco G7 Summit fleet

Chrysler Automobiles and CNH Industrial’s **Iveco**. Some 90 vehicles were provided to event organizers, including the natural gas Fiat 500L, electric Fiat 500e, Alfa Romeo Giulia and Giulietta, the new Alfa Romeo Stelvio utility, and vans including both Fiat Ducato and the Iveco Daily Minibus (natural gas and electric ver-

sions). The vehicles transported delegations, ministers, civil servants and all the other personalities taking part in the Summit. Many of the vehicles will also be used for G7 collateral events held through October in numerous Italian cities, such as the Environment summit in Bologna in early June and the Technology and Industry summit in Turin in late September. FCA and Iveco both have solid Italian roots and long-established global operations, positioning them well to take center stage at an international event like the Taormina G7 Summit. The vehicles also boast low environmental impact and high safety technology content.

▼ Expanding its automotive platform and marketplace, **eBay Motors** is adding tire installation services, which began in Germany in May and will expand to the US this summer. The ability to bundle new tire purchases with professional installation in their local area is a first for eBay. With this new feature, tires will ship directly to local automotive repair shops for installation. Additionally, eBay is unveiling an improved Motors homepage for the desktop, with enhanced search

and browsing features for a massive selection of vehicles, both new and used, as well as parts and accessories. And thirdly, a new eBay partnership with TrueCar in the US will offer buyers new tools with access to deeper insights when shopping for new vehicles and the ability to quickly compare vehicle prices.

▼ A new **Porsche 911 Turbo S Exclusive Series**, the most powerful 911 Turbo S ever, will be limited to 500 units worldwide. In addition to a power increase of



Porsche 911 Turbo S Exclusive Series

27 hp, the 911 Turbo S Exclusive Series is distinct from the standard 911 Turbo S with its own style points and more luxurious materials and details. Each coupe is finished by hand in the new Porsche Exclusive Manufaktur at the headquarters in Zuffenhausen. The in-house workshop, previously known as “Porsche Exclusive,” specializes in tailoring to customer wishes and in being responsible for limited-edition series. The car’s 3.8-litre biturbo flat six with exclusive power kit has 553 lb-ft of torque between 2,250 and 4,000 rpm, for acceleration from 0 to 62 mph in 2.9 seconds, a 9.6-second time to 124 mph and a top speed of 205 mph. (Numbers are converted from European.) An active sports chassis with Porsche Active Suspension Management (PASM) and Sport Chrono package are standard. Fuel consumption is the same as the standard model at about 26 mpg combined. The car is finished in Golden Yellow Metallic using new laser technology and has black-painted 20-inch wheels with central locking. (The car is also offered in other specifically approved colors.) The hood, roof and side skirts are carbon fiber; two carbon-weave strips trace the hood and roof to a Turbo Aerokit rear wing; ram-air scoop in carbon; and twin stainless steel exhaust pipes are in black. Fenders bear Porsche Exclusive Manufaktur badging. And for the first time, you can have a matching precision chronograph from Porsche Design configured to coordinate with the design of the car.

▼ **Ford Motor Company Fund**, Ford’s philanthropic arm, collaborated with Detroit Public Schools and Experience Aviation as more than 50 career and techni-

cal education students built a 1965 Ford Daytona Coupe with nearly 1,000 parts over the course of 18 weeks. The hands-on project taught vital skills and provided students an up-close look at how science, technology, engineering, the arts and mathematics (STEAM) come together in a modern work environment, increasing awareness of technology-based career opportunities. The car, designed by Factory Five Racing Inc, has a 350-hp Ford 306 engine, a Ford TK5 transmission and new independent rear suspension, all provided



Students build 1965 Ford Daytona Coupe with Ford Motor Company Fund

with support from Ford Fund. Instructional support was provided by Experience Aviation, applying principles from Ford’s STEAM Lab digital curriculum. The Lab was launched in 2014 to spark student passion for technology entrepreneurship and traditional STEM careers, as well as automotive design and vehicle tech-

nology. STEAM Lab adds an arts component to the original STEM elements of science, technology, engineering and math, to help students learn how creativity and innovation can be used in problem solving and collaboration. Before a test track unveiling at Ford’s Dearborn Development Center, the students—joined by students from Douglas Academy for Young Men in Detroit, one of the special STEAM Academies launched by Ford Fund’s Next Generation Learning initiative—were challenged to reimagine how they would improve safety and sustainability through technology. This mini hackathon and panel discussion featured award-winning pilot Capt. Barrington Irving, founder of Experience Aviation, who gained fame in 2007 as the youngest person to fly solo around the world. The session included a cross-section of Ford engineers and other experts from Ford Driving Skills for Life; Ford Fund’s education office; Ford’s Automotive Safety Office and product development departments. Ford Motor Company Fund invests over \$18 million a year in scholarships and education initiatives globally. In addition to Ford STEAM Lab, Ford Fund educational programs include Ford Blue Oval Scholars, Ford Next Generation Learning, Ford College Community Challenge and Ford Driving Dreams Tour.

▼ **INRIX, Inc.**, a leader in connected car

services and location analytics, has published the results of its *Connected & Autonomous Vehicle (AV) Consumer Survey*, with insights into products, services and pain points emerging in this multi-trillion dollar market. Three key themes emerged from



consumer experiences of and attitudes about connected cars and autonomous vehicles: concerns about data privacy, the importance of road and vehicle safety, and the level of trust and confidence in

coupe features a large panoramic glass roof; tapering glasshouse; dramatic dash to axle proportions; the swept tail coachwork of the 1934 Gurney Nutting Phantom II Two Door Light Saloon; the up-

ice is in 17 cities, with 100 Bolt EVs capable of 250,000 all-electric miles a month. Working to reduce traffic deaths and make transportation easy for the elderly or disabled, GM has driven more than 50 autonomous Bolt EVs in San Francisco, Scottsdale and Detroit. Sixty-one global models have forward collision alert, 58 have lane departure warning and 40 have blind side alert. More than half of Chevrolets sold this year will have a Teen Driver system. GM used 199.8 MW of renewable energy in 2016, passing its 125 MW goal four years early while saving \$5 million. They aim to source all electricity for 350 facilities in 59 countries with renewable energy by 2050. Energy and carbon intensity in manufacturing are down 16 percent and water 12 percent since 2010. GM added 23 landfill-free facilities last year, for a total of 152 worldwide, already beating its 2020 landfill-free target. With the Materials Marketplace, a reuse network where businesses buy one another's scrap, GM has reduced total waste by 27 percent since 2010. GM employees contributed 110,000 volunteer hours with 148 nonprofits in 2016. Each of GM's 171 manufacturing plants had environmental outreach activity last year. GM filled a STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) position every 26 minutes last year. GM provides free training to veterans through its Service Technical College, and US veterans made up more than 5 per-



the connected car and autonomous vehicles market. The report found familiarity with emerging technologies and their benefits will be central to winning customers. In addition, current owners of connected vehicles are significantly more receptive to connected features, more trusting of data sharing and more likely to purchase an autonomous vehicle. "A new battleground is emerging between automakers, tech companies and ridesharing companies in the race to develop connected and autonomous vehicles," explained Bob Pishue, senior economist at INRIX. "With hundreds of millions of connected cars expected to be on the roads within the next 15 years, the market share will be owned by companies that can educate drivers and gain consumer trust."

swept rear departure angle of a 1934 Phantom II Streamline Saloon by Park Ward; an elegantly falling waist-rail; and elements of the 1934 Park Ward 20/25 Limousine Coupé. Finishing off the uncluttered rear of this one-off car is its UK registration number, 08, milled from aluminum ingots and hand polished.

▼ **General Motors** issued its annual *Sustainability Report* on operational efficiency, risk mitigation and improving communities where it does business. The report out-



lines company aspirations, from mobility for all to expanding zero-emissions vehicles. GM has produced 11 models globally with some form of electrification, most recently Chevrolet Bolt EV with an estimated 238-mile range. Lightweighting for fuel efficiency saw 10 vehicles losing 3,600 pounds total. GM's Maven car-sharing serv-

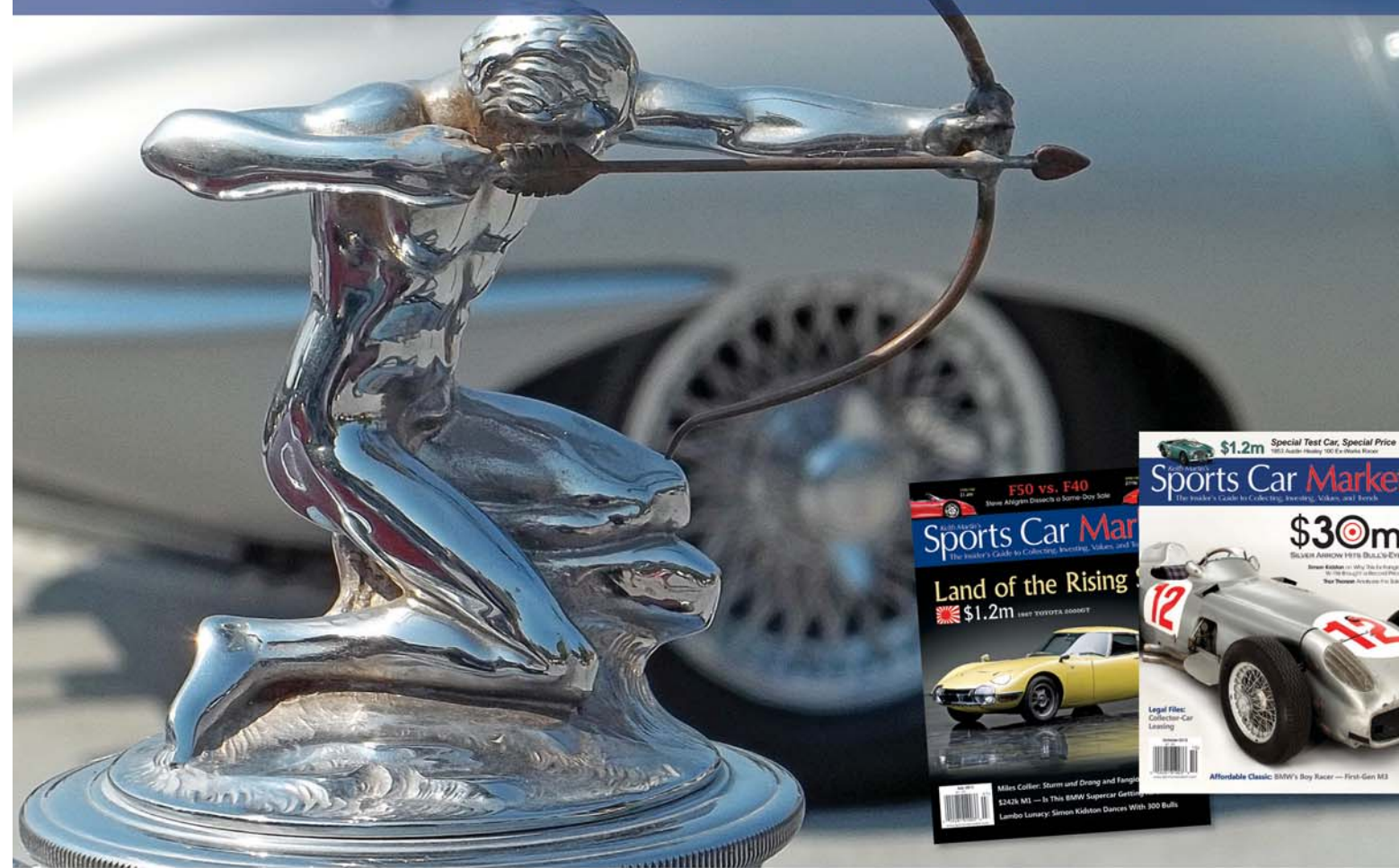
cent of new hires in 2016. GM signed the White House Equal Pay Pledge and offers internships to relaunch technical careers of caretakers and parents who took a leave from the workplace. The *Sustainability Report* is part of GM's commitment to transparency, making corporate policies publicly available as part of the report. ■

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Bloodlines

Always among the sexiest Mercedes-Benzes, the new E-Class Coupe amps up the family traditions by Joe Sage

Mercedes-Benz models have been working through a bit of a unifying and standardization scheme for the past couple of years. There are many variants, but C-, E- and S-Class are crystal clear, with sedans in the three usual sizes (compact, midsize, full-size), and utilities now in line with this (GLC, GLE, GLS). Each sedan also has a Coupe and a Cabriolet derivative. Alphanumerics still spell out engine pecking order (though they no longer necessarily reflect actual displacement).

The new E-Class Coupe comes with one engine (a 329-hp three-liter biturbo V6) that feeds through an all-new GEARTRONIC® 9-speed transmission—not only more fuel efficient, but also dropping a half second off zero-to-60 acceleration time—in one alphanumeric: E400 Coupe. Its single variant is the all-wheel-drive E400 4MATIC Coupe.

We flew to British Columbia for a chance to learn more about the new Mercedes-Benz E-Class Coupe and give it a significant shakedown drive from the Coast Mountains inland.

Luxury buyers were arguably a stuffier lot a few decades back, perhaps before the tech industry turned wealth on its head. Today, they are lively and engaged, as likely to be snowboarding in the Alps as to be hanging out at the banker's club in Bonn.

This is generation seven of the E-Class Coupe. Our introduction began with a look at those that have come before, which made us realize that even those from an earlier era had always caught our eye. Notables included the mid-80s-to-90s E-Class Coupes (upper right)—sleeker, leaner and meaner, more of a two-door vs four-door layout akin to that distinction in American cars of the '50s and '60s—and CLK (far upper right) from 1997-2009, which melded E-Class styling with a C-Class platform and basically held the lineup spot of an E-Class Coupe. E-Class Coupe and Cabriolet regained their E-names for 2010, though they were still C-Class-underpinned. These are the bloodlines. All new for 2018, they are now built on the E platform, starting with this new E400 Coupe, with a Cabriolet to follow.

Mercedes-Benz is on a roll. For 2017, they are introducing five all new products, two facelifts and 16 new variants, such as this Coupe and the upcoming Cabriolet. Popular models such as the CLA Coupe or GLA and GLC utilities are sold out. Potent

AMG vehicle sales are up more than 50 percent. Already this year, Mercedes-Benz has displaced BMW as the number one-selling luxury brand in the US. (The BMW 6 Series is stated as the main competitor for the new E400 Coupe—a smart move, as the BMW 6 Series starts at \$81,400.)

The new E400 Coupe comes not only in one single optimum powertrain configuration, but standard with creature comforts and tech including full leather, 12.3-inch COMAND® display with nav, power seats with lumbar support, a panoramic roof, even remote start so you can get the cabin ready on those really hot (or cold) days. "If you build the house right," says director of communications Rob Moran, "it does not need add-ons."

Beauty and power are themes of the new car. Its new body has strong shape and form, but gone are creases and folds that dominated the industry for the past decade. The Coupe gets its own aluminum hood, with a stylish power bulge, and its Panamericana-inspired grille gets diamond studs. The car maintains its pillarless side glass. A front fascia lip adds visual width, and the rear license plate moves down to bumper level, adding visual width and an uncluttered tri-star badge. The car is so sporty, it could start to compete with the SL, but product chief Bernie Glaser reminds us this is "a full-fledged four-seater."

KEEP RIGHT >>



SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	3.0L alum-alloy biturbo V6
HP/TORQUE	329 hp / 354 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	9G-TRONIC 9-spd auto w/paddles
DRIVETRAIN	RWD, 4MATIC AWD
STEERING	Electromech spd-sensitive rack & pinion
FORMAT	Two-door, four-passenger coupe
STRUCTURE	Steel unibody, aluminum outer sheet metal
SUSPENSION	F: Independent multi-link w/coils, single-tube gas w/variable damp, torsion bar R: same specs as front
ZERO-TO-60 MPH	(RWD) 5.5 sec 4MATIC: 5.2 sec
TOP SPEED	(elec limited) 130 mph
BRAKES FRONT/REAR	14.17" / 14.17"
WHEELS	8.0x18 (cast)
TIRES	(RWD): F: 245/45R18, R: 245/40R18 4MATIC: F/R 245/45R18
LENGTH/WHEELBASE	190.0 in / 113.1 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	(w/max load) 3.7 in
TURNING CIRCLE	37.52 ft
CARGO VOLUME	tba
FUEL CAPACITY	17.4 gal
WEIGHT	tba
MPG (city/hwy/comb)	tba

INCLUDES: Leather, 12.3" high-res COMAND® display with navigation (w/map updates & live traffic incl for 3 years), ambient lighting (64 colors), steering wheel touch controls, car-to-X communication, keyless entry and start, split folding rear seats (40/20/40), Dynamic Select, Pre-Safe and Pre-Safe Sound, active brake assist, power front seats w/lumbar and 3-position memory, panoramic roof, rear camera.

BASE PRICE	E400 Coupe (RWD)	\$58,900
	E400 4MATIC COUPE	\$61,400
DESTINATION CHARGE		995

OUR CARS: On our full drive day in British Columbia, we had one E-Class 4MATIC Coupe in the morning, another in the afternoon. Both had optional 19" AMG twin-spoke wheels (\$500), Burmester high-end 3D surround sound (\$5400), Premium 3 Package¹ (\$9350), AMG Line package² (\$2500), warmth & comfort package³ (\$800), massage seats (\$950) and rear side airbags (\$420). Both had paint and interior upgrades. One had Air Body Control air suspension.

- Our first car had elegant Lunar Blue Metallic (\$720) over Macchiato Beige and Yacht Blue leather (1370) with natural grain light brown elm wood trim (\$150) and standard suspension:**\$85,255**
- Our second car had deep and rich Selenite Grey Metallic (\$720) over Saddle Brown and Black leather (n/c) with Design® Magnolia Flowing Lines Wood (\$1300) and air suspension (\$1300):**\$86,935**

¹**PREMIUM 3 PACKAGE:** Active parking assist, inductive wireless charging w/NFC pairing, keyless entry and start, electronic trunk closer, SiriusXM all-access w/6-month trial, LED intelligent light system, adaptive highbeam assist, 12.3" widescreen digital instrument cluster, air balance cabin fragrance system, Power rear sunshade, active distance assist Distronic®, active steering assist, active lane change assist, active emergency stop assist, active speed limit assist, active brake assist with cross-traffic function, evasive steering assist, active lane keeping assist, active blind spot assist, Pre-Safe® Plus (rear-end collision protection), surround view system, heads-up display.

²**AMG LINE PACKAGE:** AMG body styling, aluminum sport pedals w/rubber studs, sport wheels.

³**WARMTH & COMFORT PACKAGE:** Multifunction steering wheel, heated armrests and rapid heating functionality for front seats.



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Moving from C platform to E gives us a Coupe that is 4.8 inches longer than its predecessor, on a wheelbase 4.4 inches longer. Front legroom and shoulder width are each up by two inches. Track is increased by 2.7 inches, width by 2.9. Now about an inch taller and with 1.3 inches of increased rear shoulder room, the car welcomes rear passengers.

Or you can use the 40/20/40 rear folding seats to gain significant flat-floored space for your gear, on top of an already spacious trunk, which easily held suitcases, camera bags, computer bags and all the rest for two occupants' international trip.

Mercedes-Benz has long occupied the leading edge of driver assistance technology and often applies it to the popular E-Class first, which Glaser calls "the most intelligent car on the road," as he gives us a tour of the car's brains. The new Coupe has a full suite of Intelligent Drive features, including not only Pre-Safe collision avoidance, but innovative new Pre-Safe Sound, which (since the noise of an impact can damage hearing) emits a short interference signal that triggers a protective "stapedius reflex" in the human ear—unprecedented attention to detail. Also new is Car-to-X Communication, able to "see around corners and through obstacles." Currently working E-Class-to-E-Class, it will next apply to all Mercedes-Benz-to-Mercedes-Benz, then to any car-to-car. Feature buttons on the steering wheel are now touch- and swipe-sensitive, closely mimicking familiar smartphone functions. Some tech features are just for fun (and style), such as taillamps with a "welcome feature," lighting sequentially outward when you arrive and inward when you lock and leave.

The car comes standard with suspension featuring selective damping, lowered 0.6 inches from the E-Class sedan. A notable option beyond your RWD/AWD choice is Air Body Control, with multi-chamber air suspension at all corners. The car handles superbly with or without, but for \$1300, it provides an enhanced range of Dynamic Select options controlling throttle, steering and shift. Settings include comfort, sport, sport plus and eco, plus an individual setting where you can dial in and preserve your favorite elements of each. Air suspension lets you raise the car a bit for winter conditions or rough roads, and it will re-lower itself after awhile if you have forgotten about it.

Our drive route took us from Vancouver airport to a quick waterfront break (temps were about 55-60° F, but swimmers were abundant), then up into the Coast Mountains to the huge Whistler ski resort, base elevation 2,198 feet. In the morning, we pursued ever more aggressive mountain roads en route to Lillooet BC, elevation 821 feet, surrounded by dramatic mountains above 9,300 feet. (For perspective, some Colorado ski towns sit above 9,000 feet, next to 13,000-foot mountains,



so a vertical rise in Colorado as spectacular as that in Lillooet would require mountains almost 18,000 feet high, about a mile taller than they are, somewhere between the Matterhorn and Denali.)

Canada, a country as big and beautiful as the US, but with only 10 percent our population, is bound to have fewer roads and simpler budgets. As such, it doesn't seem to suffer the fate of roads in the US that get perpetually widened and straightened, year after year, reducing their enthusiast driver quotient. Our roads in BC were as twisty and steep as could be. It was wonderful. With mountains, valleys, huge rivers and lakes, hills, curves and tunnels, our full second day was about 300 miles—imagine more or less mixing our drive distance to San Diego with the terrain of Southwest Colorado. Canada is metric, so pumping the heads-up display to 100 while still going just 62 mph kept us on good terms with the Mounties and various flavors of local gendarme.

We had driven the Alaska Highway when it was 1200 miles of gravel, in an old pickup truck with not so much as an AM radio, which made for a long week. Much of our drive route in BC matched much of that drive's scenery. The Alcan is paved now, and if we could rock out the way we did for many happy highway hours in BC—with the new E400 Coupe's 590-watt Burmester audio cranked up in Live mode and 3D Surround, feeding 13 speakers, front body cavity low end and a clever ceiling speaker—every mile would go by fast and enjoyably. We could easily have gone all week.

The 2018 Mercedes-Benz E400 Coupe and E400 4MATIC Coupe start arriving at dealers this summer. The new E-Class Cabriolet—which will also offer 4MATIC for the first time and has a soft power top that opens in just 20 seconds and operates up to 30 mph—arrives this fall.

Watch for the Atlanta Falcons this fall, playing in new Mercedes-Benz stadium, which appropriately has the world's largest retractable roof. ■



OPEN-WHEEL WEEKEND AT PIR

DESERT DIAMOND WEST VALLEY PHOENIX GRAND PRIX

INDYCAR / SILVER CROWN / VINTAGE / .25 MIDGETS

Phoenix Raceway expanded year two of the Phoenix Grand Prix into a diverse, action-packed open-wheel weekend in April, including the fourth race of the 16-race Verizon IndyCar Series; race two of the USAC Silver Crown Championship; USAC .25 Midgets; and a new Vintage Desert Classic.

QUARTER MIDGET SERIES

The USAC .25 Midget Series Phoenix Mini Copper Cup had 16 classes of young racers, ages 5 to 16—a chance to watch stars of tomorrow—in heat and feature races on a special 1/20th-mile track on the DC Solar Power Pavilion (the Midway) behind the straightaway grandstands. Classes are divided into junior and senior drivers (5-8 and 9-16 years old), as well as light and heavy classes (below and above 100 pounds). Tucson native Alex Bowman and 2015 NASCAR K&N Pro Series West champ Chris Eggleston got their starts in

Quarter Midgets at Phoenix. AJ Foyt, Jeff Gordon, Sarah Fisher, Brad Keselowski and Joey Logano also started in Quarter Midgets.

USAC SILVER CROWN SERIES

The 100-lap (102.2-mile) Phoenix Copper Cup, the second race of the 11-race USAC Silver Crown Championship, marked a return to Phoenix. USAC last raced here in 2009, with current NASCAR driver Cole Whitt winning the Silver Crown Series. The highlight of the season for many fans, the series would generally hold their season opener at Phoenix, to crowds of up to 31,000 fans. Some of PIR's most legendary drivers got their start in the Series, including current team owner and three-time NASCAR champion Tony Stewart, broadcaster and four-time NASCAR champion Jeff Gordon and AJ Foyt, IndyCar team owner and winner of the first-ever race held at Phoenix Raceway, in 1964.

VINTAGE DESERT CLASSIC

The inaugural *Classic Racing Times* Vintage Desert Classic had a series of exhibition runs for vintage Indy cars, many with significant ties to Phoenix. The event—their first visit here—featured two on-track sessions ahead of IndyCar on Saturday. Some of the most legendary open-wheel racecars in history were displayed, on and off track, including the No. 4 TrueValue/STP March Indy car driven by Roberto Guerrero that won at Phoenix in 1987 (and the Indy 500 that same year); and the last Indy car Jim Clark ever drove in competition, the 1967 Rolla Vollstedt 67B Bryant Heating and Cooling Special Ford. Phoenix local race legends Tom Sneva, Lyn St James and Arie Luyendyk were special guests, along with Derek Daly and Max Papis.

VERIZON INDYCAR SERIES

The 250-lap (255.5-mile) Desert Diamond West Valley Phoenix Grand Prix, the fourth race of the 16-race Verizon IndyCar Series, saw Helio Castroneves take pole position in qualifying on Friday for his second straight year, setting new one-lap (18.8701 sec, 194.975 mph) and con-

(At left) IndyCar winner Simon Pagenaud in Turn 4. // (Right) USAC Silver Crown, Quarter Midgets and Vintage racers augmented the busy open-wheel weekend. // Beach Whiskey girls. // The Boy Scouts held their Pinewood Derby at the track for the first time. // Fan Pogo shows off her nails. // 3TV's Scott Pasmore with "Speed King" Helio Castroneves.

secutive two-lap (37.7538 sec, 194.905 mph) records, for another "Speed King" crown. Seven cars this year broke the speed record Castroneves set a year earlier. Penske teammates Castroneves, Will Power (2nd), Josef Newgarden (4th) and defending Verizon IndyCar Series champ Simon Pagenaud (5th) took four out of five spots, with Ed Carpenter Racing's JR Hildebrand in third.

In Saturday's race, 33-year-old Frenchman Simon Pagenaud, 2016 Verizon IndyCar Series champ, was dominant, taking the lead on lap 137 and winning at a record average speed of 144.058 mph, the first time any driver has averaged over 140 mph in a race at the tricky one-mile oval. The key moment came on lap 138, when he had been running a close third behind Penske teammates Power and Castroneves, as that lead pair dashed into the pits for fuel and tires. Pagenaud stayed out and inherited the lead when Takuma Sato (who won the Indianapolis 500 a month later) drifted wide coming out of Turn 4 and made contact with the outside wall. While under caution, Pagenaud was able to pit for service and still retain the top position. Pagenaud, Power, Castroneves and Newgarden ran in close quarters at times during the final 113 laps, but Pagenaud dodged, weaved and kept the rest at bay. It was the second consecutive year the defending Verizon IndyCar Series champion won at Phoenix; last year was Scott Dixon.

This was Pagenaud's second career start at Phoenix Raceway. His first was in last year's Phoenix Grand Prix, where he finished second. It's the tenth win of his career, and his first oval track win, conquering a configuration that has challenged him throughout his career.

Phoenix Raceway demonstrated it can run two major races on the same day, perhaps paving the way for the return of NASCAR Mexico next year (NASCAR took a year off in México, as well), this time on Saturday to a bigger audience, back to back with regular NASCAR 500 on the same day. We hope so.

NASCAR returns to Phoenix Raceway in November 2017, March 2018 and November 2018. The Desert Diamond West Valley Phoenix Grand Prix returns in spring 2018.

We look forward to all of the above. ■



APRIL 28-29, 2017
PHOTOS BY RANDALL BOHL

Quarter Midgets photo: Phoenix Raceway

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VEHICLE IMPRESSION : 2017 DODGE DURANGO R/T RWD

Stealthy
Seven-seat Dodge R/T by Joe Sage

Dodge Durango bears impressive DNA under its relatively unassuming skin. Built alongside Jeep Grand Cherokee, Durango shares much with this combination Rubicon Trail/country club champion. Developed in the waning days of the DaimlerChrysler partnership, Durango shares significant elements of chassis and drivetrain design with the twice-as-costly Mercedes-Benz GLS. And as a Dodge, it not only shares an impressive range of Pentastar and HEMI® engines, but in the case of our example here, an R/T badge and treatment, moving it into a space not covered by the others.

Put that all together, and you have a seven-seat utility with 360 well-mapped horses, 7400 pounds of towing, a base price just over \$40,000 and a persona that will give you an ear-to-ear grin while leaving the outside world oblivious, if you care to—or not—a package that's equal parts quiet but potent sleeper and head-turning competitor.

Yet through it all, this two-and-a-half-ton people hauler is also just cool. Batman cool.

Durango's tow capacity (7400 lb RWD, 7200 lb

AWD) gives it an edge against many competitors, which have ratings of 3500-5000 lb. Some others decided that 90 percent of people are covered at 5000 lb, and that fuel savings could make up for the rest. Durango R/T is still in the 20s for highway MPG, but can tow for those 90 percent and for the 10 percent who need to tow 50 percent more.

And when did anybody buying a Challenger or Charger R/T ever worry about the MPG-HP trade-off? Same here. There's a V6 Durango with 6200 lb tow capacity and 26 MPG if you prefer.

Our Durango R/T was thoroughly equipped, from 8.4-inch Uconnect® and Beats audio, to triple-zone climate with desirable roof outlets, to a rich red and black R/T-embossed, leather-trimmed interior.

There are a number of alternative shifters we don't like, but FCA's rotary we do—it's just tactile, easy and well positioned, and it won't let you turn off the vehicle if not in park—simple and effective.

By the way, if 360 hp is not enough for you, watch for the 2018 Dodge Durango SRT, with a rev-matching 475-hp 6.4L HEMI V8 and 4.4-second zero-to-60 acceleration time.

The bones of Grand Cherokee, GLS and Dodge Durango itself, with the spirit of Challenger R/T, all delivered in the \$40s. What's not to like. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	5.7L HEMI® MDS VVT V8
HP/TORQUE	360 hp / 390 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	8-spd auto w/ paddle shifters and electronically modulated torque converter clutch
DRIVETRAIN	RWD (AWD available)
BRAKES	F 13.8 vented 2-piston disc / R 13.0 solid disc
STEERING	rack & pinion, elec power assist
SUSPENSION	FR: Short- and long-arm (SLA) indep, coils, gas twin-tube coil-over shocks, steel upper & alum lower control arms, alum knuckle, stabilizer bar
	R: Multi-link rear, coils, twin tube shocks (w/ load leveling for tow), alum lower control arm, independent upper links (tension/camber) plus separate toe link
WHEELS	20x8 low-gloss granite crystal wheels
TIRES	265/50 R20 Pirelli Scorpion
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	201/2 in / 119.8 in
TURNING CIRCLE	37.1 ft
PASSENGERS	seven (2/2/3)
CARGO CAPACITY	17.2 / 47.7 / 84.5 cu.ft
WEIGHT / PAYLOAD / TOW	5133 / 1340 / 7400 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	24.6 gal
MPG	14/22/17 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$42,095
TECHNOLOGY GROUP:	Adaptive cruise, advanced brake assist, blind spot/cross path detect, full speed fwd collision warning, lane depart warning plus
REAR DVD ENTERTAINMENT PACKAGE:	Blu-Ray compatible dual screen video
SECOND ROW CAPTAIN'S CHAIRS:	Ford/tumble, w 2nd row console, cupholders, armrests, 3rd row console
POWER SUNROOF	1195
DESTINATION CHARGE:	1095
TOTAL	\$49,670



From pre-law to automotive mechanic

Sarah 'Bogi' Lateiner and 180 Degrees Automotive

BY TYSON HUGIE



Left to right: Madison Ervin, Michelle Davis, Heather Herr, Bogi Lateiner, Barbie "Barbie the Welder" Parsons and Martha Tansy. Up front is Martha's daughter Ellie.

Fewer than two percent of auto mechanics are female. Plenty of women have an interest in getting into the industry, but many can't find work because they aren't qualified, and they can't build the skills to become qualified until they land that first job. It's a cycle that Sarah "Bogi" Lateiner has sought to break, while changing the way people think about women in automotive.

Lateiner started her love affair with cars when she was sixteen, buying an old VW Beetle. After multiple bad experiences with repair shops, she enrolled in her high school's auto shop so she could work on her own car. With the help of mentors and books, she did a complete restoration of her beloved Bug, building her confidence and her passion for working on cars in the process.

Pushed from an early age to go to college, Bogi attended Oberlin College with a double major in Women's Studies and Pre-Law and a minor in Politics, graduating Phi Beta Kappa in just three years. At first, she set her sights on Harvard Law School, but after thinking about what she really wanted to do with her life, she made an about-face—a 180—and moved to Phoenix to attend Universal Technical Institute to be a mechanic.

After graduating from UTI, Bogi had a difficult time finding someone to hire her, finally finding a home with BMW dealerships. She found working at the dealership frustrating in some ways, so after six years, she quit her job and started working on friends' cars in her driveway.

Within eighteen months, her reputation as a topnotch mechanic had grown to the point where she couldn't keep up with the workload. So at age twenty-nine, Lateiner took the huge step of leasing a building, hiring some employees and officially opening her own shop—180 Degrees Automotive.

The shop serves as an educational institution as much as a repair facility. In addition to performing a full range of automotive services, her team of women (and the occasional male) are joined by others from around the community—and around the country—who come to Bogi's to learn the trade. Many already have skills, while for some it may be the first time they've picked up a wrench.

The facility erases gender stereotypes, causing people to think twice about anyone's skills and abilities in automotive trades. Between Bogi's own career story, the new lives her trainees can pursue and the customer perceptions that are changed, the name 180 Degrees Automotive completely fits.

The magic happens inside an industrial building near W Camelback Road and N 7th Avenue that holds more than meets the eye. Sofas, chairs and fixtures create a comfortable atmosphere for customers. The lobby contains a quarterly art exhibit featuring local artists and the garage bays themselves are immaculately tidy and organized.



Lateiner's real name is Sarah, but she studied in Hungary for a year during high school, where "Sarah" sounds a bit like a curse word. Her friends instead called her Boglarka (buttercup), nicknamed Bogi, which is close to the word for beetle. Since her VW Beetle had started her down the automotive path, "it stuck for multiple reasons," she says. Bogi is in her fifth season co-hosting *All Girls Garage* on Velocity TV. The current main project for her team of women is a build called the Chevy Montage—a 1957 Chevy pickup truck (equipped with a BMW M5 engine) that will debut at the SEMA show in Las Vegas this November.

Bogi has done something all of us wish—she has kept that first VW Bug all this time. It is due for another complete restoration and thus is on the list of projects for her team of women professionals and hobbyists from across the country. ■

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- Nationwide parts and labor warranty for 3 years or 36,000 miles.

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 545 W Mariposa St, Phoenix AZ 85013
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www.180automotive.com
www.bogisgarage.com

PIR REBUILD UNDERWAY

PHOENIX RACEWAY PROJECT POWERED BY DC SOLAR FIRST STEEL SET AND PEDESTRIAN TUNNEL EXCAVATED

Phoenix Raceway, along with parent company International Speedway Corporation (ISC), announced a \$178 million redevelopment on January 30, and the project is now underway. Concrete elevator towers were already standing by the time the Phoenix Grand Prix rolled around in late April.

DC Solar is title sponsor for the Phoenix Raceway Project Powered by DC Solar modernization and multi-year sponsor of the redesigned Midway.

The project includes extending the grandstand near what has been Turn 2, with seating and hospitality roughly doubled in size. The existing Bobby Allison Grandstand will be extensively upgraded, with old bench seating replaced by individual 20-inch seats with cupholders and free in-seat WiFi. The new extension will have 20- and 21-inch seats with the same features. The expansion curves to the south, so it will provide excellent shade coverage for spectators in the new grandstand, as well as in the remodeled existing grandstand.

Pre-race will take place in front of the majority of fans, between what have been Turns 1 and 2,

with a Gatorade Victory Lane fan viewing area.

The start/finish line moves to old Turn 2, just before the well-known dog leg, closer to fans and shaking up competition considerably, launching into one of the most challenging areas of the track.

Concessions, merchandise stands, guest services and medical center will all be new or completely renovated. New suites will accommodate 18, 28 or 48 people, with new seating for easier mingling between outside and in, while new Club 64 is essentially one huge hospitality suite that accommodates multiple groups collectively.

There will be four new escalators, five new elevators and a new pedestrian tunnel with access to a completely redesigned infield with new DC Solar Fan Midway and first-of-its-kind Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series Garage Fan Zone, placing fans face-to-face with the superstars of the sport, watching over a waist-high wall, seeing right into the garages—no glass and no obstructions—as their favorite teams prepare their cars and hold driver meetings. There will also be glass-walled

garage hospitality suites.

The old grandstands along the straightaway on the north side will be removed once the new structure is complete, by November 2018, creating new RV camping spots, with both premium track viewable spaces and non-track-viewable spaces.

While some parking will be relocated, the majority will remain untouched and free.

LOADS OF STEEL PARADE

On May 25, Phoenix Raceway marked an important milestone for its redevelopment as the first steel for the grandstand addition was delivered. The event was marked by a parade from Phoenix Raceway headquarters and ticket office, running down Avondale Boulevard to the track, led by an Avondale Police Department escort and the official Phoenix Raceway Toyota Camry. City of Avondale officials and Phoenix Raceway ticket holders joined members of the Okland Construction project team in four semi trucks, each carrying 40,000 pounds of steel—the first of 100 trucks that will transport steel to the track for the project.

STEEL INSTALLATION BEGINS

At dawn on May 30, the day after Memorial Day, the first piece of steel was installed for the new

Phoenix Raceway redevelopment starts at the west end, with grandstands and suites extended to the south (orange). The next phase includes a new tunnel connecting to the infield, which itself will be totally transformed. As new facilities come online, the old north side grandstands will be removed.

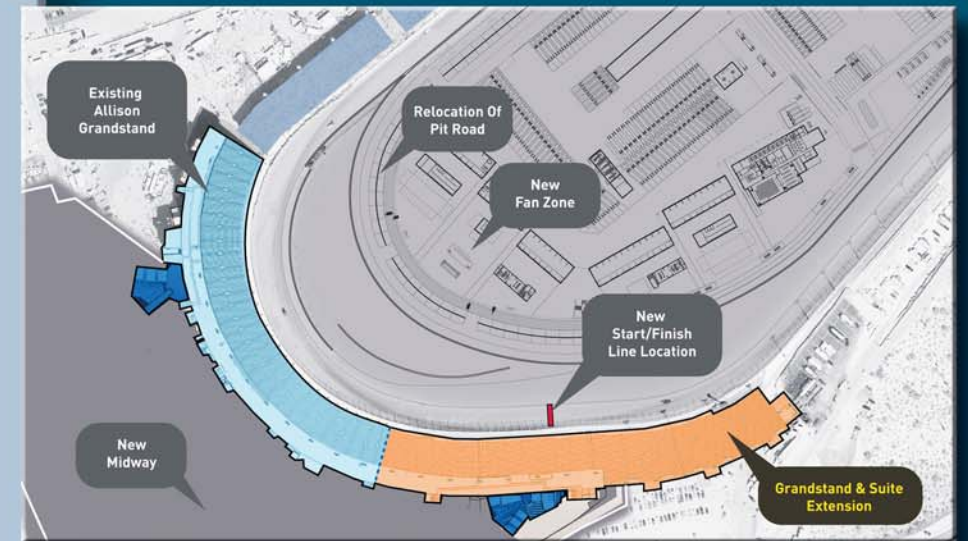
grandstand, featuring a special message, “Best Wishes from Daytona,” a fraternal passing of the torch from partner ISC facility Daytona International Speedway, which recently completed its own significant redevelopment project. The beam is the first of nearly 2,000 tons of steel that will be installed by Phoenix Raceway Project Powered by DC Solar’s completion in November 2018.

PEDESTRIAN TUNNEL CONSTRUCTION

In late June, the construction crew began excavation of a new pedestrian-only tunnel near current Turn 2, for quick and easy access from the grandstands to a centerpiece of the redevelopment—the infield DC Solar Fan Midway and Monster Energy NASCAR Cup Series Garage Fan Zone.

SEATS, TICKETS AND CAMPING

For detailed information on 2017 season tickets and 2018 renewals, individual tickets, seats, parking and camping during the transformation, visit PhoenixRaceway.com, or call the PIR ticket office at 866-408-RACE (7223). The ticket office is open Monday to Friday, 8am to 5pm, at 125 S Avondale Blvd, Suite 200, Avondale AZ 85323. ■



Lead photo: Phoenix Raceway

Photos: Joe Sage (6) ; bottom center and bottom right: Phoenix Raceway

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VEHICLE IMPRESSION : 2017 MERCEDES-BENZ GLC300 4MATIC COUPE

Positioning

BY JOE SAGE

When fastback versions of SUVs first came to market a few years ago, they struck some as the answer to a question no-one had asked. Whether due to evolution, the broadening of the segment, or the specific attributes of this one, the Mercedes-Benz GLC may well be the answer to every question, all rolled into one. Compact cross-overs, now the hottest selling segment, offer a lot of choice at the affordable end. For the basic format but with luxury brand, style and fitments, the GLC fills the bill. And for a sportier overall demeanor, we arrive specifically at the GLC Coupe.

This luxury sportster with a sleek yet rugged bearing seems to have been created clean sheet-style, but actually arrives in context. Mercedes-Benz renamed all its utilities almost three years ago, with new GLA, GLC, GLE and GLS models paralleling A, C, E and S sedans by size. The GLC's predecessor was the GLK, conceived to look a bit like a very small GL (now GLS), though shrinkage left its styling a bit awkward. The new alphanumeric may seem to toss out a lot of equity, but actually translated it, allowing a few lane changes

in the lineup. Rather than a wide variety of styling that used to be an unavoidable part of choosing size among the old GLK, M and GL, the new lineup presents a stairstep of clearly related vehicles.

The GLC300 SUV, new last year, is beautifully proportioned, closer in spirit to its bigger siblings. GLC solves two goals of relativity: when you want a Mercedes-Benz utility but want to pick your size, or when you want this size but want a Mercedes-Benz. That sounds simple, and now it is, with prior tradeoffs in style or format among sizes erased.

The GLC300 Coupe, new this year, is stunning from every angle, applying cues from the halo series of AMG GT sports cars everywhere from its grille to instruments and air handling vents.

If those cues strike your fancy, an AMG GLC 43 Coupe is now arriving, with a 362-hp 3.0L biturbo V6, zero-to-60 time of 4.8 seconds (the GLC300 does it in 6.4) and base price of \$59,650. Want even more? In early 2018, there will be an AMG GLC 63 Coupe with 469-hp biturbo V8 and a zero-to-60 time of 3.9 seconds, then an AMG GLC 63 S Coupe, with 503 horses and a 3.7-second acceleration time. Since the GLC300 with options already crosses into this pricing realm, these will be easy upgrade decisions for many buyers. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	2.0L aluminum-alloy inline-4 turbo
DRIVETRAIN	4MATIC AWD
HP/TORQUE	241 hp / 273 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	9-GTRONIC 9-spd auto, paddles
SUSPENSION	F&R: Indep multi-link coil, shock, bar
STEERING	speed-dependent electro-mech rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 13.5 / R: 12.6 discs
WHEELS/TIRES	8x18 cast / 235/60 R18
LENGTH/WB/GRND CLEAR	186.3" / 113.1" / 6.1"
TURNING CIRCLE	38.7 ft
WEIGHT	4001 lb
LUGGAGE CAPACITY	19.4 / 56.5 cu.ft.
FUEL CAPACITY	17.4 gal
MPG	22/27/24 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE \$42,095

(per our evaluation vehicle's sticker; now stated as \$45,950)

BRILLIANT BLUE METALLIC 720

NATURAL GRAIN BLACK ASH WOOD 160

HEATED & ACTIVE VENTED FRONT SEATS 1030

AIR BODY CONTROL AIR SUSPENSION 1900

BURMESTER SURROUND SOUND SYSTEM 850

PREMIUM PACKAGE: Keyless entry/start, COMAND® with

nav, CD, 8.4" display, touchpad, ambient lighting, illuminated

door sills, PRE-SAFE braking w/ped recog, blind spot assist,

lane keep, cross-traffic, air balance, LED heads 6400

LEATHER SEATING PACKAGE: incl psngr power/mem .. 1900

SPORT PACKAGE: AMG body styling, MB-Tex dash/door panels,

topstitch, perforated front brake discs, sport exhaust 2800

ADVANCED PARKING ASSIST: Parktronic active parking

assist, surround view system, hands-free access 1550

DESTINATION CHARGE 925

TOTAL \$64,185



MUDFEST!

Off-roaders compared on pavement and in the extreme



by Joe Sage

Photo: NWAPA / Josh Mackey

The competitive vehicle event popularly known as Mudfest—officially the Northwest Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year awards—is presented by the Northwest Automotive Press Association (NWAPA), a consortium of media predominantly from Oregon and Washington State, with a few outliers from such places as British Columbia and, in our case, Arizona. The Pacific Northwest means outdoor activity, so the awards, now in their 23rd year, are of broad interest everywhere. This was our fifth year.

There is always a better than average chance of rain in the Pacific Northwest, with almost perfect odds of mud. The event was held for the second time at The Ridge Motorsports Park, a 170-acre facility with a 2.47-mile 16-turn track with 300-foot elevation change (which we don't use) and a kart track that's a one-sixth-scale replica of the big track (which we do use). Off-road courses are specifically built for our event overlaying motocross courses and other acreage at the facility.

Voting was reengineered this year to place more value on day one, the pavement day, than in the past, generating a bit of debate. On one side are those who say this is how most people use these vehicles most of the time. On the other side are those who say day two, the off-road part, is the distinguishing characteristic of Mudfest. Whatever your take on this, you may want to bear it in mind while absorbing the results.

No matter how well each vehicle can do in the mud, rocks and ruts, and no matter how owners push each one to its intended limits on weekends or in rallies, most ownership miles center on the rubber hitting the road (though even this will often include more rain and snow than we get in Arizona). The first day's sealed-surface events started in the paved paddock area, with a coned handling course and a grid to test the vehicles' backup and proximity systems. Next, we enter the kart track, starting with a straightaway for acceleration and hard braking, followed by the track's succession of tight turns to challenge steering and handling, all with 50-foot elevation changes. Every vehicle entered in the event is run through this course. Lower, sleeker models may seem they will have an advantage here, and some do, but the bigger and burlier pickups and utilities are often surprisingly as nimble here as sporty crossovers.

Day two is what makes Mudfest Mudfest—the off-road portion, with climb, descent, rough surface, side slope, obstacle and mud elements. One course is used by all vehicles, while a second

course with more extreme hazards is used for certain qualifying vehicles specifically entered in an extreme capability class, plus generally a few others whose engineers have more to show off.

This year, there was considerable rain leading up to the event, some drizzle and fog for the on-pavement day, then clear skies for the off-road day, with biblical thunder and lightning and an absolute torrent opening up just as we finished driving and started tallying the winners.

Each vehicle is carefully chosen by its manufacturer to compete in one of six categories—four for utilities, one for pickups and a class open to the most extreme of either. The classes remain the same for the on-road and off-road days. An overall winner is also chosen independently of the individual category results.

The goal of judging media is to learn all they can about each vehicle's features, capabilities and performance, especially within parameters pertinent to the theme. The goal of the buying public is to learn what they should buy, but you will really benefit from taking in the relativities of it all, as well as the final votes. The manufacturers' goal is to put their best foot forward in each category, bringing the vehicles that best fit event parameters and meet the goals of the buyer.

Eighteen manufacturers entered 27 vehicles—five from Detroit, six from Europe, eight from Japan and one from Korea. All were 2017 models.

Twenty-eight media members drove and voted. Brand specialists were on hand to point out features and answer questions, and a team of hard-working press fleet representatives ran the event.

Although it's hard to buy a bad vehicle these days, this competitive event in challenging conditions is a great way for differences large and small to make themselves clear.

Scoring considers a number of things: vehicle specifics (powertrain, braking, exterior styling, interior comfort, function and technology), ride and handling on-pavement, and handling and capability off-pavement. Factors are added for fuel economy and relative value. Despite this event being rooted in the dirt, on-road and off-road attributes carry equal weight, reflecting real world use.

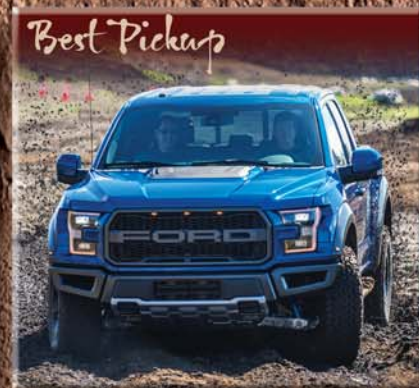
Each vehicle's numbers are added up to determine first, second and third place finishes in each category, sometimes confirming a gut favorite and other times delivering a surprise.

Results can be tight, with casual favorites not always statistical winners. Two categories this year had ties for first, broken by adding second place votes. Entrants and results are as follows:

KEEP RIGHT >>



Photos: Joe Sage



Photos: NWAPA / Josh Mackey

Compact Utility Vehicle

Honda CR-V Touring AWD
Jeep Compass Trailhawk
Kia Sportage SX AWD
Mazda CX-5 Grand Touring AWD
Mitsubishi Outlander Sport SEL AWC
Nissan Rogue SL Hybrid AWD
Toyota RAV4 Platinum AWD

PRICE RANGE\$26,590 Mitsubishi > \$38,778 Toyota
HP RANGE166 HP Mitsubishi > 240 HP Kia
HWY MPG RANGE23 MPG Kia > 34 MPG Nissan

NOTES: As segments start to overlap, this group included compacts and subcompacts. Similar spreads of power, fuel economy and price made comparisons easier. Against several upgraded models, Jeep Compass—midrange on vital specs, while as a Trailhawk having an edge off-road—was all new and took the vote.

WINNER: Jeep Compass Trailhawk
180 HP, 30 MPG hwy, \$33,565 as tested

Premium Compact Utility

BMW X4 M40i
MINI Cooper S Countryman ALL4
Volkswagen Golf Alltrack S 4Motion

PRICE RANGE\$28,615 VW > \$67,495 BMW
HP RANGE170 HP VW > 355 HP BMW
HWY MPG RANGE26 MPG BMW > 31 MPG MINI

NOTES: At more than double the VW's price and power, the BMW M dazzled both on- and off-road. The big new MINI Countryman showed an edge on the track. The VW, though more carlike, ran surprisingly well off-road. VW brought their Golf Alltrack only as a late substitute for the new Atlas 7-seater utility, which got pulled for corporate duties elsewhere—thus it was a bit of a surprise when their bring-something entry won the category.

WINNER: VW Golf Alltrack S 4Motion
170 HP, 30 MPG hwy, \$28,615 as tested

Family Utility Vehicle

Mitsubishi Outlander 2.4 SEL S-AWC
Nissan Pathfinder Platinum AWD
Subaru Forester 2.5i Touring
Toyota Highlander SE AWD

PRICE RANGE\$30,770 Mitsubishi > \$44,685 Nissan
HP RANGE168 HP Mitsubishi > 295 HP Toyota
HWY MPG RANGE26 MPG Nissan/Toyota > 32 MPG Subaru

NOTES: This is a more subjective category, "family" being a characteristic that could be applied to any and all. Subaru Forester, a vehicle with some of the highest buyer loyalty rates in the business, had almost the lowest horsepower, but the highest fuel mileage and a price point toward the lower end—and was the winner.

WINNER: Subaru Forester 2.5i Touring
170 HP, 32 MPG hwy, \$33,765 as tested

Premium Utility Vehicle

Acura MDX AWD Advance
Jeep Grand Cherokee Trailhawk
Lexus GX460 Luxury
Mercedes-Benz GLS 450 4MATIC
Nissan Armada Platinum 4WD
Volvo V90 Cross Country T6 AWD

PRICE RANGE\$50,125 Jeep > \$96,250 M-Benz
HP RANGE290 HP Acura > 390 HP Nissan
HWY MPG RANGE18 MPG Lexus/Nissan > 30 MPG Volvo

NOTES: Tough competition, this one, full of vehicles that generate lust among even those who would never need them. We could wax rhapsodic about each, on and off pavement. Brought to the event in its top off-road trim, Trailhawk, the Jeep Grand Cherokee—last year's overall winner—dominated this category once again.

WINNER: Jeep Grand Cherokee Trailhawk
295 HP, 25 MPG hwy, \$50,125 as tested

Extreme Capability Vehicle

Jeep Wrangler Trailstorm (Mopar accessorized)
Land Rover Discovery HSE Luxury
Toyota 4Runner TRD Off-Road

PRICE RANGE\$43,433 Toyota > \$82,100 Land Rover
HP RANGE270 HP Toyota > 340 HP Land Rover
HWY MPG RANGE20 MPG Jeep/Toyota > 21 MPG LR

NOTES: The category is called Extreme, and the winner was perhaps appropriately the most powerful and most expensive of the three, although Wrangler usually wins partly for the opposite reason. Jeep knew the Disco was all new, so they built a Wrangler tricked out by Mopar at double its base price. And the new Land Rover won.

WINNER: Land Rover Discovery HSE Luxury
340 HP, 21 MPG hwy, \$82,100 as tested

Pickup Trucks

Ford F-150 Raptor 4x4 Super Cab
Honda Ridgeline AWD Black Edition
Nissan Titan Pro-4X 4WD V8
Ram 2500 Power Wagon Crew Cab 4x4

PRICE RANGE\$43,770 Honda > \$62,850 Ford
HP RANGE280 HP Honda > 450 HP Ford
HWY MPG RANGE18 MPG Ford > 25 MPG Honda*

NOTES: Raptor and Power Wagon are built as the most extreme off-roaders, the Ram burlier, but both quite nimble. Nissan has won many prizes with the powerful new Titan, as it pushes for its share of this extremely brand loyal market. Honda won a surprisingly big vote share, partly for Ridgeline's tech innovations, partly due to the emphasis of the pavement portion, although its unibody-on-frame build also did well off-road. The Raptor badge seems to carry a lot of buzz, though, and took this win.

WINNER: Ford F-150 Raptor 4x4 Super Cab
450 HP, 18 MPG hwy, \$62,850 as tested

Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year

NOTES: The six categories are judged point by point, but just averaging that math would likely skew more and mean less than the subjective method used for the overall winner—judging media each simply pick a first, second and third choice and tally from there. Thus, the Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year does not need to have won a category, but it's always likely—this year's overall champion was also the Extreme Capability winner.

WINNER: Land Rover Discovery HSE Luxury
340 HP, 21 MPG hwy, \$82,100 as tested

Interestingly, last year's overall champion—the Jeep Grand Cherokee Limited 4x4 75th Anniversary Edition V6 EcoDiesel—was also the Family Utility winner, which had led us to suggest that category might be the event's spiritual core. Not only is there some subjectivity as to which categories a manufacturer enters, but there is much variety in trims within vehicles—after all, this year's Grand Cherokee, an off-road-oriented Trailhawk, was entered in the Premium Utility class.

With this year's new scoring emphasis on the pavement portion—and as healthy votes came rolling in for Volkswagen Golf Alltrack and Honda Ridgeline—we perceived some shift toward the urban/suburban end of the scale. All the more noteworthy, then, that the Land Rover Discovery won. As also the Extreme Capability Vehicle winner, it suggests that off-road may indeed still be the spiritual core of Mudfest after all. ■

VEHICLE IMPRESSION : 2017 TOYOTA AVALON TOURING

Our Mudfest event cruiser

Avalon is Toyota's flagship sedan, although EPA-classed as midsize, in an era of ever increasing overlap. Camry is Toyota's midsize, the best seller in that top-volume category; Avalon offers its appeal in a larger size and upfeatured.

Toyota Avalon is the corporate sibling to Lexus ES, though Lexus adds the rear-drive GS and big LS above that. Avalon starts at \$33,300—their biggest sedan at \$4525 less than the compact Lexus IS and \$5600 less than the near-twin ES. Our Avalon, in second-to-top Touring trim (Limited is the line-topper), is highly featured and premium-outfitted at \$1250 less than a base ES.

We drove ours from Seattle-Tacoma airport to our Olympic Peninsula hotel, to the Mudfest event site and back, then back to Sea-Tac. Powerful and smooth, our leather-trimmed Avalon cocoon had a user-friendly split-screen touch interface and nine-speaker premium audio—nice in a wild Pacific Northwest rainstorm, as was knowing the entire Toyota Safety Sense P (TSS-P) system is now standard in the entire Avalon lineup.

Toyota understands badge envy, as they bring us both brands. For a near-Lexus experience with a dose of Toyota frugality, Avalon delivers. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	3.5L DOHC 24v dual VVT-i V6
DRIVETRAIN	transaxle FWD
HP/TORQUE	268 hp / 248 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	6-spd ECT-i automatic
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson strut w torsion bar; R: dual link indep MacPherson strut w stblzr bar
STEERING	electrically assisted rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 11.7 vented / R: 11.1 solid disc Parking brake: foot-applied pedal
WHEELS/TIRES	18x7.5 / P225/45 R18
LENGTH/WB/GRND CLEAR	195.3" / 110.0" / 5.5"
TURNING CIRCLE	40.0 ft
SEATING CAPACITY	five
LUGGAGE CAPACITY	16.0 / 61.3 cu.ft.
WEIGHT	3505 lb
FUEL / CAPAC	87 octane reg / 17.2 gal
MPG	21/30/24 (city/hwy/comb)

INCLUDES: Toyota Safety Sense P included (pre-collision system w/pedestrian detection, lane departure alert w/steering assist, auto high beams, dynamic radar cruise control); Star Safety System (VSC, TRAC, ABS, EBD, BA & Smart-Stop); Latch child seat system; rear outboard seats; alarm w/engine immobilizer; blind spot monitor w/cross traffic alert; auto on/off LED headlights; heated mirrors w/signals; dual chrome-tip exhausts; power tilt/slide moonroof; dual zone climate w/filter and rear vents; Entune 9-sprk premium audio w/nav & app suite, AM-FM-CD-HD-SiriusXM, 7" touchscreen, leather trimmed seats/wheel, paddle shift, Bluetooth, voice command, 8-way power driver's seat & 4-way passenger; keyless entry/start, HomeLink.

BASE PRICE	\$37,650
BLIZZARD PEARL PAINT	395
CARPET/TRUNK MAT SET	224
DESTINATION CHARGE	865
TOTAL	\$39,134

Photo: Joe Sage

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VINTAGE MINI RACING

THE ROARING '20S AND CLASSIC MOTORSPORTS COME ALIVE IN OLD TOWN SCOTTSDALE

Racing teams, spectators and participants alike will take a step back in time at the Grand Prix of Scottsdale. Its 1920s theme includes an opening night Gatsby Under the Stars Gala, a Gatsby Garden Party & Strolling Fun, Kids Zone, Concours d'Grand Prix and the main event—the 3rd Annual Grand Prix of Scottsdale race, with Winner's Circle closing ceremonies.

This stylish event celebrates Americana, Arizona-made Vintage Mini Racers, heritage brands and the luxe euphoria of Roaring 1920s-era racing and craftsmanship.

Special festivities include:

Friday, November 3

GATSBY UNDER THE STARS GALA

Step back in time to the 1920s at this VIP evening event. Attendees will enjoy live Jazz Age music, dancing, gaming, complimentary cocktails and passed hors d'oeuvres. Your ticket includes five complimentary cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and a \$200 casino voucher. Tickets, VIP tables and tents are available starting July 1, 2017.

Saturday, November 4

CONCOURS D'GRAND PRIX

The Vintage Mini Racers used in the Grand Prix of Scottsdale are locally manufactured by Vintage Kart Company. A variety of Mini Racers will take part in a Concours d'Grand Prix from 11am till 4pm on Saturday. Admission to the Concours is free.

GATSBY GARDEN PARTY

Guests at the Gatsby Garden Party enjoy daytime fun with 1920s style in Gatsby beer, champagne, cocktail and wine gardens, while listening to Jazz Age music. Your ticket includes complimentary drinks, food and 1920s entertainment. The party runs both days from noon till 6pm. General admission and VIP tickets are available starting July 1.

Sunday, November 5

GRAND PRIX OF SCOTTSDALE

The Grand Prix of Scottsdale runs on city streets in Old Town Scottsdale on Sunday, with Opening Ceremonies at 10:30am and the race starting at 11am. Admission to the race is free.



Tickets and discounted lodging: Stay all weekend and don't miss a beat—discounted rooms are available at the Courtyard Marriott, Hyatt Regency and Howard Johnson. For tickets, complete details on the event, race team sponsorship and a link to discounted rooms, visit grandprixscottsdale.com.

Benefiting charity: For 35 years, Southwest Human Development has created a solid foundation for Arizona's children and their families. The agency serves 135,000 children and their families annually, giving away more than 180,000 children's books through early literacy programs, and changing the lives of young children through more than 40 programs. Their investments in early childhood are paving the way for Arizona's future. ■

Photo: Lindsay Meggers, Prostate Cancer Research Institute



Phoenix Molecular Imaging

The Prostate Cancer Imaging Specialists



C11-Acetate PET Imaging

The first and only facility in the Western US approved to produce and use C11 Acetate for the evaluation of prostate cancer under multiple clinical trials.

The physicians at Phoenix Molecular are conducting studies to determine how well C11 Acetate PET/CT scans can improve their

ability to detect residual or recurrent prostate cancer.

Through advanced imaging, such as C11-Acetate PET/CT, we now can know the true limit or extent of prostate cancer. With this information, better treatment decisions can be made.

Multi-Parametric MRI

Avoid the discomfort and in accuracy of Random Prostate Biopsies.

If you have a high PSA or are under Active Surveillance for Prostate Cancer, Multi Parametric MRI is the best non invasive way to determine if there is clinically significant cancer that needs further attention.

GENTLEMEN, START YOUR ENGINES— BUT FIRST CHECK UNDER THE HOOD.

Prostate cancer is one of the most common types of cancer in American men, with more than 220,000 new cases diagnosed annually, and is the second-leading cause of cancer death in men. One in seven American men—fathers, sons, husbands, brothers, partners and friends—will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in his lifetime.

While the exact cause of prostate cancer is still not known, it is known that the risk of developing the disease increases as you get older, and that early detection is the key to survival. In fact, when detected early enough, the chance for survival is very good. The PSA test is one of the most important tools available to aid in the early detection of prostate cancer. It measures the level of PSA, or prostate-specific antigen, in the bloodstream. PSA is usually found in the blood in low levels, as very little PSA escapes from a healthy prostate. Elevated PSA readings can be a sign of prostate cancer or other prostate conditions.

The Prostate Cancer Research Institute (PCRI), AMIFund.org, Phoenix Molecular Imaging and Insight Imaging work tirelessly every day on prostate cancer awareness and research.

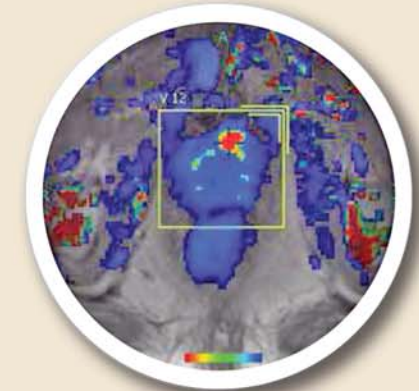
Last year, Prostate Cancer Awareness fielded a team at the Grand Prix of Scottsdale—and won the race! The winning car was auctioned last January at Russo and Steele, selling for \$12,650, with all proceeds donated to charity. The purchase

included entry in this year's racer under new livery, if the buyer so chooses.

Your life could depend upon getting tested. Early detection tools such as PSA tests should be part of a regularly scheduled checkup for men starting at age 40. It's an important way to establish baseline information, identify problems and begin treatment as soon as possible. After all, early detection is your best chance for a cure.

Phoenix Molecular Imaging is the first and only facility in the Western US approved to produce and use C11 Acetate for the evaluation of prostate cancer under multiple clinical trials. Their physicians are conducting studies to determine how well C11 Acetate PET/CT scans can improve their ability to detect residual or recurrent prostate cancer. Through such advanced imaging, they now can know the true limit or extent of prostate cancer, so better treatment decisions can be made.

Avoid the discomfort and inaccuracy of random prostate biopsies: if you have a high PSA or are under active surveillance for prostate cancer, Phoenix Molecular Imaging uses Multi Parametric MRI, the best non-invasive way to determine if there is clinically significant cancer that needs further attention. To learn more about your prostate health and treatment options, visit PCRI.org. You can also work to end prostate cancer through a tax deductible donation. Every dollar counts. ■



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Photo: Lindsay Meggers, Prostate Cancer Research Institute



Photo: Joe Sage

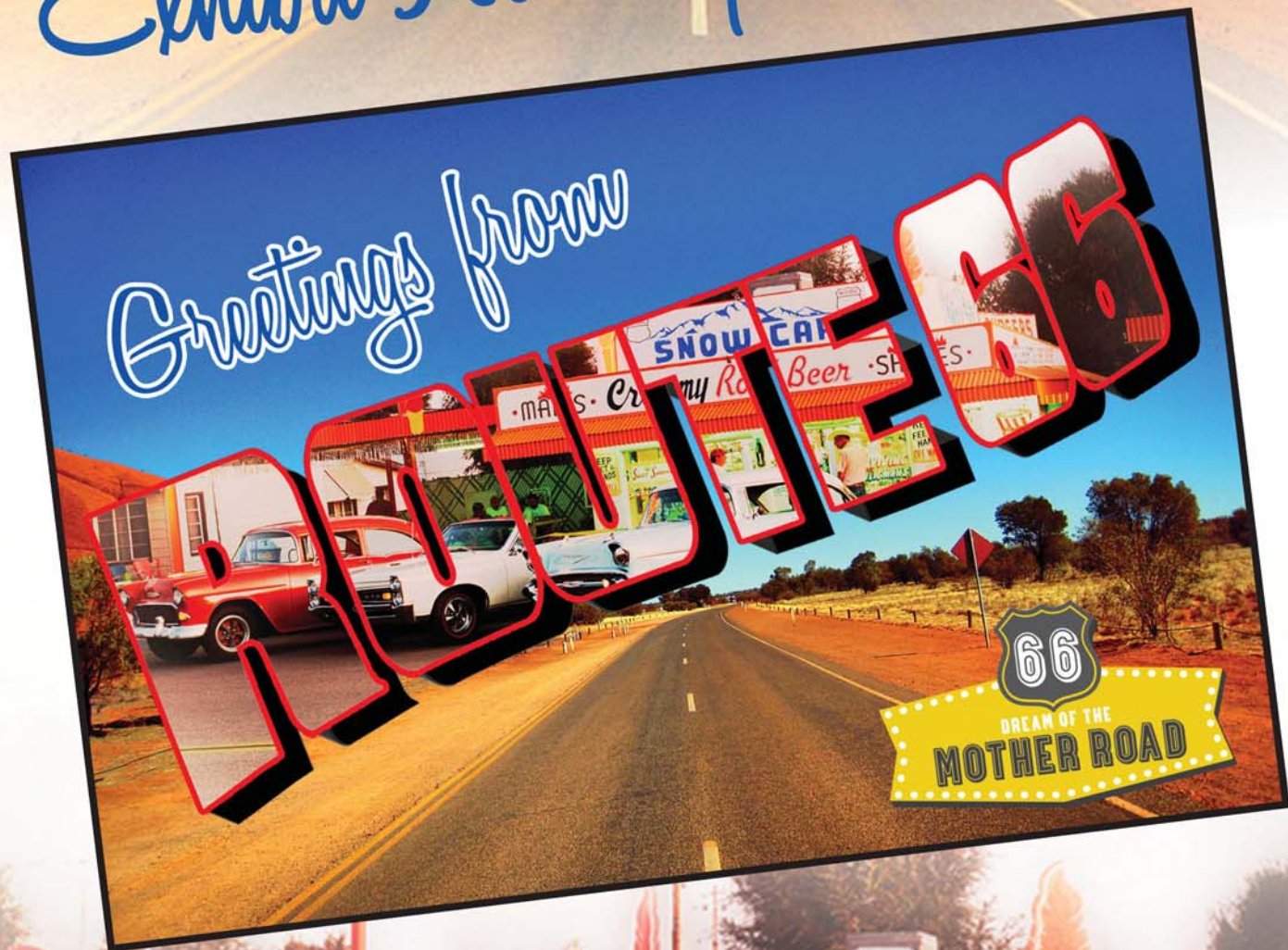


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SPECIAL EVENT : OVERLAND EXPO 2017 WEST

OVERLAND EXPO

Overland Expo can help you find the right vehicle, pack it with equipment and provisions, and learn the finer points of off-roading, with hands-on demonstrations and dozens of classroom sessions. Instructors include expert distance rally veterans and professional expedition leaders. You can also go just to take in the beautiful high country weather and the expo atmosphere, circulating among a wide variety of outdoor equipment and activity vendors and food booths.

This year's ninth annual West event (an East version in fall is in its fourth year) had a new venue, still just outside Flagstaff, now just to the south in Fort Tuthill County Park,

with Ponderosa forest, grassy meadows and views of the San Francisco Peaks, freshly covered with snow in mid-May.

We used the event as our launch site for off-roading to Jerome one day and to an volcanic off-highway park northeast of Flagstaff the second, with a chance to cruise Expo's booths and classes between the two.

A record of nearly 12,000 people attended this year's Overland Expo West—from South America, Asia, Australia, Canada and almost every US state—visiting displays and showcase vehicles from over 300 camping, equipment and vehicle outfitters, as well as high-profile vehicle manufacturers. Some 480 ses-

sion-hours of classes by some 150 presenters covered topics from vehicle recovery to securing rally sponsorship. The event also hosts authors, filmmakers and VIPs, with happy hours, food and drink including a final BBQ on Sunday, and even a film festival to round out the weekend.

Host Sponsors are Four Wheel Campers and BFGoodrich; Title Sponsors include Rhino-Rack and AT Overland. The event is put on by about 30 staff and 135 volunteers.

The 4th Overland Expo East will be held at the end of September, in North Carolina. The 10th Overland Expo West is scheduled for May 18-20, 2018 at the same Flagstaff venue.

If interested in exhibiting, presenting or volunteering next year, visit www.overland-expo.com/west. ■



NO SHORTCUTS

BY JOE SAGE

If you've ever set out to order your own new pickup from a blank slate, you know there are far more variables than on most vehicle types—payload, cab type, bed length, engine choice, alternators, rear ends, possibly transmissions and transfer cases, fuel tanks—with implications on tow capacity, acceleration, pace on a grade, driving range, fuel economy and more. It takes eleven pages of small-print charts just to specify towing capacities for the different combinations within Ram 1500 and 2500 pickups.

Both the Ram 2500 Power Wagon and the Ram 1500 Rebel simplify this—both built with mission in mind, and both marvels of engineering. They take no shortcuts and leave nothing out. The Rebel has always impressed us with the fact that for all its specialized modification, it trades off nothing whatsoever from its original specs: same towing, same fuel mileage, same everything and more. The Power Wagon starts with the beefiest heavy duty Ram 2500 and takes off from there.

Each is available in just one configuration: Power Wagon as a Crew Cab with 6'4" bed; Rebel as a

Crew Cab with 5'7" bed. Power Wagon continues to keep it simple, with just a 6.4L HEMI® V8 (with a multi-displacement system, the same incredibly effective cylinder deactivation that lets a Dodge SRT Hellcat be an efficient daily driver and a dominator, in the same package) and four-wheel drive. Rebel shoots for a wider audience, with choices between 3.6L Pentastar V6 or 5.7L HEMI V8 and 4x4 or (just a few) 4x2 drivetrains. Even a 4x2 Rebel can handle most anything, while Power Wagon is strictly business, taking everything a bit farther, with features such as a disconnecting front stabilizer bar for extreme articulation in the most challenging rock crawling. Power Wagon and V8 Rebel with 3.92 rear end can tow over 10,000 pounds.

"Power Wagon is the king of off-road trucks," says Nena Barlow of off-road outfitter Barlow Adventures, known to our readers from last year's bronze trophy in the Rebelle Rally (driving a Ram Rebel). "It's like the Rubicon is to Jeep Wrangler."

We joined Ram Trucks in Flagstaff a day before Overland Expo West opened nearby, for a major dose of overlanding in both trucks.

They specifically scout out the courses for an event like this, considering all the vehicles' particular attributes that need to be shown off, pushed to their limits. Routes are carefully chosen to be much the same kind of trails we might pick on our own, a wild-ass adventure based on the kind of extreme adventure enthusiasm we all share.

Our course was put together by our drive leader, Nena Barlow, who knows every square inch of the terrain (and every mile of road to and from).

Gathering up a small fleet of Ram 2500 Power Wagons and a couple of Ram 1500 Rebels in Flagstaff, we headed south on I-17, tires filled to 65 pounds, rarin' to go. We exited at Cornville Road west and drove several miles until we bid the pavement farewell at Beaverhead Flats Road, a fairly routine gravel run that connects to 179 south of Oak Creek Village. Here, we dropped everyone's tires to 45 pounds, for better traction.

We would take a series of trails from somewhere south of Sedona, headed in the general direction of Jerome. The fine line between rough-roading and pure off-roading starts to fade away as our roads themselves fade away. We were here to tackle it all, while wending our way generally westward within Coconino National Forest

We spent the next couple of hours on a succession of increasingly rough roads, as they soon deteriorated to minimalist ranch trails—Jeep-capable in some stretches, goat-capable in others—then to paths, hints of paths and rumors of paths,



Nena Barlow dropping the air from 65# to 45# in the Power Wagon, as we did in all the trucks. Behind that, the Ram 2500 Tradesman with Power Wagon Package, and behind that, the Ram 1500 Rebel.

until we reached our summit at House Mountain, with a spectacular view of the red rocks surrounding Sedona to our north.

A similarly challenging route ultimately brought us back to Cornville Road, some miles west of where we have started. The next stretch was all pavement, but we left the tires at 45 pounds. Our destination, via Cornville, Cottonwood and Clarkdale, was the distinctive mountainside-hugging small town of Jerome. Actually, our lunch spot would be a subset of Jerome: the Gold King Mine Museum and Ghost Town. If you have not been there, you owe it to yourself, especially as its creator and master putterer Don Robertson passed away last fall, though Don's daughter and son-in-

KEEP RIGHT >>



RAM 2500 POWER WAGON

CONFIGURATION	.....Crew Cab, 6'4" bed
ENGINE	.....6.4L HEMI® V8 w/MDS
HP/TORQUE	.....410 hp / 429 lb-ft
ALTERNATOR	.....220A (opt 220+160=380 dual)
TRANSMISSION	.....6-spd auto
DRIVETRAIN	.....4WD
TRANSFER CASE	.....manual or elec part-time w/ 2WD, 4WD hi, 4WD lo
FINAL GEAR RATIO	.....4.10
BRAKES	.....F: 14.17 solid, 2-piston, ABS
	.....R: 14.09 solid, 2-piston, ABS
SUSPENSION	.....Ram Articulink® Suspension
	.....F: 3-link w/track bar, coil springs, solid axle, disconnecting stabilizer bar;
	.....R: 5-link w/ track bar, coil springs, stabilizer bar, solid axle (opt air bags)
WHEELS / TIRES	.....17-in / 33-in
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....237.4 in / 148.9 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....43.9 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....F: 7.4 in; R: 7.1 in
APPR / BRKVR / DEP	.....21.8 / 18.2 / 27.0°
WEIGHT	.....6996 lb
TOW CAPACITY	.....10,030 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	.....34 gal

BASE RAM POWER WAGON \$51,695

RAM 2500 TRADESMAN (+PKG)

BASE TRADESMAN Crew Cab 6'4" bed	
5.7L HEMI V8 4WD	.....\$35,940
6.4L HEMI V8 4WD	.....\$36,440
POWER WAGON PACKAGE:	17x8.0-inch aluminum wheels, 180-amp alternator, 4.10 axle ratio, base engine controller (air-fuel mixture, timing and idle speed), black headlamp filler panel, black wheel flares, bright front and rear bumpers, fog lamps, front disconnecting stabilizer bar, WARN 12,000-lb front elec winch, fuel tank skid plate shield, hill descent control, OWL all terrain tires, Ram Articulink suspension (high-movement joints and a front sway bar disconnecting system), tow hooks, transfer case skid plate, Tru-Lok front and rear axles
	.....\$7,950

RAM 2500 TRADESMAN Crew Cab w/ 6'4" bed, 6.4L HEMI V8 4WD w/ POWER WAGON PACKAGE \$44,390

RAM 1500 REBEL

CONFIGURATION	.....Crew Cab, 5'7" bed
ENGINE	.....5.7L HEMI V8, 3.6L Pentastar V6
HP/TORQUE	.....5.7L V8: 395 hp / 410 lb-ft
	.....3.6L V6: 305 hp / 269 lb-ft
ALTERNATOR	.....160A
TRANSMISSION	.....TorqueFlite 8-spd auto
DRIVETRAIN	.....4WD, 2WD
TRANSFER CASE	.....2-spd elec part-time w/ 2WD hi, 4WD hi locked, 4WD lo locked
FINAL GEAR RATIO	.....2WD: 3.92; 4WD: 3.21, 3.92
BRAKES	.....F: 13.2 vented, 2-piston, ABS
	.....R: 13.8 solid, single-piston, ABS
SUSPENSION	.....F: upper/lower A arms, air suspension, stblzr bar; R: 5-link w/ track bar, air susp, stblzr bar, solid axle
WHEELS / TIRES	.....17-in / 33-in
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....229.0 in / 140.5 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....45.4 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....F: 9.3 in; R: 8.8 in
APPR / BRKVR / DEP	.....4WD: 23.9 / 18.8 / 22.1°
WEIGHT	.....5212 lb
TOW CAPACITY	.....4x4 V8: 10,160 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	.....26 gal (opt 32 gal)

BASE RAM REBEL.....V6 FWD: \$45,095
.....V8 4WD: \$48,645

Ram 2500 Power Wagon (below left) won Best Extreme Capability Vehicle at Mudfest, the NWAPA Outdoor Activity of the Year awards in 2015, while the Ram 1500 Rebel (below right) won Best Full-Size Pickup at the TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo that year. In 2016, Power Wagon won Best Off-Road Pickup at the Texas awards, where the Ram 1500 Rebel (below right) ranked as the most repeatedly driven vehicle. Power Wagon also had top scores at Texas in Appeal, Exterior and Performance.



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Cross this Bucket off your List! Even the best of us Car Guys know when to throw in the towel. And sometimes bucket doesn't mean a seat in a car. This is a limited edition set with Pub Glasses and Coasters that will have everyone gabbing about the time the wrench slipped and then..... Great tailgate item. Spend some bucks on a bucket set.

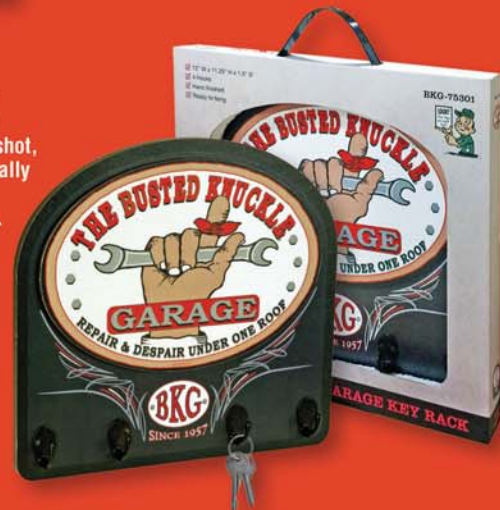
\$34.95 / SKU: 08-BKG-78700



Key Rack

Stop wasting valuable garage time looking for lost keys! Busted Knuckle Garage Metal Key Rack keeps all your keys organized and ready to go. Features 4 steel hooks and attractive BKG graphics. Dimensions: 12"W x 11.25"H x 1.5"D.

\$29.95 / SKU: 10-BKG-75301



Shot Glass Gift Set with Mat

That wreck of a car, truck or motorcycle in your garage may be shot, so why not have a shooter yourself? Not that the work is ever really done—but when it's time to celebrate—the Busted Knuckle Garage Shot Glass Set is just what you need. Set includes 2 hand blown shot glasses (2 oz.) and mini beverage mat. Top rack dishwasher safe. Mat Dimensions: 9"L x 3"W. Nifty gift container.

Was \$24.95 / Now \$19.95

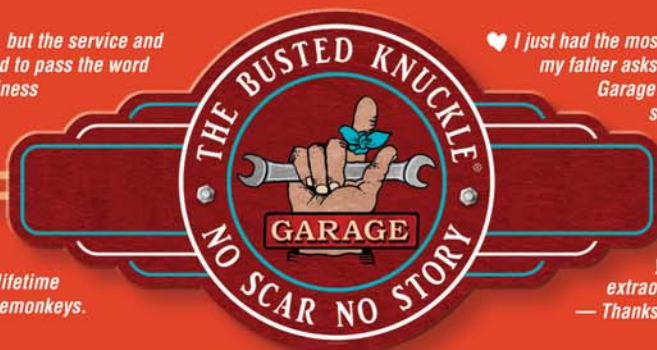
SKU : 08-BKG-78703



♥ Not only are your products awesome, but the service and the people are too! I very much intend to pass the word along about how great it is to do business with the Busted Knuckle Garage.
— Many thanks! Jackie B.

♥ I just had the most wonderful buying experience! I only hope my father asks for something from The Busted Knuckle Garage for Christmas so I can do business with such a wonderful company once more.
— Cheers! Michelle

♥ My husband just loves everything, especially me for getting him such cool stuff. I'd have to say we will be lifetime customers, oh ya!! Thank you, Greasemonkeys.
— Sincerely, Pam



♥ First, let me be the one thanking you! I honestly cannot remember such extraordinary customer service.
— Thanks again, "JR" Jean

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GOLD KING MINE, JEROME

Gold King Mine and Ghost Town just outside Jerome is a must see—an authentic historic mining town, kept alive and continuously enhanced and expanded by the endlessly imaginative and ambitious Don Robertson, who passed away in October 2016. Don's daughter and son-in-law vow to keep things going. The attraction is equal parts frontier mining history and whimsical fancy from a legendary Arizonan who was handy with a welder's torch and never short of ideas. From downtown Jerome, keep right at the fire station at the north end of town, about a mile. Hours are from 10am to 5pm, every day except Thanksgiving and Christmas. www.goldkingmineghosttown.com

law stopped by our little barbecue buffet and assured us that all will continue as it has been.

Our travels were not done yet. After lunch, we headed back out of Jerome, not the way we had come in, via paved highways, but generally north toward Williams, though all on roads of a sort. We started with twisty old Jerome-Perkinsville Road, a ridge-topper high above Gold King Mine, with a clear view of the snow-capped San Francisco Peaks north of Flagstaff at a high point. This connects to a series of Forest Service roads, one-lane canyon crawlers in some spots, two-lane gravel in others, ultimately paved near Williams—a two-hour, 50-mile drive that would be almost 90 miles but 20 minutes quicker on paved roads via Prescott. Next time... we will do the dirt again.

Ram themselves pointed out one clever shortcut to having a Ram Power Wagon. You can buy a simple and affordable Ram 2500 Tradesman and add its available Power Wagon Package, bringing it up to the same fundamental specs as a Power Wagon itself. You won't have the Power Wagon grille or tailgate (unless you pursue those yourself), but if you value a degree of stealth as well as a healthy dose of thrift, this can save you about \$7300 (see sidebar). If contemplating Power Wagon versus Rebel, this could make the choice even tougher—but, as always, in a very good way.

If you're interested in both the Ram 2500 Power Wagon and Ram 1500 Rebel, we have to leave the decision up to you. You can compare specs all day against your actual needs or whims, and you can try them both on for size. In general, the 1500 Rebel leans more toward the sporty side and the 2500 Power Wagon more toward the work side of things, although neither will fail at the other's leanings. There's no question the Power Wagon is the biggest and toughest—which is why it is purchased in significant numbers by purpose-first entities like the US Forest Service and Border Patrol. It's also what Nena Barlow bought as lead vehicle for Barlow Adventures. "I like it for its rock crawling and its heavy pull," she says, while the Rebel is "great for speed and whoop-de-does." In fact, she bought a Ram Rebel for her husband. ■



VOLCANO CRUISING

TACKLING NORTHERN ARIZONA'S VOLCANIC CINDER FIELDS IN THE RAM 2500 POWER WAGON

BY JOE SAGE

“Okay, people. Listen up. The people upstairs handed us this one and we gotta come through. We gotta find a way to make this... fit into the hole for this... using nothing but that.” This classic engineering challenge from the true tale film *Apollo 13* came to mind as we sat in the bottom of a volcanic crater—in a deep layer of cinders we could variously describe as rock, sand, gravel, lava or a quicksand equivalent of all of the above—adjusting our tire pressure, sway bars and drivetrains, with an eye on the first truck in our group, high above, which had made the path out of our hole to the top look easy.

We had had so much fun driving the Ram 2500 Power Wagon and the Ram 1500 Rebel overland from Sedona to Jerome the day before, that as Overland Expo West got underway the next day, so did we again. This time, we headed northeast of Flagstaff to the volcanic fields east of the San Francisco Peaks, home to Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument and to our specific destination: the 13,500-acre Cinders Off-Highway Vehicle Park, all in Coconino National Forest.

Our group of five Power Wagons was led by Nena Barlow, off-road rally trophy winner in last year's inaugural Rebelle Rally (in the Ram 1500 Rebel) and owner of Barlow Adventures, a 4WD rental, training, tour and event operation in Flagstaff and in Moab, Utah.

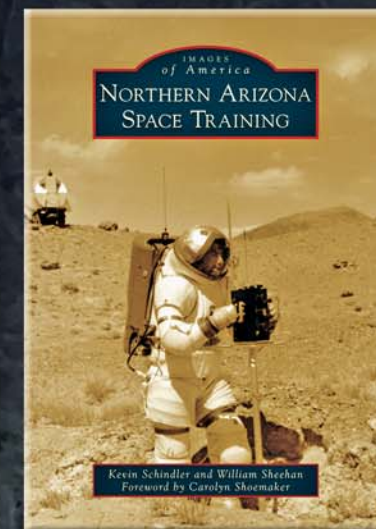
It was mid-May, and it had snowed in Flagstaff just a couple of days prior. The San Francisco Peaks were covered with a thick, fresh coat of white, but now the sky was blue and temperatures were in the 60s.

We stopped at a quickmart at the north end of Flag and filled our RamBoxes with plenty of ice and bottled water.

The volcanic San Francisco Peaks—once some 16,000 and now 12,633 feet high—have not erupted for hundreds of thousands of years, but Sunset Crater did less than 1,000 years ago. Dozens of other volcanic cones dot the landscape throughout the area, and a heavy coat of cinders blankets it all, with patches of Ponderosa interspersed. This barren terrain was used by NASA to train Apollo astronauts for our Moon missions.

Access to The Cinders OHV Area is via Forest Road 776, off US 89 about 15 miles or so north of Flagstaff, two or three miles before the Sunset Crater turnoff. As on the day before, we paused to drop our tires from 65 to 45 lb. The journey begins much like any

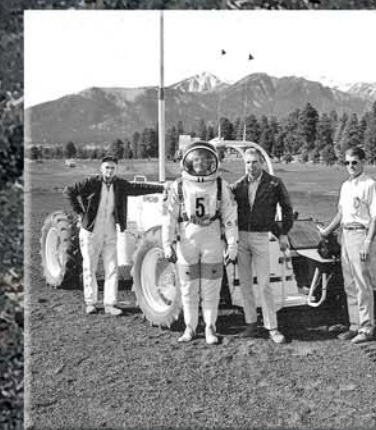
KEEP RIGHT >>



NORTHERN ARIZONA SPACE TRAINING

In the 1960s and early '70s, Northern Arizona played a critical role in America's mission to send humans to the Moon. From the Grand Canyon to Flagstaff's dark sky observatories, activities ranged from geology training to lunar mapping, mission simulation and moon buggy testing—and The Cinders area was ideal for this. Each astronaut who walked on the moon, from Neil Armstrong to Gene Cernan, prepared for his journey here, and all used maps by Flagstaff artists to navigate once on the lunar surface. This book captures their spirit with stunning images from NASA, the USGS and others. Kevin Schindler has been the Lowell Observatory historian for 21 years. William Sheehan is a psychiatrist and independent scholar of the history of astronomy.

Reprinted with permission from *Northern Arizona Space Training* By Kevin Schindler and William Sheehan Foreword by Carolyn Shoemaker Arcadia Publishing and The History Press ISBN: : 9781467126137 128 pages with 202 historic B&W images \$26.99 hardback Available from the publisher by calling 888-313-2665 or online at www.arcadiapublishing.com



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drive through a park, until defined roads give way to a wide open range of what looks like black gravel. First impulse is to hit this wide open, but you quickly learn it is full of swells and swales, and whereas they may look like forgiving soft sand, their contours are firm and fixed—time to slow down at least a bit and maneuver the details. At the same time, this surface is not completely firm—this matrix of material can readily shift beneath you as you apply power, adding significant, almost hydraulic sideways motion at times, able to change your track in ways both subtle and dramatic.

Some trails are more defined. We paraded up a steep cliffhanger to the edge of a big cinder bowl lurking within the cones. Time for 4-wheel low for a descent to the bottom.

We could tell by the many tracks, berms and buildups within the bowl that this was a place for some fun. We responded with a mix of donuts, dashes, and moderate climbs and drops. With jagged boulders and the occasional small, defiant tree strewn throughout to watch out for, the tendency of the surface to redirect us was a challenge.

Time to head up and out. As leader of our quintet, Nena was the first to barrel on up the longest path to the highest rim. Neat. Now the other four would follow. Even the most defined tracks had the probability of side slippage, so just one truck at a time would tackle the climb.

We stayed in 4-wheel low and disconnected our sway bars—both simple pushbutton operations—for maximum torque and travel even as we applied maximum speed. We each chose our tracks carefully, based on conditions and the paths of those who had gone before. But run after run, a truck would seem to have plenty of momentum, barreling up the deep, soft incline until—it would just bog down about 40 percent of the way up.

Backing down to try again was a sensitive endeavor, as well, with slide-slipping plus those boulders and trees. Fortunately, the Power Wagon has 14.3 inches of ground clearance, 33-inch tires, a well-armored underside and a very good backup camera.

Some of the higher rings of concentric tracks from prior donuts and other adventures down in our hole suggested another approach. Head uphill in the other direction, arc across to catch a great circle, accelerate around it while fighting side-slip gravity and the cinders' own nefarious grip, then sling-shot up a deeply swaled track to the top.

We dropped our tires to 25 pounds. These



are conditions where more rolling resistance and a larger contact patch should help.

We were all still only getting halfway up.

With two people per truck, some finally trudged to the top on foot, to see whether they could offer some tips from that vantage point. (We all had radio communications.) Is the surface in this crater really like the Moon? We're not sure, though we'd be game to find out. But we do know that full gravity is in play here—no sky-high leaps and bounds. More like wearing leg weights on a treadmill.

With plenty of water, we could go all day, if need be. And somewhere along the line, we started to think we just might.

We dropped the tires to 21 pounds.

The combination of repeat run experience and ever lower tire pressure—even as trail conditions evolved, not necessarily for the better, as our army of 7000-pounders slipped and slid through their defining tracks—ultimately combined to produce five very dusty Ram 2500 Power Wagons all triumphantly at the top of the rim.

A glance at photo and video timestamps later revealed that our whole crater adventure was just about 45 minutes long.

The sun was getting low as we drove back to Flagstaff (with our tires still in the 20s). We had pitted the great big, powerful Ram 2500 Power Wagons against a great big, powerful volcanic planet. We fought the cinder cones and the trucks won. And we still had more headroom in our tires and a few more tricks up our sleeves. All this by a truck that can also tow over 10,000 pounds. The Power Wagon's capabilities will exceed just about anything you can throw at it. ■





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SPECIAL EVENTS: AUCTIONS & SHOWS



Arizona Concours d'Elegance ends

• EVENT DISCONTINUED AFTER FOUR YEARS

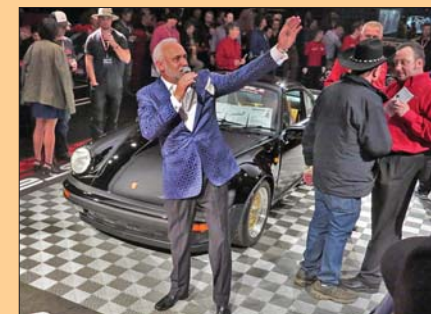
The Arizona Concours d'Elegance was created to produce a quality event with integrity and to raise money for its charity, Make-A-Wish Arizona. Held at the Arizona Biltmore, it was timed to kick off January auction week. A critical success over its four-year run, the Concours raised over \$300,000 for Make-A-Wish, but the directors have concluded they cannot establish the sustained financial foundation needed to support the event. Fearing compromise in the quality of the event, they are retiring the Arizona Concours d'Elegance—there will not be an event in 2018. The eventors thank the dedicated Concours Committee, faithful volunteers, entrants, judges and sponsors.



Gary Bennett retires

• LONGSTANDING BARRETT-JACKSON VP

Gary Bennett, longtime Barrett-Jackson VP of consignment (above at left, with chairman/CEO Craig Jackson and president Steve Davis), has retired. Bennett met Russ and Nellie Jackson at the inaugural auction in 1971 and became a regular bidder and consignor. In 1995, when Craig Jackson took the reins, Bennett and Steve Davis offered to help. After seven years of special projects, Gary officially joined the company in 2002. His years of collector car expertise and an ability to make anyone feel at home were invaluable. Bennett's career has included restoration, aftermarket, design and a stint as a racecar driver. He is considered instrumental in defining the Barrett-Jackson persona.

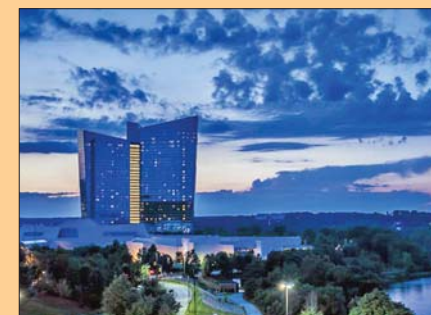


Russo & Steele auction news

• McQUEEN RALLY / NEWPORT / ONLINE BIDS

Russo and Steele sponsored the 48-car Steve McQueen Rally (stevemcqueenrally.com) from Dana Point to Anza-Borrego and Palm Desert in May, benefitting Boys Republic. • Russo and Steele held their 5th Annual Newport Beach Auction on June 2-4, with over 400 European sports and American muscle cars, hot rods, customs and exotics over three days. Results were not released by late June.

• Russo and Steele is partnering with Auction Mobility, a comprehensive online and mobile app platform with real time bidding, video streams, and online catalogs with lot notifications, plus access to online timed post-sale auctions. • Next for Russo and Steele is Monterey, in August.



Barrett-Jackson Northeast

• JUNE 21-24, 2017: RESULTS

Barrett-Jackson's 2nd Annual Northeast Auction—extended to four days—attracted thousands of bidders (with an increase in younger ones) and put Barrett-Jackson above \$94 million raised for charity to date. 630 vehicles sold for \$23.5 million at a 95.74-percent sell-through rate; 685 automobilia pieces at \$819,000 bring the total to over \$24.3 million. Some 72,000 people attended. Top sellers were a 2017 Ferrari 488 Spider (the first ever sold at auction) at \$434,500, 1969 Ford Mustang Boss 429 Fastback (\$407,000) and 1958 Dual-Ghia Convertible (\$269,500). Four new world auction sales records were set, including for trucks and a motorcycle. Next up is Las Vegas, October 19-21.



Monterey and Pebble Beach

• COMING UP: AUGUST 16-20, MONTEREY CA

Rolex Monterey Motorsports Reunion
THU.....FRI.....SAT.....SUN.....August 17-20

Mecum Auctions
 WED.....THU.....FRI.....SAT.....August 16-19

Russo & Steele
THU.....FRI.....SAT.....August 17-19

RM Sotheby's
FRI.....SAT.....August 18/19

Gooding & Company
SAT.....SUN.....August 19/20

Concorso Italiano
SAT.....August 19

Concours D'LeMons
SAT.....August 19

Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance
SUN.....August 20



Jaguar Club Concours d'Elegance

• COMING UP: NOVEMBER 4, 2017

The Jaguar Club of Southern Arizona will hold its 45th consecutive Concours d'Elegance this year, in St Philips Plaza, Tucson (4280 N Campbell Ave). An anticipated 30 to 35 Jaguars of all vintages will be displayed in the plaza and judged for class awards. Entry is open to any Jaguar owner in North America, and scoring is officially registered with the Jaguar Club of North America. The event is open to the public, with free admission. The Jaguar Club of Southern Arizona (JCSA) was chartered in 1972 by enthusiasts from Ft Huachuca (Sierra Vista) and Tucson. It is the oldest Jaguar club in Arizona and one of the oldest in the US. For more information and an entry form, visit www.jcsaz.com. ■

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VEHICLE IMPRESSION : 2017 GENESIS G90 RWD 3.3T PREMIUM

Mastery.

Tackling the stratosphere at an earthly price. by Joe Sage

We made an unusually high volume of notes on the Genesis G90. One minute, we would see it with the understated elegance of a Bentley (at a third of the price), the next minute needing more pizzazz. We noted ponderous big boat handling in certain conditions, then concluded that an aggressive driver can coax the tight, solid performance they seek. We had to really dig through some interface puzzles, while praising the genius of others. We found the placement of the Park button hard to find and hard to reach one minute, then the next minute—well, this does need to be fixed. Some things just needed time to master, and they probably don't take long, just as it has not taken Genesis long to master the luxury segment.

In a badge-conscious world, displacing established German luxury brands is a very tall order. The Japanese built up their premium brands' mystique for a significant period of time before revealing any cars. It's a different challenge for the Koreans, as Genesis cars already existed under prior

nameplates. Genesis, a separate brand since late 2015, comprises the former Hyundai Genesis as a Genesis G80 and the former Hyundai Equus as a Genesis G90. The transition was subtle, as neither Genesis nor Equus ever carried a Hyundai badge.

The line-topping G90's full range of four models—V6 or V8, in RWD or AWD—are within \$4000 of one another. Premium features for all include Nappa leather, 22/16-way heated/cooled power seats, 12.3-inch screen, multiple backup and top view cameras, 17-speaker Lexicon audio, power doors/trunk/sunshades, ambient lighting in seven colors and much more, plus a full suite of driver assist systems. Rear tires are an inch wider than in front, delivering purposeful grip and a smooth, powerful launch (all are same-diameter, to suit the AWD option). Ours here is the base rear-drive V6. The 5.0L V8 adds 15 percent more horsepower for two percent more price and upgrades the already spacious rear seat experience (see sidebar).

Genesis G90 was a North American Car of the Year finalist in its debut season. Genesis overall ranks highest among premium automakers in the JD Power Initial Quality Study. We noted aggression from other premium vehicle drivers, perhaps attributed to envy at all this with lower cost. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	...3.3L DOHC 24v twin turbo V6 / dual CVVT GDI
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD (AWD available)
HP/TORQUE	.....365 hp / 376 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	...8-spd auto w/Shifttronic manual mode
SUSPENSION	.....Adaptive control w/electronic damping and intelligent drive mode; 5-link front and rear, with 25mm front and 17mm rear solid stabilizer bar
STEERING	.....rack-mounted motor-drvn, variable gear ratio
BRAKES	.....F: 14.2 vented disc / R: 13.4 vented disc
WHEELS/TIRES	.....Front: 19x8.5 / P245/45R19.....Rear: 19x9.5 / P275/40R19
LENGTH/WHEELBASE	.....204.9" / 124.4"
TURNING CIRCLE	.....39.2 ft
WEIGHT	.....4630 lb
LUGGAGE CAPACITY	.....15.7 cu.ft.
FUEL CAPACITY	.....21.9 gal
MPG	.....17/24/20 (city/hwy/comb)

GENESIS G90 RWD 3.3T PREMIUM	.....\$68,100
Add HTRAC® AWD System:	
GENESIS G90 AWD 3.3T PREMIUM	.....\$70,600

ADD FOR 5.0L ULTIMATE MODEL: 5.0L V8; full LED headlights with dynamic bending; rear seats upgraded w/ventilation, 12-way left & 14-way right seat power w/memory, power head restraints w/manual tilt, ventilated rear seats, 12-way left and 14-way right rear power seats w/power head restraints w/manual tilt, rear seat illuminated vanity mirrors.

ENGINE	.....5.0L DOHC 32v V8 / dual CVVT GDI
HP/TORQUE	.....420 hp / 383 lb-ft

GENESIS G90 RWD 5.0L ULTIMATE	.....\$69,700
Add HTRAC® AWD System:	
GENESIS G90 AWD 5.0L ULTIMATE	.....\$72,200



ROUNDUP!

By Joe Sage / Photos: Joe Sage and Marshall Tidrick Photo / TAWA

TAWA—the Texas Auto Writers Association—hosts two high-profile vehicle comparison events each year. We drive and judge in both. In the fall is the Texas Truck Rodeo. Texas means trucks, so this event and its winners have national and even global significance. In the spring is the Texas Auto Roundup, with ten vehicle award categories—of which five are performance-oriented—plus categories for new features and interior, and three overall car of the year awards.

Roads, driving styles and demographics in the Lone Star State are similar in many ways to Arizona's, so both events' results are useful here.

Truck Rodeo is held on a huge Texas ranch, a great way to put things to the test on rough roads, in the mud, through water fordings, over rocks and logs, and up and down the steepest and toughest

terrain. Auto Roundup is held at the track. All categories benefit from this, as here we can really put acceleration, handling and braking to the test.

This year's was our third Texas Auto Roundup. In prior years, it was held at Texas Motor Speedway near Fort Worth, with a 1.44-mile banked track for NASCAR and IndyCar, as well as an inner road course, a couple of service ring roads and easy access to a stretch of Interstate. Our event ran on all but the big oval. This year, the event moved to Circuit of the Americas (COTA) southeast of Austin, new in 2012 and home to FIA Formula One, American Le Mans Series, IMSA and other events.

The Euro-inspired track at COTA is 3.427 miles long, with 20 turns, a 133-foot elevation change and an 0.62-mile straightaway. The starting line leads straight to the track's highest point, at Turn One. Each vehicle would have a longer run than at Fort Worth, although former drive time between

garage and road course was eliminated. (There is also a service road in the mix at COTA, although only one vehicle chose to use it and it only; given the option on all the other vehicles, most drivers chose the track most often.) We had 42 vehicles in the stable and most of two days to drive them all.

Our runs were not a matter of going all out for three and a half miles. Rather, the course was broken up into eight stages, with a full stop between each, including slalom, moose test, acceleration and braking, and well-allocated use of challenging turns. A speed cap of 60 mph was stated, which sounded impossible at this venue, but turned out to be appropriate and most of the time easy enough to stay within. The succession of stops between stages kept this manageable, also equalizing the pace from driver to driver and vehicle to vehicle.

There is no predetermined sequence, so each driver grabs whatever he or she can, in whatever order (subject to ongoing availability of some of the hottest rides). Our scores are entered online during midday break and at the end of the day, with electronic tabulation—an efficient and accurate process. (Many other events are still done by hand.)

Among ten vehicle categories, three had just two vehicles each (Minivan, Full-Size Luxury Car and Supercar). The most crowded segments were

Performance Compact, with six, and Activity Vehicle, which actually had seven, though they were counted as six, since Jeep brought two trims of the Compass to be voted on as one. On the other hand, two Dodge Chargers in the Performance Sedan category competed against each other. Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid was entered in both Minivans and Green Vehicles, both rightly so; this was the only two-drive-category vehicle. Not all hybrids were in the green category, however: Toyota entered the RAV4 Hybrid in a performance group. Any number of vehicles could have been in different classes—for example, the new 2018 Lexus LC 500h was entered among Performance Coupes, but arguably could have been in the small Supercar class with Mercedes-AMG GT S and Nissan GT-R. The decision by a manufacturer to enter, say, the Performance Utility class or the Activity Vehicle class was subjective, as long as each was appropriate. Each manufacturer wants us to experience each vehicle in its own best and most appropriate light, and they also surely make decisions based on the anticipated competitiveness of each vehicle within its chosen category.

Category winners and runners-up are highlighted below, followed by other entrants in alphabetical order. Most vehicles entered were 2017 models, except for three 2018s and one 2016 as noted.



Best Compact Car



COMPACT CAR

WINNER.....**Mazda3**
RUNNERUP...**Honda Civic Hatchback**
ALSOKia Soul
.....Toyota Corolla XSE
.....Toyota Corolla iM

NOTES: Civic and Corolla sell over 350,000 a year; Corolla iM, a rebadged Scion, fewer than 18,000. Soul sells almost 150,000, but is due for an update, as is Corolla; Civic was new last year. Mazda3 is a few years old, but smaller numbers (95,000±) may keep it fresh; it took this win.

MINIVAN

WINNER.....**Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid**
RUNNERUP...**Toyota Sienna Limited AWD**

NOTES: Minivans may not seem the hottest category in a track event, but the winner here, Pacifica, went on to also win Green Vehicle, Best Feature and Family Car of Texas.

ACTIVITY VEHICLE

WINNER.....**Jeep Compass Trailhawk/Latitude**
RUNNERUP...**Mazda CX-5**

ALSOHyundai Tucson AWD
.....Nissan Rogue Sport AWD
.....Toyota C-HR (2018)
.....Volkswagen Atlas (2018)

NOTES: Five out of six here are new for 2017—Jeep, Toyota and VW totally new, Rogue Sport new to the US, and CX-5 a new version. VW was the only entry in the whole event that specified road course evaluation only, no track. Jeep Compass, in two trim flavors, took first place.

Best Minivan



Best Activity Vehicle



Best Full-Size Luxury Car



Best Green Vehicle



FULL-SIZE LUXURY CAR

WINNER.....**Volvo S90 T6 AWD Inscription**
RUNNERUP...**Chrysler 300S**

NOTES: Chrysler 300 is a perennial favorite and a great buy at \$39,555, but may be due for an update. Volvo S90, new this year, came in supercharged/turbocharged AWD Inscription trim (\$66,365). Winning hundreds of awards for their XC90, Volvo is now headed there with the S90.

GREEN VEHICLE

WINNER.....**Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid**
RUNNERUP...**Hyundai Ioniq Hybrid**

ALSOKia Niro
.....Toyota Prius Prime Advanced

NOTES: Ioniq and Niro are totally new vehicles bringing hybrids mainstream (EVs and plug-in hybrids, too, in Hyundai's case). Prius is an update. Pacifica is so new, it took a new name when it replaced Town & Country. Each brings something significant, but Pacifica took the win.

PERFORMANCE COMPACT

WINNER.....**Mazda MX-5 Miata RF**
RUNNERUP...**Toyota 86 - 860 Special Edition**

ALSOFiat 124 Spider
.....Ford Focus RS (2016)
.....Subaru BRZ
.....Volkswagen Golf R

NOTES: The event could probably have run for a day with just these, and all as a group would be happy. It seems nobody doesn't like Miata, and the new retractable hard-top RF proved irresistible in the vote tally.

PERFORMANCE COUPE

WINNER.....**Lexus LC 500h (2018)**
RUNNERUP...**Infiniti Q60 Red Sport 400**

ALSOAlfa Romeo 4C
.....Dodge Challenger
.....Lexus RC F

NOTES: The event could also have run for a day with just this category combined with Supercars. Some entrants here could probably have entered as supercars—the new Lexus LC 500h, a stunning 295-hp, 348 lb-ft hybrid, looks and feels that way, and the Lexus RC F has aggressive style and 467-hp skills. Lexus LC is the newest in the group and took the prize.

PERFORMANCE SEDAN

WINNER.....**Alfa Romeo Giulia Quadrifoglio**
RUNNERUP...**Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat**

ALSODodge Charger R/T Daytona
.....Lexus GS F
.....Volkswagen Jetta

NOTES: This makes three performance entries for luxury-rooted Lexus. Two Chargers were voted individually, pirating votes from each other. Jetta, a turbo, was bold for taking on this group. But the highly anticipated sexy new 505-hp Italian won this category easily.

PERFORMANCE UTILITY

WINNER.....**Jeep Grand Cherokee SRT**
RUNNERUP...**Infiniti QX30 Premium AWD**

ALSOToyota RAV4 Hybrid SE

NOTES: Three vehicles here represent disproportionately wide variety. The Infiniti is an impressive premium package, but it's a track event, and, well, SRT. (The only prior time we'd driven at COTA was in the Grand Cherokee SRT, at its launch four years ago. It was right at home.)

SUPERCAR

WINNER.....**Mercedes-AMG GT S Coupe**
RUNNERUP...**Nissan GT-R Premium**

NOTES: With a couple of other potential contenders entered in the Performance Coupe category, this came down to a venerable absolute favorite of everyone and a new absolute favorite of everyone. And new wins again.

While driving, we also paid attention to interiors and features, as would always be the case, but these impressions also determine our votes in a separate Best New Interior category (among those vehicles that chose to compete, which were only three). Static displays in the garage area are used for non-driving demonstrations in the Best Feature category, which this year included a variety of powertrain, safety and driver assist features.

BEST FEATURE

WINNER.....**Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid Powertrain**
RUNNERUP...**Toyota Safety Sense, Corolla 50th Anniv.**

ALSODriving Modes, Ford Focus RS (2016)
.....Volvo S90 IntelliSense

BEST NEW INTERIOR

WINNER.....**Volvo S90 Inscription**

ALSOAlfa Romeo Giulia Quadrifoglio
.....Lexus LC 500h (2018)

When all else is said and done, the driving and judging media draw three more conclusions from among the entire set of entries. Category-by-category decisions can form a solid basis for this, and each winner did also win a category trophy or two.

TITLE AWARDS

PERFORMANCE CAR OF TEXAS:

.....**Mercedes-AMG GT S Coupe**

FAMILY CAR OF TEXAS:

.....**Chrysler Pacifica Hybrid**

CAR OF TEXAS:

.....**Alfa Romeo Giulia Quadrifoglio**

Next up is the TAWA Texas Truck Rodeo, in October, a similar event in concept, but for pickups and utilities, run almost entirely off-pavement. We're ready; we booked our flights months ahead. ■

Best Performance Compact



Best Performance Coupe



Best Performance Sedan



Best Performance Utility



Best Supercar



Performance Car of Texas



Family Car of Texas



Car of Texas



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VEHICLE IMPRESSION : 2017 FORD FUSION SE HYBRID

Low-key magic act

Ford's humble hybrid just gets down to business. by Joe Sage

We welcome a mainstreaming trend among some hybrid vehicles, moving away from over-the-top, look-at-me bodywork or complex mystic-project interfaces. There really doesn't need to be anything mystical about a hybrid vehicle by now, any more than, say, fuel injection. A manufacturer can include hybrid powertrains of one sort or another in their engineering solution to achieve the particular combination of price, performance and fuel economy within a very normal package, if they are so inclined. Other brands are taking this approach this year, notably the new Kia Niro, a hybrid, and new Hyundai Ioniq, with hybrid, plug-in hybrid and fully electric versions all in the same wrapper. Ford Fusion Hybrid figured this out long ago—the first was released in spring 2009.

Fusion is Ford's biggest selling car, about double Focus and three times Mustang. Brandwide, it is topped only by Escape and F-Series. Ford has fully a dozen hybrid, EV or plug-in hybrid models—C-Max, Focus and Fusion—all subtle adaptations, simply delivering lower fuel bills in unassuming

packages. So significant is Fusion in the Ford stable, it comes in no fewer than twelve models, of which four are Fusion Hybrids and three more are Fusion Energi plug-in hybrids.

Our sample here, the SE Hybrid, adds 10-way and 6-way power front seats, nine-speaker audio and MyView screen customization at a base price just \$805 higher than the base S Hybrid. Titanium Hybrid and Platinum Hybrid trims start at \$30,630 and \$37,130, respectively. Even as features are added, fuel mileage is the same across the lineup.

A hybrid Fusion versus a conventional engine costs a few thousand dollars more at the low end, to just a few hundred in Platinum. Weight is less than 200 pounds more, no worse than one more buddy hopping in for a ride. The battery does shave four cubic feet off trunk volume. In any trim, the hybrid more than doubles city fuel mileage.

For almost anyone, the hybrid will pay for itself. This delivers all the self-satisfaction you need, without flashing your virtue to all the world. You can, of course, mention it any time you want. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	2.0L Atkinson Cycle
ELECTRIC MOTOR	7.6 kWh lithium-ion
BATTERY	1.4 kWh lithium-ion, peak power 35 kW
	EV range 21 miles, EV top speed 85 mph, total range 610 miles, charge time 7 hrs / 2.5 hrs (110/220)
TRANSMISSION	eCVT, rotary shifter
DRIVETRAIN	power-split hybrid, regen braking, FWD
HP/TORQUE	188 hp / 129 lb-ft
STEERING	elec power-assisted
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson struts, SLA, stblzr bar; R: ControlLink indep multilink, twin-tube gas shocks
BRAKES	power front/rear disc, ABS
WHEELS	17-in premium paint luster nickel
LENGTH/WB/TURN CIRCLE	191.8" / 112.2" / 37.6 ft
WEIGHT	3668 lb
LUGGAGE CAPACITY	12 cu.ft.
FUEL CAPACITY	14 gal
MPG	43/41/42 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$26,480
602A EQUIPMENT GROUP	10-way pwr driver's seat w/memory, leather-trim seats and wheel, heated front seats, autodim mirror, intelligent access w/remote start, LED fogs, headlights and taillamps, heated side mirrors w/approach lamps and turn signals, warm interior accents
BURGUNDY VELVET PAINT	2995
HYBRID SE TECH PACKAGE	SYNC® 3, dual-zone electronic auto climate, two 4.2-in screens, media hub w/ 2 USB ports & SD card reader, 110V power, reverse sensing
ENHANCED ACTIVE PARK ASSIST	995
ADAPTIVE CRUISE W/STOP & GO	1190
DRIVER ASSIST PACKAGE	Lane keep, blind spot and cross traffic alert
DESTINATION CHARGE	85
TOTAL before discounts	\$35,500
(SYNC & SOUND DISCOUNT)	(490)
(SE TECH DISCOUNT)	(500)
TOTAL	\$34,510



Formula Ford

by Joe Sage

Equal parts off-road extremist and performance pickup: shake and stir

Icon—it's an overused word, but Ford Raptor surely is one, holding a distinctive brand image among nominal half-ton pickups. Its engine performance, with zero-to-60 in just over six seconds, evokes the sleek rear-drive Ford SVT Lightning pickups of 15-25 years ago, while its huge tires, off-road suspension, skid plates and 4x4 bearing have always made it a different flavor of special.

Raptor was an SVT (Special Vehicles Team) build in its first generation. Gone for 2017 is the SVT name, now folded into the Ford Performance stable globally. Also gone are Raptor's prior 6.2L V8 engine and a considerable amount of weight.

For 2017, Raptor moves to the aluminum-intensive structure brought to the mainstream F-150 in 2015 and Super Duty trucks in 2017. The latter has adapted the same F-150 cab design to the heavy duty range for the first time in a couple of decades, though its underpinnings are completely different from the F-150. This was already Raptor's formula, though while F-250 and up are built for loads, Raptor is built for desert racing agility.

Raptor is available in SuperCrew (four-door) and SuperCab (with rear half-doors) form, with a 5.5-

foot bed on either, making SuperCrew's 134.2-inch wheelbase unique among F-150s. Aluminum uppers with a Raptor-specific high-strength steel box frame brings increased chassis strength and torsional rigidity while shedding some 500 pounds.

Raptor remains wider than the standard F-150, with a six-inch wider track and a bit more than that for the body, which has flared wheel arches and wider bumpers. The new Raptor has two inches more ground clearance than the first generation. Active grille shutters, functional hood and fender vents, and fine-tuning of body and underbody improve aerodynamics by five percent. New Raptor-specific FOX Shocks are 44 percent beefier, with hydraulic bump stops for the roughest terrain. Suspension travel is increased by almost an inch in front, almost two in back (now 13 and 13.9 inches, respectively, and comparing with 7.3 and 9.5 inches in an F-150 FX4 off-road package).

The new 3.5L EcoBoost V6 puts out 450 hp and 510 lb-ft of torque, beating the old V8's 411 and 434 while rating 18 mpg highway. To maximize efficiency further, Raptor runs these horses through a segment-first 10-speed automatic.

Fate put the Ford Raptor in our fleet for the week

that included Overland Expo West, near Flagstaff. This was nice timing, as Raptor just screams out "off-road," as does Overland Expo, plus we could drive the truck to Flag and back, a chance to see how it did on the grades and at altitude. However, Expo activities themselves would have us largely tied up for a couple of days, and a mileage cap meant we couldn't also dash to the Glamis Dunes just west of Yuma—the perfect place to drive the Raptor, about 500 miles roundtrip. Raptor's new EcoBoost V6 means it can get to Glamis and back on about \$100 worth of gas. There are areas near Safford or Willcox, over 400 miles roundtrip. Or of course Baja, the truck's patron saint terrain. Not to worry. We hit a good spot nearby—the Boulders OHV Area off Highway 74 west of Lake Pleasant, 50 miles away, home to ATV and single-track bike trails, enough to give the Raptor a workout.

The Raptor is comfortable—its cabin is a stunner and has ample storage—and inviting to drive even in traffic, unexpectedly so. The Raptor's extra girth is not particularly noticeable, and its shorter box proved surprisingly maneuverable in town.

Most our time in the Raptor was spent the way most people spend the majority of their time—cruising the highways and running around town. Returning from Flagstaff, we loaded up with two more colleagues and all our gear for a week, all of which fit easily in the cabin when we locked up for



dinner on the road. The next day, we did our rough roads, dirt, gravel, bumps, hills, thrills and chills.

The formula for the Ford Raptor is pretty simple, really. It ranges from zero to maybe ten percent more cumbersome than a regular F-150 for your around-town stuff. You'll feel the difference in suspension here and there. You may deal with the difference in width here and there. Possibly never for either, putting it near the zero end of that scale. But on its specific capability scale, as a dune-running outdoor enthusiast, it's surely a thousand percent ahead of an already very capable routine F-150.

We drove aggressively and we went places—two things anyone is very likely to do with the

Raptor. Our fuel mileage readout after all of the above was still an admirable 16 mpg.

A fully street-legal stock 2017 Ford F-150 Raptor ran the 49th SCORE Baja 1000 this past season (then drove back to Phoenix on the highway), as well as four Best in the Desert races. They use the same truck you can buy, modified only for regulations requiring a roll cage, light bar and fuel cell (plus minor shock changes to handle the weight of that added equipment). The race truck runs on the same BFGoodrich tires as the production vehicle.

Ford Raptor proves versatile, efficient and highly effective—it's a winning formula. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	.....3.3L High Output EcoBoost V6
HP/TORQUE	.....450 hp / 510 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....10-spd SelectShift auto with high-speed one-way clutch
DRIVETRAIN	...torque on demand 4WD/AWD, six-mode terrain management system, 4.10 electronic rear axle
BRAKES	.....power 4-wheel anti-lock FR: 13.8x1.33 vented disc, dual piston R: 13.7x1 vented disc, single piston
STEERING	.....elec w/ normal-sport-comfort
SHOCKS	.....High-output, on/off-road position-sensitive gas-pressurized FOX Racing Shox™
WHEELS	.....17-in cast aluminum
TIRES	.....LT315/70R17 BSW All-Terrain (A/T) full size spare with lock
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....220.0 in / 134.2 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....(SuperCab) 43.8 cu.ft
CARGO BOX VOLUME	.....(5.5 box) 52.8 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....(SuperCrew) 5518 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	.....26.0 gal
MPG	.....15/18/16 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE **\$48,325**

INCLUDES: Raptor front performance bumper, dual exhaust, dynamic hitch assist, BoxLink™, cast aluminum running boards, tow hooks, LED headlamps, tow package w/sway control, wheel lip moldings, 60/40 rear bench seat, one-touch windows, single zone manual climate control, compass, cruise, leather wrapped wheel, Raptor-specific center stack, paddle shifters, upfitter switches, curve control, electr 4x4 shift-on-fly, fail-safe cooling system, hill descent and off-road modes, hill start, MyKey, off-road shocks, reverse sensing, drive modes, skid plates, keyless keypad.

EQUIPMENT GROUP 802A: Raptor Series, power-slide rear window, Sync 3, Sync Connect, 4.10 front axle w/ Torsen differential, 360-degree camera, BLIS w/trailer tow monitor, Pro Trailer backup assist, electronic auto temp control, integrated trailer brake LED box lighting, LED side mirror spotlights, remote start, Sony single CD w/HD radio, voice-activated nav9345

EXTERIOR GRAPHICS PACKAGE	.....1075
TAILGATE STEP	.....375
17-INCH FORGED ALUMINUM WHEELS	.....1165
TAILGATE APPLIQUE	.....495
RAPTOR TECHNOLOGY PACKAGE1950
SPRAY-IN BEDLINER495
DESTINATION CHARGE1195

TOTAL **\$64,420**



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VEHICLE PROJECT : NISSAN TITAN PROJECT BASECAMP AT OVERLAND EXPO 2017 WEST

BASECAMP

Nissan seized the opportunity of Overland Expo West to showcase a special build of the Nissan Titan XD, also seizing the opportunity while here in Northern Arizona to put the rig through its paces in some of our rugged canyons and rivers.

The Nissan Titan XD PRO-4X "Project Basecamp" truck started as a stock XD (the model uniquely slotted between half-ton and heavy-duty) with 310-hp/555-lb-ft Cummins 5.0L turbo diesel V8, modified as a dream project vehicle for overlanders, with more than 60 parts and accessories from ARB, Factor 55, Goal Zero, Hellwig, Hi Lift, Crazy Beaver, Rhino-Rack, Ridgid, Rotopax, Warn and others.

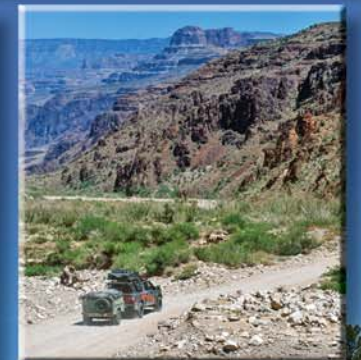
Max traction 35x12.50x17 off-road tires are mounted on 17-inch aluminum-alloy beadlock wheels. A 3-inch lift kit and air springs with on-board leveling compressor provide extra tire clearance at all four corners. The body was beefed up with custom bumpers front and rear, fender flares and cab-length rock sliders, custom hood, light bar and chase lights, with fogs and spots. A winch system with remote mount and quick connect cables is tucked under the front bumper. The body is finished off with a custom vinyl wrap.

Overland survival essentials include a Leitner Designs Overland bed cage, Rhino-Rack Pioneer rack system, Foxwing Awning, CVT Tents Mt Rainier Stargazer tent and vestibule, a Black Forest portable fridge/freezer, water

canisters and fuel packs from Daystar, shovels and emergency kit from ARB, and more.

Capping off Project Basecamp is a custom Patriot Camper X2 Off Road Adventure Trailer with matching vinyl wrap. Fully loaded, the X2 can haul more than two thirds its own weight, well distributed for off-road stability, and its departure angle, overall length and low, wide track, plus adjustable air suspension, keep the trailer clear of rocks and debris.

The Nissan Titan XD Diesel is assembled in Canton, Mississippi, with engines built in Indiana. For 2017, Titan XD added a Single Cab version to the existing Crew Cab, along with new SV Leather, Texas Titan Edition, SL Chrome and Platinum Reserve Bed Utility packages. A new Titan XD King Cab joins the lineup this summer. ■



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VEHICLE IMPRESSION : 2017 HONDA CR-V 1.5T AWD TOURING

Epiphany

by Joe Sage

Meet the new boss: popular vanilla receives a healthy dose of hot sauce

Honda CR-V comes to bat with a very impressive stat: among compact crossovers—it is the number one seller in the US, at almost 360,000 units last year. CR-V has been the best-selling SUV in America for 20 years, with over 4 million sold to date.

Buyers seek purchase and operating economy, utility and high reliability. Honda comes to mind due to a long reputation of infallibility, though the playing field has leveled over time. Buyers also like Honda's simple trim levels and pricing system.

We certainly see the Honda CR-V on the road in great numbers, though we had never found it particularly stimulating. Our first hint that something had changed came when a good friend, a Harley-riding global rock star, said he was thinking of getting one. Granted, he was inspired by his sister having just bought one, and his wife will drive it, too, but they're both just as cool.

Our next hint was when our CR-V arrived. So used to seeing these in silver, we found this one's

Obsidian Blue Pearl stunning. Though familiar overall, dramatic changes in lighting, sheet metal and a particularly sexy set of wheels caught our eye. The interior is a handsome light grey leather on this line-topping Touring trim, with tasteful wood-grain inserts in the door panels and dash.

This is the fifth-generation CR-V, completely reengineered inside and out with more space, better aerodynamics even with its sharp new looks, more premium finishes, a complete suite of driver assist technologies, enhanced entertainment and connectivity, new body structure for improved handling and cabin tranquility, a hands-free power liftgate and CR-V's first turbo powerplant.

The vehicle again has a CVT, though G-Design shift logic mitigates both feel and power, via stepped ratios during acceleration. Most people never know they even have a CVT, but those who do should notice the improvement.

We found the lane keep function overly sensitive and over-corrective, as many are, but it can be easily turned off.

The new Honda CR-V remains immediately recognizable, yet is also immediately recognizable as being all new. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	2.5L inline-4 turbo
DRIVETRAIN	Real Time AWD w/Intelligent Control
HP/TORQUE	190 hp / 179 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	CVT w/sport mode
SUSPENSION	F: MacPherson, 23mm tub stblzr bar; R: multilink double wishbone, 13mm solid stblzr bar
STEERING	variable ratio elec power rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 11.1" vented / R: 10.2" solid discs
WHEELS/TIRES	18" alloy / 235/60 R18
LENGTH/WB/GRND CLEAR	180.6" / 104.7" / 8.2"
APPROACH/DEPARTURE	20.8° / 24.8°
WEIGHT	3512 lb
WEIGHT DISTRIBUTION (F/R)	57% / 43%
TOW CAPACITY	1500 lb
CARGO CAPACITY	37.6 / 75.8 cu.ft
FUEL CAPACITY	14.0 gal
MPG	27/33/29 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$33,695
DESTINATION CHARGE	900
TOTAL	\$34,595



San Vegas / Las Diego

Copper-Silver-Golden State 1000-mile whirlwind weekend drive. By Tyson Hugie

A 1000-mile one-way drive from Phoenix can take you to a lot of places: Butte, Montana; Tulsa, Oklahoma; Dallas, Texas; or Medford, Oregon, for example.

Or for just a weekend, San Diego is a popular dash, about 700 miles roundtrip, as is Las Vegas, about 600. But how about a triangular two-in-one weekend dash through our whole backyard?

Who RSVPs to a birthday party in one state and a bachelor party in another on the same weekend and still attends both? You're looking at him.

The good news is that it feels amazing to go from the awe-inspiring 54th floor of the Cosmopolitan on the Las Vegas Strip one day, to sweet-smelling, picturesque Mission Beach in San Diego the next.

The adventure started after work on Friday, with two of us heading to Las Vegas, Taco Bell crunchwrap supremes in hand, in my 2013 Acura ILX. The drive takes about four and a half hours through the picturesque yet barren reaches of US 93. We arrived just in time to join the rest of our gang for a bite to eat at Buffalo Wild Wings before venturing out on the town.

I can assure you, what happened in Vegas that night will stay in Vegas. Well, I take that back. The group text message with eight people in it became a dumping

ground for all the photos and videos from that night's debauchery, and they will forever live on in the memory bank of each participant's phone. Las Vegas Boulevard—The Strip—is home to some 62,000 hotel rooms. Tourists are out on the streets 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There is seriously no end to the available entertainment, and we got our share of it.

On Saturday morning, we pulled our acts together in time for brunch at Guy Fieri's Vegas Kitchen and Bar, home to some of the best nachos you'll ever have—"trash can nachos," which basically come out in a big tin can that gets dumped on a plate in the center of the table. Trust me, they were amazing.

Three of us hit the road by early Saturday afternoon for the next chapter of our road trip weekend: a bachelor party in Southern California. The drive was a breeze, with 95 percent of it on southbound I-15. We stopped briefly in the middle-of-nowhere town of Baker, California, home to the World's Largest Thermometer—134 feet tall, indicative of the highest temperature ever observed in nearby Death Valley. It was only 67 degrees at the time of our visit.

In typical fashion, traffic was slow-and-go the closer we got to the Los Angeles

area, but as dusk settled in, we cranked the iPod and karaoked to classics like Chumbawumba's "Tubthumping" (a song now 20 years old!) to pass the miles.

Motel 6 on 2nd Avenue in downtown San Diego, primitive but predictable, was our resting spot for Saturday night. We had just enough time to freshen up before heading to dinner and a night out on the town at Oxford Social Club in the Gaslamp District. I felt like a true A-Lister there: VIP entry, reserved seating and the owner himself coming over to shake our hands. The lights and music raged on as we celebrated the upcoming wedding of our friends until the wee hours.

What California trip would be complete without a stop at the beach? My phone told me we were a mere 14 minutes from Mission Beach, so we saddled up in the ILX and went to check it out. The smell of a fresh sea breeze and the sound of crashing waves will never get old. We wandered north along the sand for a little while before looping back to meet the rest of the gang in Little Italy for brunch at a spot called Prepkitchen.

The final leg of this epic weekend journey was the stretch of Interstate 8 that links San Diego with the Phoenix area, an oft-desolate road that runs parallel to the Mexican border. Kyle took the wheel from the halfway point in Yuma onward, which was great. By then I finally welcomed some time with my eyes off the road.

The bad news is that coming back to reality bites. Hard. ■





Rob Melville with McLaren 720s

▼ **McLaren Automotive** has announced the promotion of Rob Melville, who joined the company in 2009 as senior designer, to design director. Melville has worked on the McLaren P1, the evolution of the 12C into the 650S, the 675LT and was responsible for the Sports Series which won the “Best of the Best” category in the coveted Red Dot design awards in 2016. Most recently he led the design of the 720S, the first model in the second-generation Super Series. Melville initiated the recent McLaren “design pillars,” the main ethos from which the team apply the brand’s DNA and core principals. His new role makes him responsible for further developing the company’s design strategy, philosophy and principles, working with engineering and manufacturing as well as the customer insights team. Another 14 new models or derivatives are promised under McLaren’s Track22 business plan. Prior to McLaren, Melville launched his career at Jaguar Land Rover, where his sketches and clay were chosen for the LRX Concept Vehicle, which led to the production Range Rover Evoque. He then joined GM as senior designer within their UK Advanced Design Group, as part of a design team responsible for evolving and realizing Cadillac design principles and philosophy across the product portfolio, including the Cadillac Converj project.

▼ **Iveco** Defence Vehicles, the specialty vehicles business of CNH Industrial, has signed a delivery order with Swiss Armed Forces, represented by armasuisse (the Federal Office for Defence Procurement) for 400 trucks to be supplied between 2017 and 2021. This initial order forms part of a frame contract for a new fleet of special trucks to be delivered from 2016



Iveco DV Swiss Armed Forces truck

through 2022. The contract was awarded to Iveco DV in November 2015 after two years of thorough market evaluation and comprehensive practical trials with several demonstrator chassis. This is the third frame contract between the two parties, following others in 1996 and 2006, confirming a long established and trusted cooperation between Iveco DV and the Swiss Armed Forces, enhancing the brand’s position as a key industry supplier.



Dodge Demon HEMI V8

▼ Details have been released on the supercharged 6.2-liter HEMI® V8 and powertrain in the **2018 Dodge Challenger SRT Demon**. The powerplant has a deep-skirt cast iron block and aluminum alloy heads with hemispherical combustion chamber, an output of 840 hp at 6300 rpm and 770 lb-ft at 4500 rpm on 100-octane unleaded fuel, or 808 and 717 with 91-octane pump premium. The engine has 62 percent new content compared with the Hellcat V8: block, crankshaft, pistons, connecting rods and supercharger are all specific to the Demon. The car boasts the largest functional hood scoop opening ever (45.2 square inches) and triple-inlet air box (903.1 cubic inches), feeding a high flow, low restriction inlet system delivering cool air into the supercharger at a rate of 1,150 cubic feet per minute. A twin-screw supercharger pumps 2.7 liters per revolution and has rotors 1.1 inches longer than Hellcat, maximum boost pressure of 14.5 psi compared with 11.6 psi for Hellcat, dual water/air heat exchangers integrated into the supercharger housing, and an electric pump flowing at up to 11.9 gallons per minute. The engine is being produced at FCA’s Saltillo Engine Plant in Mexico.

▼ **Automobili Lamborghini**, headquartered in Sant’Agata Bolognese, Italy, has set a production record, with 8,000 Lamborghini Huracán units built in three



Lamborghini production record

years. A Spyder Grigio Lynx car, chassis number 8,000, rolled off the assembly line destined for the UK market.

▼ **Lamborghini** has begun a collaboration with the Houston Methodist Research Institute, sharing the auto manufacturer’s expertise in carbon fiber composite materials. Lamborghini is a leader in research and production of carbon fiber composite materials, and its Advanced Composite Lightweight Structures Department of Research & Development provides experience not only in the automotive field but also in other sectors including biomedical. Research will focus on biocompatibility of composite materials to be used in prosthetic implants and subcutaneous devices, to identify new materials that are lighter, better tolerated by the human body and more resistant over time than those in current medical use. Houston Methodist Research Institute president and CEO Mauro Ferrari, PhD—an Italian scientist engaged mainly in nanotechnology research and applied bioengineering in medicine—was welcomed at Lamborghini by chairman and CEO Stefano Domenicali. Lamborghini also collaborates in Italy with the Occupational Medicine Unit of Bologna University Hospital Authority St. Orsola-Malpighi Poly-clinic, Neurosurgery of IRCCS Institute of Neurological Sciences of Bologna, Neurosurgery Humanitas University Rozzano-Milano, CNR Institute of Neuroscience and Humanitas, and IRCCS Rizzoli Orthopedic Institute of Bologna.

▼ **Swapalease.com**, the nation’s largest online car lease marketplace, released its lease trends report for the first quarter of 2017. The report shows Volkswagen lease

search traffic up two percent compared to the previous quarter, a sign the brand continues to mend its image from its diesel scandal. Hyundai saw the largest gain in search traffic during the quarter (+16%), followed by Subaru (+12%). Among domestic brands, Cadillac had the biggest jump for search traffic (+3%), with Buick and GMC both up 2 percent. Chevrolet, Ford and Chrysler were down by 4, 5 and



Volvo Trucks autonomous refuse

7 percent respectively. Among European brands, Audi saw the biggest gain in the quarter at +5%, and BMW the largest drop at -6%. Mercedes-Benz held its position as the largest share of overall traffic (10%), with BMW and Lexus each at 9 percent. The average monthly payment on a lease was \$436.35, with Mercedes-Benz holding the most expensive monthly payment, at \$704.65 and Toyota the lowest monthly payment, at \$348.34.

▼ With land scarcity limiting Singapore’s adoption of solar power, the city-state is trying “floatovoltaic” solar panels as a possible alternative. Floating panels could be

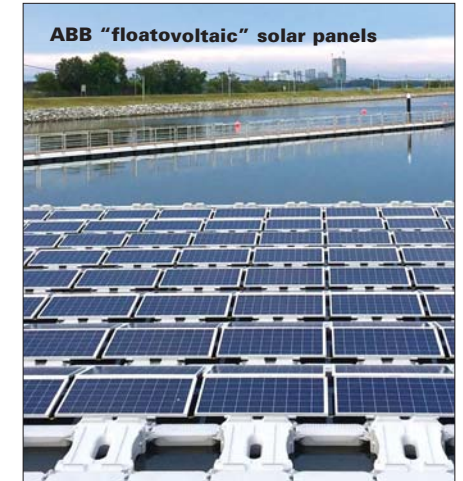


ABB “floatovoltaic” solar panels

11 percent more efficient than those on land. **ABB** has provided critical components on a 2.47-acre one-megawatt floating solar photovoltaic test-bed. Electricity generated will feed into the national energy grid, enough for up to 250 households.

▼ Meet a waste management truck that drives itself. **Volvo Trucks** (a separate company from Volvo Cars) and Swedish

waste management company Renova are testing how autonomous trucks can contribute to safer, more efficient refuse handling and a better working environment. Given the risk of accidents when refuse trucks reverse in housing areas, a self-driving truck offers the benefit of needing only one person. The truck reverses automatically, following a worker around houses as he or she collects refuse, helping to increase both productivity and safety. ■

UPCOMING FEATURES

FCA "What's New 2018" at Chelsea Proving Grounds



BMW 530i Sedan



Volvo V90 Cross Country



Kia Niro



Mazda MX-5 Miata RF



Hyundai Sonata



Texas Truck Rodeo competition



Run To The Sun 25-vehicle drive



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