

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 18 NUMBER 4

JULY-AUGUST 2019



PICKUPS! CHEVY-FORD-RAM
NEW CHEVY BLAZER - LAST C7 CORVETTE
OUTDOOR ACTIVITY VEHICLE OF THE YEAR
TWO UNUSUAL ARIZONA ROAD TRIPS
PLUS PERFORMANCE, LUXURY, CONVERTIBLES,
UTILITIES, EVS / AND MUCH MORE

Mercedes-Benz
S 560 Cabriolet

VEHICLES • EQUIPMENT • TECHNOLOGY • PEOPLE • EVENTS • DESTINATIONS • ATTRACTIONS





Discover new products, trends and ideas that will drive more sales for your business.

Register to Attend at **SEMASHOW.COM**

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

news & features July-August 2019

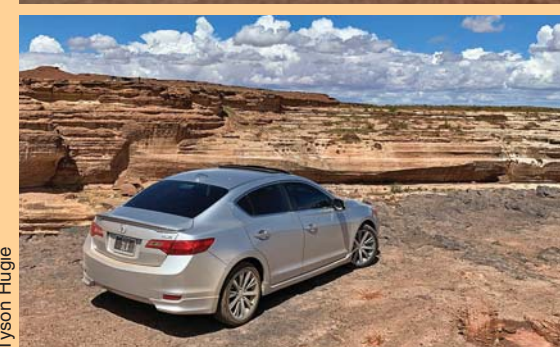
New Vehicle Launch Drive	2020 Chevrolet Silverado 1500 3.0L Duramax A 8 The latest addition to the new Silverado 1500's lineup is a diesel powerplant. We bring a towing neophyte along to Oregon to check out its tow-friendly technologies. By Joe Sage
New Vehicle Launch Drive	2020 Chevrolet Silverado 2500HD / 3500HD A 10 While in Oregon for the Silverado 1500 diesel, we also put the all-new top-torque HD lineup to the tow test in a big way. By Joe Sage
A Week With	2019 Nissan Leaf SL Plus B 13 A drive to Wickenburg and back, the long way, gives us a chance to experiment with this longstanding EV's range.
New Vehicle Reveal	2020 Dodge Charger Hellcat & Scat Pack widebodies C . 15 FCA's "What's New 2020" event was full of secrets to be kept till September, but here's a pair we can show you now.
A Few Days With	2019 Jeep Wrangler Rubicon 4x4 2.0T Two-Door C 17 While in Michigan for FCA's "What's New 2020" event, we put the outdoorsy Wrangler Rubicon through urban duty. By Joe Sage
A Week With	2019 Ford F-150 4x2 SuperCrew HO 3.5 EcoBoost D 19 We had a two-wheel-drive pickup for Overland Expo West near Flagstaff—which turned out to work just fine.
Road Trip	Northern AZ: Grand Falls, Snowbowl, Bedrock City E . 20 From natural wonders to human-sports-adapted nature to completely human roadside attractions, this wide-ranging road trip reveals anything can be "closed for the season"—but a good road trip is still always worth taking. By Tyson Hugie
A Week With	2019 Mercedes-Benz S 560 Cabriolet 23 We finally get to see how chill deflection tech tackles the heat.
A Week With	2019 Ram 3500 Crew Cab 4x4 Long Box Dually 25
New Vehicle Launch Drive	2020 Hyundai Palisade F 26 Hyundai's utility lineup continues to evolve and to grow, with this new three-row SUV defining a new upper end. By Joe Sage
Road Trip	180-mile burger run to Globe AZ G 29 Nurdberger makes the drive worth it, and the drive makes Nurdberger worth it. By Tyson Hugie
A Week With	2019 Chevrolet Blazer RS 3.6L AWD H 30 Comparing the new to the original Blazer leads us to finding the spot where the original was photographed 50 years ago.
A Week With	2019 Chevrolet Corvette Grand Sport convertible I 32 We take a drive to Bartlett Lake in the last rear-drive Corvette.
Sneak Peek	2020 Chevrolet Corvette C8 on the horizon 33
A Week With	2019 Mercedes-Benz GLE450 4Matic SUV 35
Vehicle Comparo/Awards	Mudfest: Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year J 36 NWAPA's 25th year of what has become a pavement-plus-off-road comparo crowns a king with clear off-road bones. By Joe Sage
A Few Days With	2019 Toyota Tacoma TRD Off-Road 4x4 in Tacoma J 41 While in Washington State for Mudfest, well, what better?
A Week With	2019 Nissan Maxima SR 43

departments

- FROM THE PUBLISHER 4
- AUTOMOTIVE NEWS UPDATE 6
- THE INSIDE TRACK: BRIEFS & RUMORS 44
- UPCOMING FEATURES 46



COVER: Top down in the Mercedes-Benz S 560 Cabriolet, with AirCap, AirScarf and Wind Block, features we've tried many times in cold weather, but now also in very hot. Photo: Joe Sage



Tyson Hugie

START YOUR ENGINES : FROM THE PUBLISHER

There seem to be convergences aplenty in this issue, though all may be random coincidences, aside from cases in which the industry has a focus—such as a high incidence of pickups (the biggest sales category, and growing), with offerings (sometimes multiple offerings) from the Detroit three, 4x4 and a bit of 4x2, as well as some midsize pickup time and a few midsize pickup trophies while participating in the NWAPA Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year awards comparo (aka Mudfest) in the Pacific Northwest.

Speaking of which, there is a high incidence of Pacific Northwest in this issue, as we not only flew to Seattle and drove to the Olympic Peninsula for Mudfest (in a Toyota Tacoma via Tacoma), but also flew to Spokane and drove to Idaho for the Hyundai Palisade launch and flew to Oregon for intertwined launches of Chevy Silverado 1500 and HD pickups.

Speaking of which, this issue may seem a little Chevy-heavy, which is due to not only the back-to-back Silverado launch drives (and launch drives always command a bit more page space), but also a very last drive of the long-time-front-engined Corvette and a very first drive of the badge-back-from-the-past Chevy Blazer.

Speaking of which, we had discovered that the only media archive photo of the original Blazer was a '69 model, clearly shot in Arizona—50 years ago! So we headed north with some hunches, clues and orienteering till we found the exact same spot outside Sedona.

Speaking of trips north of the Valley near and far, we also took the Blazer to Prescott on a separate run and took the C7 Corvette to Bartlett Lake (those Chevys again); drove a Nissan Leaf EV to Wickenburg and back to gauge its charge range; headed to Northern Arizona nature and tourist points from mountains to canyons with **Tyson Hugie**; and drove a rear-drive pickup to Overland Expo West (bringing us back to those pickups!).

Some say there are no coincidences, so perhaps it's all fate. Or perhaps these all mark trends. Often it turns out to be a combination of all of the above. Or not.

Enjoy the ride!

Joe Sage - Publisher/ Executive Editor

ARIZONA DRIVER

MAGAZINE



PUBLISHER/EXECUTIVE EDITOR:
Joe Sage

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS/PHOTOGRAPHERS:
Randall Bohl, Nick Calderone, Eileen Falkenberg-Hull, Tyson Hugie, Stephanie Jarnagan, Christina Lawrie, Sue Mead, JP Molnar, Doris Ong, Brenda Priddy, Lyn St James, Tim and Kristin Sharp, Dave Stall, Paul Strauss, Scott Tilley, Sherri Tilley, Jan Wagner, Kevin A Wilson

-  www.arizonadrivermagazine.com
-  facebook.com/ArizonaDriverMagazine
-  twitter.com/ArizonaDriver
-  instagram.com/ArizonaDriver

ARIZONA DRIVER MAGAZINE IS A MEMBER OF:
IMPAInternational Motor Press Association
MAMAMidwest Automotive Media Association
MPGMotor Press Guild
NWAPANorthwest Automotive Press Association
PAPAPhoenix Automotive Press Association
RMAPRocky Mountain Automotive Press
SAMASouthern Automotive Media Association
TAWATexas Auto Writers Association
WAJWestern Automotive Journalists

ACMLeMay—America's Car Museum
SturgisSturgis Motorcycle Museum & Hall of Fame
USFRAUtah Salt Flats Racing Association
USMAUnited States Motorsports Association

PUBLISHED BIMONTHLY BY ADZONE ARIZONA LLC
 All contents © AdZone Arizona LLC and *Arizona Driver Magazine*. All rights reserved. Any scanning, downloading and/or physical or electronic sharing of any part of this publication without prior written permission of the publisher constitutes theft of intellectual property.

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

ARIZONA DRIVER MAGAZINE
 PO Box 13387, Scottsdale AZ 85267
 Advertising: 480-948-0200

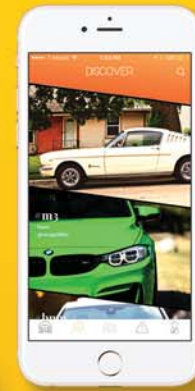
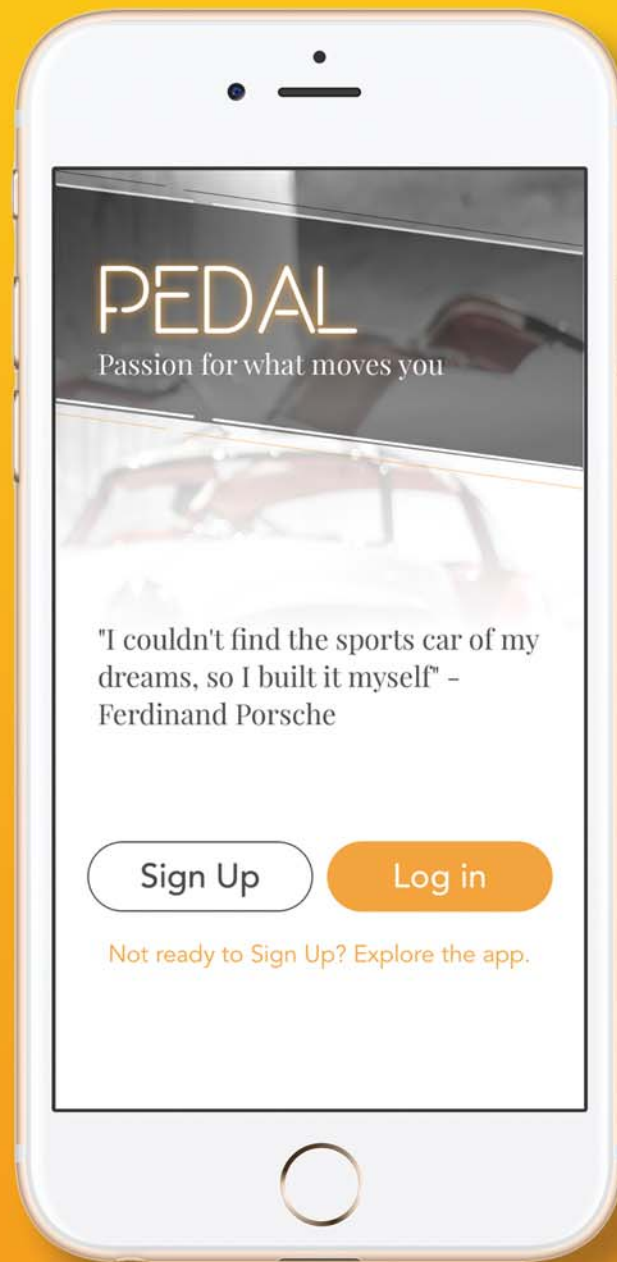
Torva

Fine Art of Fine Automobiles



Lucretia Torva | 480.251.3817
 Instagram: @torvasm | torvafineart@gmail.com


**PASSION
 FOR WHAT
 MOVES YOU**



Pedal is the must-have free app for automotive enthusiasts—the social networking community to capture and share the passion that moves you. Regardless of vehicle: car, truck, van or motorcycle. Whether you're a collector, dreamer or fan. An individual, organization or business.

Create a profile. Follow friends, family and others. Take new pictures and video, or upload from your camera roll. Share and comment. Post a link. Discover content from all over the world and join in the conversation.

This app is for people who want to share exotics like Ferrari, Lamborghini, McLaren and Porsche. Vintage, hot rods, daily drivers, electrics, autonomous and exciting barn finds. Individuals and car clubs. Racing from NASCAR to F1. The beautiful, ugly, strange and everything you think is worth sharing on and off the road.

Use Pedal to:

- Create your own profile.
- Post pictures and videos. Edit with our filters, add comments and save them to your profile.
- Opt-in to location services to geotag your posts.
- In the Discover page, search for users and hashtags to uncover and follow content you may like.
- On Pedal, we rev what we like. You can rev a post up to three times on the RPM gauge and then resets. Show your interest with each rev, watch the color change and the odometer counter go up.



PEDAL
 © 2018 CARSCARS!, INC., ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



Porsche 911 Speedster

▼ Speedster variants, combining open-top driving pleasure with advanced driving dynamics, have been part of **Porsche** company history since 1952. The forefather of all these models was a 356 America Roadster, its aluminum body manufactured by hand at Erich Heuer Karosserie-fabrik in Ullersricht near Weiden in Upper Palatinate, Germany. Thanks to a lightweight body, it weighed 350 lb less than the coupe, and a top speed of 180 km/h (112 mph) from its ±70-hp four-cylinder boxer engine was impressive at the time. The exclusive sports car, developed for the US market and built only 16 times, already featured key elements of the Speedster design, with slot-in windows for the doors, a folding rain-cover top and lightweight bucket seats. But it was pricey. US importer Max Hoffmann, who convinced Porsche there was a market for their cars in America, requested an inexpensive Porsche with reduced furnishings costing less than \$3000. In fall of 1954, Porsche produced a significantly less expensive version than the 356 America Roadster, which included “Speedster” in its name for the first time, using the sheet steel body of the cabriolet with a raked windscreen, simplified interior equipment and a rain top. The 356 1500 Speedster for America cost just \$2995 and became an instant hit in sunny coastal states and in motorsports. Hollywood icon James Dean was an enthusiastic race driver and chose this purist model dedicated to the sheer pleasure of driving. Further generations of the

356 Speedster followed, with the model reaching its peak in 1957 with the 356 A 1500 GS Carrera GT Speedster, with a 1.5L vertical shaft engine producing ±110 hp, the first production Porsche with a top speed of 200 km/h (124 mph). Newer Speedsters have come and gone in the 911 era, the last one a variant of the 997 generation, the 911 Speedster, debuted at the Paris Motor Show in October 2010, with a ±408-hp 3.8L six-cylinder boxer and built



The 20,000th McLaren

in a limited edition of just 356 units starting at 201,682 euros (±\$268,000 at that time). Flash forward to fall 2018, and Porsche gave itself a “70 years of Porsche Sports Cars” anniversary present in the 911 Speedster concept, the first in modern times to be based on a GT model, developed by the brand’s motorsports team. The concept car made public appearances at Goodwood Festival of Speed, Rennsport

Reunion VI in Laguna Seca, California, and the Paris Motor Show. The dream has now become reality, as the new Porsche 911 Speedster—the last of the 991.2 series 911 GT cars—goes into production and is now available to order. Its motorsport-based 4.0L flat-six engine develops 502 hp and 346 lb-ft of torque, can sprint from zero to 60 mph in 3.8 seconds and has a top track speed of 192 mph, with a 9000 rpm red-line. Aimed at purists, the new Speedster is available exclusively with a GT Sport six-speed manual transmission.

▼ **McLaren** Automotive has celebrated the 20,000th car to be hand-assembled at its McLaren Production Centre (MPC) in Woking, Surrey, UK. The 20,000th car built was a right-hand drive 600LT Spider in Chicane Grey from the brand’s Sports Series line-up. Launched only last summer as the next chapter in the McLaren Longtail story, all production slots for the Coupe variant had already been filled. The 20,000 milestone comes eight years after the first McLaren road car left MPC in July 2011. While production passed 4,800 cars in

2018 to meet rising global demand, output will remain around 5,000 a year into the next decade, before increasing to 6,000 before the end of the current *Track25* business plan, to maintain exclusivity. McLaren Automotive now employs over 2,300 people and, helped by a diverse product portfolio and more customers using the brand’s bespoke division McLaren Special Operations, contributed a significant proportion

of McLaren Group’s overall £1.2bn of revenue (about \$1.5 billion) in 2018. Introduction of a second production shift in 2016 to meet rising global demand for McLaren vehicles has seen production double from



BMW i8 Roadster Safety Car

around ten cars to over 20 a day. Over 90 percent of vehicles built in Woking are exported to more than 32 markets around the world. Launched in 2010, the company is now the largest part of the McLaren Group. The McLaren Production Centre took 14 months to build, from breaking ground in 2010 to July 18, 2011 when the first car, a McLaren 12C, was approved for shipping. The company has defined product families: Sports Series, Super Series, Ultimate Series and Motorsport, which are retailed through over 80 retailers in more than 30 markets around the world.

▼ As Official Vehicle Partner for the ABB FIA Formula E Championship, **BMW i** unveiled its new BMW i8 Roadster Safety Car at Yacht Club de Monaco on the eve of the Monaco E-Prix. Modified specifically for track use, with design based on its sister model, the BMW i8 Coupé Safety Car, it’s the first safety car in the world that can be used with an open cockpit. No major modifications were necessary, but there still have been some changes for the track version. The BMW i8 Roadster Safety Car’s front windscreen is shorter than that of the production model, giving the car a more dynamic appearance, while its center of gravity is also 15 millimeters lower than the production car. The car has M carbon ceramic brakes, an FIA-approved roll bar, a front splitter and a rear wing for additional downforce. Modifications necessary for its role of Safety Car have also been made—a light bar mounted above the rear wing,

making it easily visible from all angles in any race situation; a communication antenna and a GPS antenna; and an extensive communication system in the cockpit, as well as a rear-view camera. Livery de-

sign includes a high-contrast BMW logo-inspired alternating blue and white schematic from the BMW iFE.18 and BMW i8 Coupe Safety Car, blue and purple representing raw electricity, and orange and green accents to match the Safety Car light system. As with the BMW iFE.18, violet “synapses” surging throughout to telegraph a “live” connective network in the design. A BMW Group Motorsport matte black anti-reflective cockpit extension has



Automobili Pininfarina Battista hypercar

been updated to include passengers who will be in the passenger seat during taxi rides. The resulting “winged” graphic mirrors the door opening kinematic of the BMW i8 Roadster.

▼ **Automobili Pininfarina**’s pure-electric, zero-emission, 1900-hp Battista hypercar recently became available via specialist retailer partners in North America, Europe,

Asia and the Middle East, a chance to own one of just 150 to be hand-built at Pininfarina SpA in Italy next year. Of these, a maximum of 50 will begin arriving in North America from late 2020, with over half already reserved through Pininfarina’s network of six specialist retailers in Los Angeles, Miami, New York, San Francisco, Toronto and Vancouver. The carbon-bodied hypercar, in Grigio Luserna satin grey, was shown to collectors, supercar owners, business leaders and automotive influencers at private briefings in New York City before heading to further appointments in the US and Canada. The Pininfarina Battista’s 120 kWh battery provides power to four electric motors—one at each wheel—for a combined (targeted) 1900 hp and 1696 lb-ft of torque. Development of the car, over a period of just 18 months, as both performance hypercar and eminently drivable luxury car—“ballistic in a straight line and enjoyable on a long drive”—is being led by Nick Heidfeld, a driver in both Formula 1 and Formula E, along with a team of seasoned design and engineering experts who have been responsible for many of the most impressive performance cars of recent years, including design director Luca Borgogno (Lamborghini Urus), chief Technical officer Christian Jung (Porsche Mission E) and director of sports-

cars Rene Wollmann (Mercedes-AMG Project One). The car has a single-charge range target of 300 miles (equal to a non-stop drive from Phoenix to Las Vegas), and a sprint from zero to 60 mph in under two seconds—faster than a Formula 1 car. With just 50 of the \$2.5 million EV hyper GTs coming to America, the remaining 100 Battistas will be split equally between European and the Middle East/Asia. ■

NEW SILVERADO 1500 GETS ITS DIESEL

BY JOE SAGE

WE PUT FUEL MILEAGE AND TOW TECH TO THE TEST

The all-new Chevrolet Silverado 1500 has had what GM calls a cadenced launch strategy, from its original rollout, to the addition of a breakthrough 2.7L powerplant launched in Arizona this winter (see our JanFeb issue), and now of a 3.0L Duramax diesel, completing the Silverado light and medium duty lineup. (The broader Silverado lineup includes completely new 500HD and 3500HD heavy duty pickups also launched in this issue.)

We joined Chevrolet in the Bend, Oregon region—similar in many ways to Northern Arizona, with high altitude volcanic plains and evergreen forests—to put the new powertrain to the test.

TOWING: A diesel pickup is especially good at towing—with its massive torque, it can bring a significant load up to speed seemingly effortlessly.

One area all the manufacturers have been paying extra attention to for the past few years is making towing easier for both the expert and the novice, and for this, Chevy had an idea. We'd each bring along someone "with little or no towing ex-

perience," allowing us to really experience the new Silverado's various backup, hookup and load-monitoring systems from the clean-slate perspective these are designed to accommodate.

That might be easier said than done, as we quickly realized just how many people we know who already tow—whether race cars, rally rigs, horses, livestock, boats or all of the above, these are the circles we run in. But we described the event to one friend, a Valley pharmacist who grew up in Wyoming, where we might think everybody has a big pickup and something to tow. However, she did not grow up on a ranch and, in fact, despite being a serial purchaser of interesting vehicles, has never bought a pickup—nor even wanted one, which turns out to be the flip side of growing up in Wyoming for some people. And she was game.

Chevrolet's research indicates that 57 percent say towing operations can be stressful—and executive chief engineer Tim Herrick jokingly suggests the other 43 percent may be lying. Chevy fig-

ures its towing tech will thus be part relationship counselor—"we save marriages," says Herrick, whose data further suggests that 12 percent of users have had a fight with a significant other, family or friend during the process. (We can think of cowboy-cowgirl relationships that have actually bonded this way, but do not have data on that.)

Towing is one of the most competitive benchmarks among pickups. Payloads and tow capacities—carefully charted out by each model's frame length, bed length and cab style; and by engine, transmission, transfer case and rear end—tell the tale of who is king of the segment at any point in time. And, as any one of the manufacturers knows very well, the bar rises each time and gets conquered anew. But there's more to it than that final number. When you have a big pickup in one hand and a heavy and/or cumbersome trailer in the other, bringing those two hands together is a critical point, all the moreso depending upon the degree of experience of the operator. That's where our inexperienced co-driver kicks in.

Trailer features on the new Silverado 1500 include a trailer checklist, a towing label on the door pillar (a breakthrough for the large percentage of people who have traditionally either guessed or just remembered as best they can), trailer brake-

gain memory, and the ability to store up to five different trailer profiles—one for your boat, one for your RV, one for your horses, one for your racecar, one for a weekend cargo rental and so on.

All the big players have been devoting considerable clever effort to the related tasks of targeting that specific hookup point more accurately and more easily, with ever-increasing pools of technology available in their kit. As with anything where more and more binary wisdom is available for the cost of ever more inexpensive cameras and chips, some easily become overkill, which in turn can be good or bad, largely depending upon whether it gets in the way. Our greenhorn tow driver would separate the wheat from the chaff.

CAMERAS: Grasping and monitoring your trailer's (and overall truck-trailer package's) status at all times is essential. Silverado's eight cameras offering up to 15 different views not only help with alignment at hookup; they also let you keep an eye on your bed load, the road behind you, and even the contents of your trailer. A fan favorite is the "transparent trailer" feature (shown at right), which allows you to "see" that road behind you as though the trailer were barely there. This is not magic, of course, but rather uses peripheral views to fill in the blanks for perspective and orientation.

We've tested systems with a wide range of complexity, some of which have confirmed our jaded feeling that just knowing how to do it can be the best approach. That's also why Chevy had us each bring someone new to the game.

Silverado's approach is clean, clear and directly augments a reality-based approach: the cameras and steering simply generate an on-screen centerline (much as with automotive backup cameras that forecast your wheel paths), to help you guide your hitch straight to the trailer—which proved uncannily accurate for both the trained and untrained, with our newbie driver nailing most things on the first try, others on the second. Tasks included backing up to hitch to a boat or cargo trailer; and a coned course for a sequence of braking, circling and 100-foot backup drills. Our guest's performance was so impressive, she was then turned loose to tow 35,500 pounds with the HD, not originally part of the plan (see other feature).

BED: The new Silverado 1500 has GM's Durabed standard, a high-strength steel build with integrated liner for higher cargo volume, solid tie-downs at all four corners (plus available movable), power up/down tailgate, task lighting, 120v power outlet, even larger corner steps than before (now good up to a size 13 boot—whew, we just make it).

FUEL MILEAGE: Our drive through the region highlighted one more key attribute of the new 3.0L Duramax diesel package—its fuel mileage. Though EPA figures had not been tallied yet, a cou-

ple of dozen of us could give big pickup hypermiling a try. We zeroed out our fuel mileage indicators as well as our odometers and headed out on the local roads, climbing from about 19 mpg into the 20s, inching into the 30s, then—well, hypermiling may not be our thing. A beautiful mountain two-lane is sooner than later going to give you a challenge or two of its own, and tapping the 3.0 Duramax's 277 hp and 460 lb-ft of torque are a sure way to beat those challenges. We knew that someone had beat 40 mpg the day before, and we knew that some of our fellow travelers this day were really focused on this. We abandoned any dreams of a fuel mileage trophy and instead enjoyed the truck's full power cruising abilities.

Several people did have results in the 40s that day—truly remarkable for such a beast. Chevy's own data suggests you can regularly hit 40 mpg at a steady 50 mph in a 2WD truck (35.9 in a 4x4), descending to mid-20s at 70 mph.

LINEUP: The full 2020 Silverado 1500 lineup's plant capacity is being rebalanced to assure Chevy will be able to build enough crew cabs to meet demand (which stands at 70 percent nationwide). They expect demand for diesels to continue to grow, though sales are forecast at about 10 percent, with the majority anticipated to remain 5.3L gasoline models, with a 6.2L gasoline engine bracketing a bell curve at the premium end.

The 2020 models will add standard features—Herrick says "everything on the 2020 HD will work its way into the 2020 1500"—including adaptive cruise control and the "invisible trailer" view. Maximum tow capacity for the 2020 Silverado 1500 will hit 13,400 pounds in the RST trim 6.2L gasoline truck, stated as of now to be best in segment.

Along with the new 2020 HD models also featured in this issue, Chevrolet now has an entirely new light duty and heavy duty Silverado lineup. ■



35,500 POUNDS

BY JOE SAGE

IMMENSE NEW HD PICKUPS HAUL IMMENSE LOADS

While the all-new Chevrolet Silverado 1500 light duty pickup has grown into its wider range in stages (see other launch feature in this issue), the equally all-new Silverado HD heavy duty pickup has come to the light of day over time in its own way. Chevy brought a full-size mockup of the HD to us here in Phoenix last November (looking real, but a foam or equivalent build—we could look but not touch, and with no interior). In February, we were invited to Flint, Michigan, for the full reveal of the HD trucks and a tour of the factory line where they were about to start full production this summer. Then in June, we flew to Bend, Oregon, to drive the full range for the first time.

Usually, a launch drive is a first look *and* a first drive, but although we had seen this one before, it's always a different experience in motion, in multiple trims and configurations, and in the light of day. So bold is this new truck, it turns a lot of heads and stops a few people in their tracks the first time they see it. But it's a quick adjustment. The stylists at GM regularly do this well, creating a new look that goes from startling to familiar in no time, while the prior goes from familiar to yesterday's news. While the new Silverado HD seems to still be startling some people online, we are quickly and fully acclimated. It looks tank-rugged, suitable for the heaviest of heavy duty purposes.

Executive chief engineer Tim Herrick identifies two major groups buying heavy duty pickups: those who earn a living with one; and those who haul their prized possessions with one. Some haul a valuable item aside from work; and some work without hauling a prized item; but in a great many cases—from heavy construction to farming and ranching to manufacturing and beyond—they are one and the same. (And, as Herrick points out, even those with heavy prized possessions just for fun are likely to know a thing or two about earning a living.) At that prized possession end of the scale in particular, a premium, creature feature and tech-rich interior is increasingly important. Across the spectrum, sheer capability remains the touchstone.

The new Silverado HD is available with two engines, both also beasts: a new 6.6L gasoline V8 purpose-built for the HD (with 401 hp and 464 lb-ft of torque, 22 percent more torque than the engine it replaces); and an also-6.6L Duramax turbo-diesel V8 (with 445 hp and 910 lb-ft of torque) connected to an exclusive Allison 10-speed automatic. Intriguingly (and uncommonly), both engines are priced the same. New axles, locking rear dif-

ferential, prop shaft, U-joint and 12-inch ring gear combine with the strength of the Duramax to deliver the full 910 lb-ft of torque in first gear. The diesel also has a range of cooling upgrades, from a functional hood intake and 28-inch fan to engine after-run of up to 15 minutes.

Front suspension is unusual for the segment—a short/long-arm configuration rather than a solid axle, aiming to deliver the best possible ride anywhere from empty to hauling a full payload.

The HD's Durabed build, which resembles a factory spray-in liner, is about seven inches wider inside, accommodating increased cargo volume, and includes 12 fixed tie-down points, nine movable points, upgraded lighting, 120-volt outlet, power up-down tailgate, cornersteps and also front-of-box bedsteps good enough for size 13 work boots and 500 pounds of load.

Important in the high country, the truck's front fascia is winter-ready two ways: it's engineered for snow plow installation with no cutting; and it has an integrated engine heater outlet. There's also a factory-installed and warrantied power take-off (PTO), ready for quick installation of farm or ranch equipment, power dumps and spreaders. Also important in the high country for anyone, Chevrolet says the new gasoline engine has no loss of GCWR and tow ratings at altitude (they note some



others lose 20 percent or more at 10,000 feet).

Tow capacity is a major claim of the new Chevy Silverado HD, with the 3500 HD diesel rated at up to 35,500 pounds, a whopping 52 percent increase from its predecessor, putting it in first place for the moment. "We know our friends in Auburn Hills and Dearborn are hard at work to hit 35,501," says Herrick. But today they wear that crown. A gasoline 2500 HD truck tows up to 17,400 lb, an 18 percent bump up from the truck it replaces.

On our full drive day on the open roads of central Oregon, our loads were kept to what were legal with a commercial driver's license (CDL)—12,100 pounds for the gasoline 2500 HD and 14,000 pounds for the diesel 3500 HD. But on the prior afternoon, we had staged our adventures at the sprawling Bend Municipal Airport without re-

striction: towing the maximum—the 35,500-lb anvil truck above—on the runways with a single-cab short-box 3500 HD dually, a purposeful power tug; and doing donuts around a helipad serving as skidpad, towing the bulldozer below. Engine and other drivetrain specs aside, tow capacity is determined by the truck's cab and bed configuration, but every diesel dually 3500 HD will tow above 30,000 lb.

All bear an extensive list of tow features—grade holds, sway and rollover controls, five-profile storage, cameras and mirrors, as well as a prominent VIN-specific trailering label, to avoid any bad guessing of an individual truck's capacity.

We might have thought a cowboy or construction field worker who's used to wrestling the most out of their truck might think this is all for techies and even be happier without it. But having tried it

all, we now think they'll say, "Heck, I used to have to think about all that stuff and frankly I didn't like it—and if I didn't think about it, I might regret it. Now I don't even have to think about it." A no-tow-experience guest on hand to try the hookup and backup procedures of the new Silverado 1500 was welcomed behind the wheel of these beasts as well—and she took to this with the same confidence as with the lighter trucks and loads.

Heavy duty pickups have been getting a lot of attention, both in the marketplace and from the manufacturers themselves, who have been hustling to make them at least as stylish and technically advanced as that biggest-selling vehicle of all, the full-size light duty pickup. This seems the natural growth of an overall booming segment, but we have an additional theory that the explosion of midsize pickups over the past couple of years has created a nudge for the full-size buyer to differentiate themselves that much more, by moving to the heavy duties. We suspect these will do well. ■



**It's not just a car.
It's a time machine for your soul.**



Drive your dream.®

You never forget your first love.

With thousands of classic cars and trucks for sale, ClassicCars.com plays matchmaker every day to car buffs just like you. Travel back in time and fall in love all over again.

www.ClassicCars.com

© 2008 The Collector Car Network, Inc. All rights reserved.

A WEEK WITH : 2019 NISSAN LEAF SL PLUS

Easy EV BY JOE SAGE

When we had a Nissan Leaf in 2011, its first year, it was delivered on a flatbed, we had it for just three days, its 80 kW motor was powered by a 24 kWh battery, and range was 100 miles or less—you never wanted to be too far from a plug. Flash forward, and power, battery capacity and range are all doubled or more. This one was driven to us like any other; we had it for a full week; and charging is available all over the map. Technology has evolved—attitudes even moreso.

Our Leaf is the top of three trims in the bigger of two battery capacities, but you can get in the game for under \$30 grand. Various EV incentives remain (from purchase to plates to utility rates).

For all that's still magical and new about EVs, we also found magic in the fact that the Leaf is now more mainstream in appearance (Nissan's family styling cues work especially well here), and its operation is conventional enough to leave novelty where it makes you smile, while being like any other car in every meaningful way. There's enough energy headroom now to painlessly include everything from power heated seats and premium audio to stylish low-

profile wheels and tires. AC runs off electric charge rather than belt-drive and is every bit as effective.

In 2011, a 66-mile roundtrip left us right at the limits of range. This time, after three or four days of routine driving, we had over 100 miles of range left, charged back up to 80 percent at an EVgo station while grabbing a sandwich, then took a day trip to Lake Pleasant and out past Wickenburg.

Our drive up was spirited and carefree, leaving 115 miles of range for a 70-mile return, clearly more than enough, but we changed from D (drive) to B (more aggressive regenerative braking). The range gauge then dropped noticeably more slowly, while the drive was just as much fun—a simple trick.

Leaf's 250 lb-ft of torque (almost that of a 370Z), on tap from the word "go," provides quick launches, flat cornering, strong freeway ramp acceleration and confident lane changes. Expect others on the road to be surprised, as your pep and precision may match a V8 muscle car or \$150k luxury performance roadster in the next lane.

Leaf's E-Pedal mode follows your application or release of pedal immediately. It can bring you to a full stop at slower speeds or on a hill, but you do need to be ready to brake the regular way.

There are two common questions about driving an EV: [a] is it complicated? and [b] is it fun? The answers to these from behind the wheel of the new Nissan Leaf are [a] no, and [b] yes! ■

SPECIFICATIONS

PLATFORM / SEATS	dedicated EV, battery in floor / five
MOTOR	high-response 160 kW AC synchronous
BATTERY	62 kWh laminated lithium-ion, 288 cells: warranty 8 yrs/100,000 mi (defects, excess capac loss)
HP/TORQUE	214 hp / 250 lb-ft
CHARGE	6.6 kW on-board, 6.0 kW output 240V in ±11.5 hrs, quick charge 45 minutes to 80%
RANGE	(EPA est) 226 miles
EMISSIONS	Tier3Bino0/CFV ZEV, ILEV (Fed), ZEV (Calif)
DRIVE / TRANSMISSION	FWD / single speed reducer
SHIFTER	shift-by-wire drive selector
DRIVE MODES	Normal; Eco-Mode (increased regen braking, limits motor and HVAC output); B-mode (more aggressive regen braking during deceleration); E-Pedal advanced one-pedal operation
SUSPENSION	F: indep MacPherson strut w coils, stblz bar; R: torsion beam w integrated stblz bar
STEERING	vehicle speed-sensitive elec power
BRAKES	co'op regenerative; 4-whl pwr assist disc: F: 11.14x1.1" vented / R: 11.5x0.63" vented
WHEELS / TIRES	17" alum-alloy / 215/50R17 energy sav
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	176.4 / 106.3 in
TURNING CIRCLE	36.1 ft
GROUND CLRNCE / APPR/DEPART	5.9 in / 16.7/25.9°
HEADROOM (F/R)	41.2 / 37.3 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	42.1 / 33.5 in
WEIGHT	3753 lb
CARGO CAPACITY	23.6 / 30.0 cu.ft
MPG (MPGe)	TBD

SL PLUS INCLUDES: E Pedal Mode, NissanConnect EV, nav, services, Apple/Android, 8" infotain scrn, 17" alloys, Bose prem 7-sprkr audio, LED hdlts, high beam assist, ProPILOT assist, steering assist, intel cruise w full speed range & hold, auto emerg brake w ped detect, intel lane intervention, blind spot warn, rear cross traffic alert, intl around view monitor, intl driver alert, intel fwd collision warn.

BASE PRICE	\$42,550
CARPETED FLOOR MATS	135
DESTINATION CHARGE	895
TOTAL	\$43,580
40 kWh	62 kWh
S.....\$29,990	S Plus.....\$36,550
SV.....32,600	SV Plus.....38,510
SL.....36,300	SL Plus.....42,550



YOUR NUMBER ONE DESTINATION FOR AUTO RACING & DRIVING SCHOOLS




Since 1975, Skip Barber Racing School has operated a fully integrated system of racing school, driving schools, corporate events and special projects across North America, at WeatherTech Raceway Laguna Seca, Lime Rock Park, NJ Motorsports Park and Road Atlanta. No other organization delivers such a combination of high quality instruction, equipment, facilities and memorable experience. Whether you are a new driver looking to improve your street awareness skills, or an accomplished amateur racer looking to take the next step, Skip Barber Racing School has a program for you!

SKIPBARBER.com / 866.932.1949

BRIDGESTONE WINTER DRIVING SCHOOL




DRIVING AT THE NEXT LEVEL

- We are North America's premier winter driving and rally school
- Learn to drive well on ice and you will have the ability to excel on any surface
- We offer programs for beginners to seasoned professional race drivers
- Our custom-built tracks are constructed and maintained to international standards
- We are open 7 days a week during the winter season

1.800.WHY.SKID winterdrive.com Mid December through early March Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Book today for the experience of a lifetime!

Learn To Drive! Learn To Race! Learn To Win!



It doesn't get more real than this! When you enroll in one of our race programs, you'll be strapped into a real 150 bhp Formula 2000 racecar capable of 0-60 mph in 4.2 seconds, 130 mph in the draft, pulling up to 2g's in the corners, and stopping on a dime.

Full SCCA accreditation | No Artificial Speed/Rev limits | Full Laps Every Session
Passing Allowed In All Programs | In Car Timing Systems | Textbooks In Advance
3-1 Student to Instructor Ratio | Formula 2000 Racing Series For Graduates



PALM BEACH INT'L RACEWAY - LIME ROCK PARK - NJ MOTORSPORTS PARK
POCONO INT'L RACEWAY - DOMINION RACEWAY - ROEBLING ROAD RACEWAY

BERTILROOS.com | 800-722-3669

0-60 IN 1.5 SECONDS

DRAGSTER ADVENTURE
SIDE-BY-SIDE RACING
STARTING AT JUST \$399

OR EARN YOUR NHRA OR IHRA COMPETITION LICENSE!



FRANK HAWLEY'S DRAG RACING SCHOOL

866.480.7223 | frankhawley.com

CLASSES HELD AT
FONTANA, CA · PHOENIX, AZ · GAINESVILLE, FL
ST. LOUIS, MO · NORWALK, OH · READING, PA

Charger goes wide

BY JOE SAGE

FCA holds a "What's New" media event each summer at their top secret Chelsea Proving Grounds in Michigan, showing off all their wares and announcing all their secrets for the following model year. All is kept tightly under wraps until September, with few exceptions.

Involving dozens of tons of machinery bearing thousands of collective horsepower, it's held on durability roads, lateral load courses, autocross, drag-strip, tow roads and of course off-roading on world famous Lyman Trail—an outdoor event, also with few exceptions.

Two exceptions to being outdoors this year were lunch in a big tent—sandwiches from Zingerman's Deli in Ann Arbor, washed down by Michigan's own Faygo pop—and a Dodge//SRT new product reveal in another nearby tent. The latter was also an exception to the September embargo—and just in time for this July/August issue's deadline.

Here, North American passenger car chief Tim Kuniskis pulled the wraps off not one but two new

Dodge Charger models: the Charger SRT Hellcat Widebody and Charger Scat Pack Widebody. Both follow suit to Challenger SRT Hellcat and Scat Pack Widebody evolution, with the new 2020 Charger SRT Hellcat going all Widebody, standard, and the 2020 Charger Scat Pack offering it as an option, both bearing the same stance-conquering wheels and tires, and with parallels in performance and value to the Challenger widebodies (see specs).

This news will make a great many Dodge, SRT and horsepower-in-general fans very happy—everyone, really, except the one guy on our Instagram feed who doesn't want to hear another word out of us unless it's about a Charger Redeye he is sure must be on some future horizon. If it ever comes to pass, remember—you heard it from that guy first.

Pricing was not released for the 2020 Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Widebody, nor for the Charger Scat Pack Widebody option, but the Charger Scat Pack without Widebody will start under \$40,000.

Despite the okay for early photos and informa-

CHARGER SRT HELLCAT WIDEBODY

WIDEBODY BUILD	.....standard
ENGINE	.....supercharged 6.2L HEMI Hellcat V8
HP/TORQUE	.....707 hp / 650 lb-ft
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD
TRANSMISSION	.....8-speed automatic
0-TO-60 MPH	.....3.6 sec
1/4 MILE	.....10.96 sec
TOP SPEED	.....196 mph
WHEELS / TIRES	.....20x11 / 305/35ZR20 Pirelli P-Zero
LATERAL GRIP (SKIDPAD)	.....0.96 g
BRAKING DISTANCE (60-TO-0)	.....107 ft

CHARGER SCAT PACK WIDEBODY

WIDEBODY BUILD	.....available
ENGINE	.....naturally-aspirated 392 (6.4L) HEMI V8
HP/TORQUE	.....485 hp / 475 lb-ft
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD
TRANSMISSION	.....8-speed automatic
0-TO-60 MPH	.....4.3 sec
1/4 MILE	.....12.4 sec
TOP SPEED	.....not stated
WHEELS / TIRES	.....20x11 / 305/35ZR20 all-season perf
LATERAL GRIP (SKIDPAD)	.....0.98 g
BRAKING DISTANCE (60-TO-0)	.....107 ft

tion on the new models, drive impressions are under embargo for longer than the all the rest of the event—until October. As always, stay tuned! ■



2020 Dodge Charger SRT Hellcat Widebody (blue) and 2020 Dodge Charger Scat Pack Widebody (white) revealed at Chelsea Proving Grounds, above, and on the track at an undisclosed location in the American West, below. Their next stop after our Michigan reveal would be the Pikes Peak International Hill Climb.



BRIDGESTONE WINTER DRIVING SCHOOL



DRIVING AT THE NEXT LEVEL

- We are North America's premier winter driving and rally school
- Learn to drive well on ice and you will have the ability to excel on any surface
- We offer programs for beginners to seasoned professional race drivers
- Our custom-built tracks are constructed and maintained to international standards
- We are open 7 days a week during the winter season

1.800.WHY.SKID
winterdrive.com

Mid December through early March
Steamboat Springs, Colorado

Book today for the experience of a lifetime!

A FEW DAYS WITH : 2019 JEEP WRANGLER RUBICON 4X4 2.0L TURBO TWO-DOOR

¡Detrojito Mojito!

BY JOE SAGE

We did a double take when a friend in Michigan asked whether this was “a real Jeep”—a question sometimes asked of, say, a Renegade or Compass, with the answer typically invoking their Trail-Rated Trailhawk models. But this one was easy, as real as it gets: a Wrangler. Two-Door. Rubicon. Trail-Rated. With rock rails, skid plates, disconnecting sway bar, 4.10 rear end, 33-inch tires on 17-inch wheels, the works. As real as it gets and as real as it ever was, only consistently better. (And its vivid Mojito! Green is perfect for red rocks.)

She had owned a Jeep Wrangler some years back, when they were less refined. But creature features and technologies added since then do not subtract—they simply add comfort and safety for the daily drive. And that was the kind of driving we were doing for a few days after FCA's “What's New 2020” event at Chelsea Proving Grounds wrapped up—mostly urban and suburban duty, from farmlands near Chelsea to Ann Arbor, then to Detroit's northwest suburbs, downtown Detroit's inner ‘burbs, then back to the airport a few days later.

Four-Door sales are now about 75 percent of the Wrangler total, so a short-wheelbase Two-Door was a special treat in town. Usually, we'd have one of these while navigating the tightest rock crawls (see our launch feature on the all-new

Wrangler JL outside Tucson, in our Jan/Feb 2018 issue). In this case, we were navigating hotel parking lots and highway construction barrels and traffic cones (known locally as the Michigan state tree and state flower, respectively), and we loved the smaller Jeep's maneuverability.

A cousin told us the roads were much worse than usual this year (it was still early summer, with most repairs ahead), but in the Jeep Wrangler, we barely noticed and we didn't care. For a Wrangler Rubicon, the pavement of Detroit was child's play. The ride is firm on broken concrete, as intended, but that's more than made up for by the tight-turning urban mobility of its 96.8-inch wheelbase.

This top-capability off-roader—see sidebar for suspension, drive, brake and clearance specs—has had much added in our sample, even leather bucket seats, Uconnect navigation and 552-watt, nine-speaker Alpine audio with all-weather subwoofer. Our options brought the \$38k Wrangler above \$50k, but you could knock three grand off with a manual transmission and 3.6L Pentastar V6 (with a bit more horsepower but a bit less torque), and if it would feel more real-Jeepish to you without so much urban civility, you could also shave off some electronic driver assist.

This was a great cruiser for our urban Michigan overtime, and we vowed that next time, we'd head into the north woods. In Arizona, it's a better formula still, with smoother roads in town but the most rugged terrain even more readily at hand. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ASSEMBLY PLANT	Toledo, Ohio
BUILD	ladder-type frame, steel and aluminum body
ENGINE	2.0L 16v I-4 direct-inj eTorque turbo, chain-driven DOHC, alum block/heads
HP/TORQUE	270 hp / 295 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	10:1
TRANSMISSION	8-speed automatic
TRANSFER CASE	Rock-Trac: 2HI, 4HI, neutral, 4LO
DRIVE / AXLE RATIO	part-time 4X4 / 4.10
SUSPENSION	F: solid axle, link coil, leading arms, track bar, coils, stblzr bar, electr sway-bar disconnect, high-pres gas monotube shocks, hydraulic rebound stop; R: solid axle, link coil, trailing arms, track bar, coils, stblzr bar, high-pres gas mono shocks, hyd reb stop
STEERING	electro-hydraulic power
BRAKES	F: 12.9x1.1 vented, 2" twin-piston floating cal; R: 13.4x.55 solid, 1.88 single-piston floating caliper
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	166.8 / 96.8 in
LEGROOM (F/R 2/2)	41.2 / 35.7 in
WHEELS / TIRES	17x7.5 / LT285/70R17C on/off-road
TURNING CIRCLE	34.5 ft
APPROACH / BRKOVER / DEPART	44 / 27.8 / 37°
GROUND CLEARANCE	10.8 in
WEIGHT (two-door, 2.0L, auto)	4175 lb
TOW CAPACITY (two-door)	2000 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	18.5 gal
MPG	23/25/24 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	\$38,045
INDIV OPTIONS:	leather bucket interior (1395); heated seats-wheel, remote start (995); trailer tow group (795); LED lighting (995); 8.4" Uconnect premium audio-nav group (1595); rear park assist, blind spot, cross-path (895); adaptive cruise, brake assist, collision warning (795); steel bumpers (1295); floor mats (150); window storage bag (75); 8-spd auto w hill descent (2000); 2.0L eTorque engine (1000); Sunrider soft top (595)
DESTINATION CHARGE	1495
TOTAL	\$52,120



Register Today - Free to Browse, Free to Join, Free to Post
#1 Motorsports Marketplace. Go to www.racingjunk.com



- Drag Racing Cars • Off Road • Road Racing Cars • Antique/Classic Cars and Trucks
- Motorcycles • Modern Cars/Trucks/SUVs • Hot Rod/Street Rod/Custom • Much More

Interested in having millions of people see your products?
Email advertising@RacingJunk.com to learn about dealer and
advertising opportunities.

4x2 perspective BY JOE SAGE

Have you ever noticed? Despite being the single best-selling vehicle in America, each Ford F-150—work fleets aside—is typically distinctively different. Ours here is in top-level Limited trim, well above a \$28k base F-150, even some \$12k above Platinum, with a wealth of features—massaging leather seats, Sync3, power running boards—that take the trend of pickup as daily driver to country club cruiser level. It's the biggest of three cabs, Supercrew. Its EcoBoost V6 (the engines that have quickly become F-150's most popular) is the 450-hp 510-lbft High Output, tops of six available engines (even the diesel) on both specs. And it's a 4x2, in a world where about three-quarters of full-size pickups are 4x4. This sample has a trailer tow package, tow-haul mode, backup-hookup technology and trailer monitoring, and its configuration—cab, wheelbase, bed length, engine, drivetrain and rear end—gives it a tow capacity above 12,000 lb.

Ford's updated styling sees the grilles and headlights finally take full advantage of the shapes afforded by aluminum build, and this Limited in particular is one handsome truck. We had this 2WD truck for Overland Expo West week and wondered: could that prove awkward, or would anybody even notice? In decades prior, a stock 4x4's high stance was immediately recognizable. Now the difference is just 6/10ths of an inch.

We headed north toward Flagstaff, a migration

where I-17's curves, grades and widely varying speeds among fellow travelers often get the best of lane-keeping and smart cruise control systems, but the F-150 blessedly deferred to our human input. The beefy EcoBoost offered king of the road command. (Next time, we'd like to try that 12,000-lb trailer, too.) Arriving at Expo, we were directed into a rugged basically 4x4 parking spot, where the truck's healthy ground clearance and traction rendered our largely invisible difference moot.

Heading back south, we pulled off at Schnebly Hill Road. The sign says, "recommended for trucks and off-road vehicles." Trucks! That's us! Nothing about 4WD. (When conditions are bad enough, they just close the road, anyway; they don't fine-tune the qualifications.) Within a couple of miles, the road gets rougher and rockier, but that didn't faze our 2WD Ford. We wanted to return on I-17, so we didn't drive all the way to Sedona. Our three-point turnaround could have dropped two wheels off the deep end, where 4WD would have been vital, so we took care there, our only concession.

Full-size pickups, the biggest category, increasingly live in the middle, with booms in both bigger 2500/3500 HD and smaller midsize trucks. And here we found perspective. While smaller trucks may need 4x4 drivetrains to maximally achieve, some bigger ones may have the stuff to prove they can conquer just as much even without it. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

BUILD	high-strength steel frame, aluminum cab & bed
ENGINE	High Output 3.5L EcoBoost v6 alum block/heads, twin-turbo, intercooled, DOHC
DRIVETRAIN	4X2 (rear-wheel drive)
HP/TORQUE	450 hp / 510 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	elec hydr 10-spd auto w tow mode
SUSPENSION	F: indep dbl-wishbone w coil-over HD gas shocks, stamped lower control arm; R: leaf spring, solid axle, HD gas shocks
STEERING	electric power assist
BRAKES	pwr ABS vented disc, iron: F: 350x34mm, 2x54 sliding caliper; R: 336x24mm, 1x54 sliding cal; electronic parking brake
WHEELS / TIRES	22" pol alum / P275/45 R22 BSW AS
LENGTH / WB (SuperCrew 5'5" bed)	231.9 / 145.0 in
APPROACH / BRKOVER / DEP	25.5 / 21.0 / 26.0°
GROUND CLEARANCE	(4x4 9.4 in) 4x2 8.8 in
HEADROOM (F/R)	40.8 / 43.9 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	40.4 / 43.6 in
GVWR / PAYLOAD (per this spec)	7000 / 2030 lb
TOW CAPACITY (per this spec, 3.55 rear)	12,100 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	23 or 36 gal
MPG	17/22/19 (city/hwy/comb)

INCLUDES: LED box lighting, LED quad beam headlights, LED side-mirror spotlights, power slide rear window w defrost & privacy tint, remote tailgate release, power running boards, LED taillamps, twin-panel moonroof, 100V 400W outlet, heated-vented front seats, 2nd row heated seats, 8" productivity screen, SYNC@3 8" touchscreen, adaptive cruise, memory pedal adjust, ambient lighting, wood accents, leather-wrap st wheel, multicontour seats w active motion, 360° camera, B&O prem audio, blind spot w cross traffic alert, FordPass™ Connect 4G wifi hotspot modem, keyless entry-start, lane keep, pre-collision assist w auto emergency brake, reverse sensing, voice activ nav, more.

BASE PRICE	\$67,135
INDIV OPTIONS: tray style floor liner (160), trailer tow pkg (995), tailgate step (375), spray-in bedliner (595)	2125
DESTINATION CHARGE	1495
TOTAL	\$70,755



DRY RUN

That peaceful, easy feeling when everything, one way or another, is pretty much "closed for the season"

BY TYSON HUGIE

There's an Arizona waterfall larger than Niagara, named Grand Falls and known for its brown color. But there's a catch: timing. I missed the snow runoff season, and Grand Falls wasn't so grand, after all. It was down to just a trickle. You see, Grand Falls only exists during a short window of time in the spring or after very heavy rains.

I had taken a gamble on the chance I might get to see something dramatic after about 10 miles of dirt road, but it was pretty quiet out there on this early May day. At least the scenery was nice.

At right is a photo of what Grand Falls *can* look like. Below is what we really saw this time around.

The falls are 185 feet tall, whereas Niagara is 167 feet. So you can bet I'll be trekking back out when the viewing is optimal.

Determined not to have the entire day be a bust, I proceeded to my next destination: the Arizona Snowbowl ski resort, the largest of Arizona's ski resorts at higher elevations. Snowbowl opened in 1938, a short drive up a fun, winding road from

Flagstaff to the lodge at 9,200 feet elevation. I encountered raindrops as I made my way up the mountainside and watched the temperature dip from mid-50s to 41 in the matter of a few miles.

Amenities at the lodge were limited this time of year. There was still a fair amount of snow on the ground at that elevation, but lifts were not in operation. However, their website said they were expected to be open at least one more weekend, through the 19th of May. In fact, the site said that extended weekend would make this year's season the longest in the resort's 81-year history. Too bad I didn't have time to pick up a quick lift pass!

The last place on my checklist for the day was a step back in time to Bedrock City, home of Fred and Wilma Flintstone, along Highway 64 north of Williams. From 1960 through 1966, William Hanna and Joseph Barbera of Hanna-Barbera Productions produced 166 episodes of "The Flintstones," which became one of the most iconic TV shows in recent memory, as a result inspiring lots of road-

side Americana to go along with it. A Flintstones-themed 62-acre theme park opened in Custer City, South Dakota in 1966. The same owner built a similar operation in Arizona in 1972. Both locations were sold and closed in 2019, but the buildings and some of the relics remain.

When I stopped by the Arizona version of Bedrock City on a Saturday afternoon, I was greeted by a massive Fred and "Yabba-Dabba-Doo" sign. A campground, gift shop and restaurant were all painted in bright colors and architecturally designed to resemble the cartoon. Luckily, despite being abandoned, it appears that vandals for the most part have left things alone so far in the four months it had been closed.

A recent news item stated that the property will become "Raptor Ranch," a showcase of birds of prey. So perhaps there is another chapter to the location's history as a tourist destination (or tourist trap, whichever way you see it).

I bid farewell to the dinosaur skeleton in the parking lot and headed home after a fulfilling day exploring the Arizona high country.

TRIP DISTANCE: 475 MILES ■



Running falls photo: Chandler Munday; other photos: Tyson Hugie

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.

Phoenix Molecular Imaging

4540 E Cotton Gin Loop, Ste 150
Phoenix, AZ 85040
602.368.3055
www.phxmi.com



A WEEK WITH : 2019 MERCEDES-BENZ S 560 CABRIOLET

Open air flagship

463-hp four-seat drop-top BY JOE SAGE

Introduced in 2016, this is the first big four-seat flagship Mercedes-Benz convertible since 1971. The new S-Class Cabriolet offers the same basic mechanicals and features as the S-Class sedan, in a sleek open package almost nine inches shorter.

While a midsize E-Class increasingly has the features and feel of a top-of-the-heap S-Class (and the E Cabrio starts at \$67,300, the S at \$134,300), the S Cabrio's horsepower, legroom and such are all greater, and it is surely well more than twice as rare, an attribute that itself reinforces its value.

This is a superyacht of the finest pedigree—although if you'd like even rarer, there are the 603-hp 4MATIC all-wheel-drive AMG S63 at \$180,100 and the 621-hp biturbo V8 rear-drive AMG S65 at \$253,250. Our S 560 Cabrio had equal parts AMG and luxury upgrades, coming in just over \$160,000.

E- and S-Class Cabriolets share features of particular value in an open four-seater—AirScarf to waft warm air upon necks from the front headrests; and AirCap, which rises out of the windshield frame to deflect chilly airflow above and beyond the cabin, supplemented by a rear wind block. These have always been of particular interest to us in

Arizona, where convertible season is largely turned on its head, with more ideal top-down winter days than summer (and with seasoned Arizonans more likely to feel a chill sooner than Northerners).

We've driven the E-Class Cabriolet with these features a number of times always when it was chilly—from early spring in the Great Smoky Mountains, to torrentially rainy days in Northern California, to winter weeks back home in Arizona—and these features have proven themselves to be pamperingly effective. This time around, it was summer, with temperatures approaching 110° F, so we would finally have a chance to satisfy a longstanding curiosity: could the AirCap deflect hot air across a cool air-conditioned cabin and preserve its comfort just as effectively?

And the answer? Not so much, although it was a fun experiment. Airflow was effective, but the power of the sun beating down eclipses that (and is especially apparent on hard surfaces like the steering wheel and shiny metals such as many of the feature buttons and switches).

Summer nights remained top-down bliss in the S 560 Cabriolet, and while daytimes were top-up, that gave us a chance to enjoy such features as its massaging seats (with heat therapy among the optional algorithms) in air-conditioned luxury bliss.

Add smooth, confident biturbo power with just the right tasteful touch of V8 rumble, delivered through Mercedes' proven 9-speed transmission.

For the Mercedes lineup overall, the S Cabriolet is a magnificent addition—augmenting the solid elegance of their biggest sedan with the breezy elegance of their biggest open-top car. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

CONSTRUCTION / SEATING	aluminum unibody / four
ENGINE	4.0L biturbo V8 24v SOHC
DRIVETRAIN	RWD
HP/TORQUE	463 hp / 516 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	9G-TRONIC 9-spd auto, paddles
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	4.5 sec / 130 mph electr lim
SUSPENSION	F/R: indep multi-link w air springs, single-tube shocks w continuously adjustable damping, tubular torsion bar
STEERING	speed-dep electro-mech rack & pinion
BRAKES	F: 14.6x tba; R: tba x1.0
WHEELS / TIRES	8.0x18 cast / 245/50 R18
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	198.1 / 115.9 in
GROUND CLEARANCE	4.5 in
SPECS TBA:	turning circle; headroom (f/r); legroom (f/r); cargo capacity; weight; fuel capacity; full brake specs.
MPG	17/26/20 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE\$134,300

LEATHER: Designo® porcelain/deep sea blue Nappa .3250

WHEELS: 20" AMG multispoke750

HEADLAMP ACCENTS: Swarovski crystal1750

NIGHT VIEW ASSIST® PLUS2260

AUDIO: Burmeister high-end 3D sound system6400

PREMIUM PKG: active multicontour front seats w massage; surround view system2700

SPORT PKG: AMG wheels, sport bodystyling (bumpers, side skirts, diamond radiator grille w chrome tips, stainless steel sport pedals w rubber studs5900

WARMTH & COMFORT PKG: heated wood/leather wheel, heated front center console armrest, heated door armrests, heated rear seats1900

DRIVER ASSISTANCE PKG: active assist: DISTRONIC distance, steering, lane change, emergency stop, speed limit, brake w cross-traffic, evasive steering, lane keep, blind spot; PRE-SAFE PLUS rear-end collision protection; route-based speed adaptation2250

DESTINATION CHARGE995

TOTAL\$162,545

AMG LINEUP (2019)

Mercedes-AMG S63 Cabriolet (4MATIC AWD):

603 hp 664 lbft AMG 4.0L biturbo V8.....\$180,100

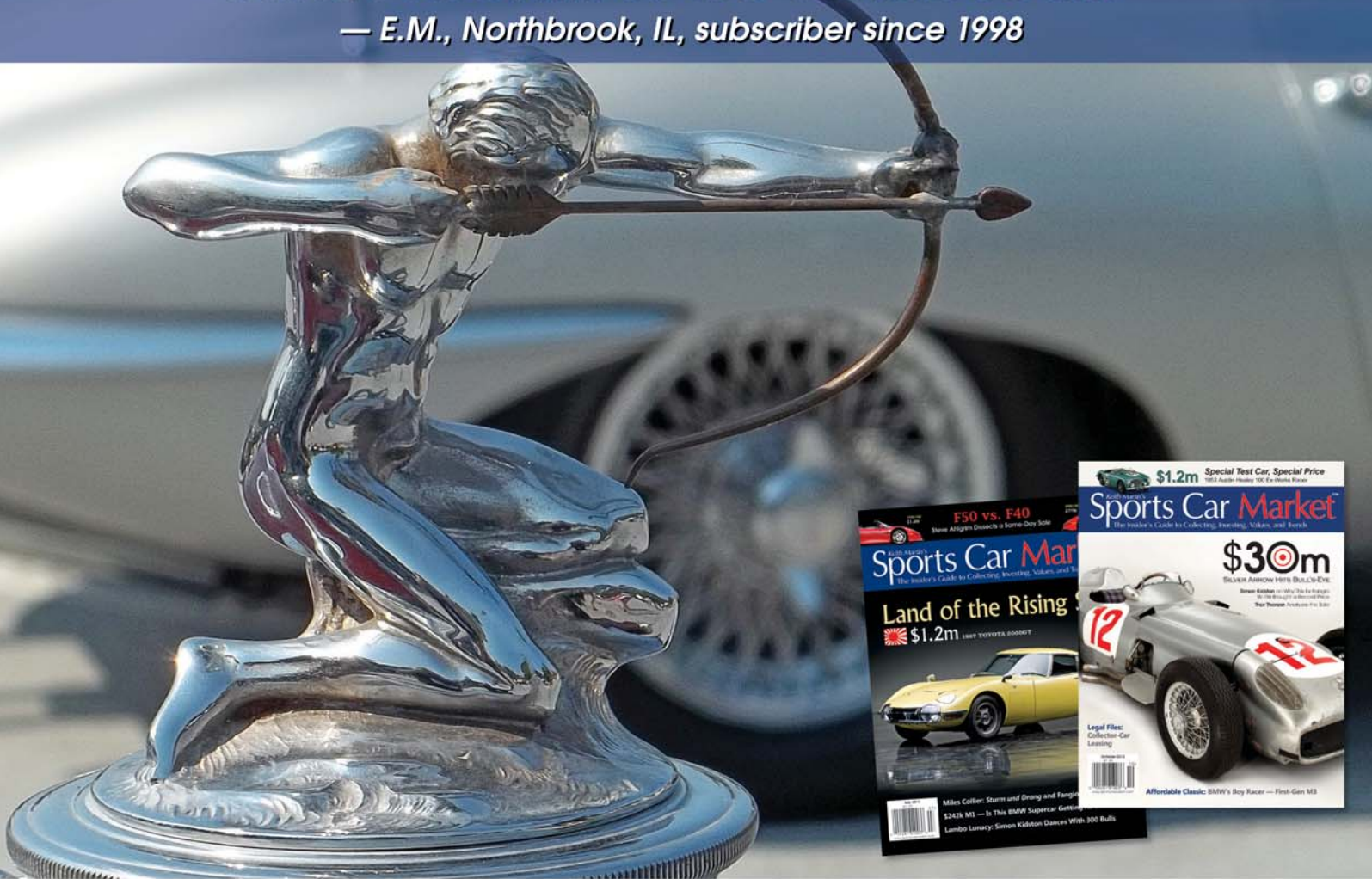
Mercedes-AMG S65 Cabriolet (RWD):

621 hp 738 lbft AMG 6.0L biturbo V12\$253,250



“Hats off to you. Keeping up the great effort to produce the best car magazine each month is no small feat.”

— E.M., Northbrook, IL, subscriber since 1998



Subscribe to SCM today and become a collector car insider

www.sportscarmarket.com

A WEEK WITH : 2019 RAM 3500 LARAMIE LONGHORN CREW CAB 4X4 LONG BOX DUALY

Strength and grace BY JOE SAGE
1,000 LB-FT OF TORQUE IS JUST PART OF THE EQUATION

The full name of this truck as above covers a lot of ground. It hits high specs through and through. It's a 3500 (the heavier of the 2500/3500 Heavy Duties). A Crew Cab (the middle of three available, as rather than building a cab-and-a-half, Ram builds this four-door and another even bigger four-door, the Mega Cab). Long box (that elusive-these-days 8-footer). Dually (an option, but a natural for this tow beast). It's a 4x4. And it's dressed in high-steppin' Laramie Longhorn trim.

That's a lotta truck—enough (with a few more options, including a Max Tow package with 5th wheel prep) to bring its \$60,750 base price up to \$72,810.

But there's more—its 6.7-liter Cummins Turbo Diesel inline-six engine, a 400-hp beast breaking a new threshold at 1,000 pounds of torque. This adds another \$11,795 to the build, now totaling \$86,300 (including \$1,695 destination)—but it's a fair bet that nothing can stop this truck, up to its 5,800-lb payload and 34,130-lb tow capacity, all without breaking a sweat.

But torque is not the only milestone. We had this truck about the same time it was announced that Ram had moved up to the number two seller in that most brand-loyal of segments, pickup trucks.

And maybe the biggest thing: the 2019 Ram HD is an all-new truck, following the all-new 2019 Ram 1500 pickup introduced earlier in the year—(arguably the 15th generation in a lineage going back to

1914)—which has picked up one trophy after another. (See our May/June 2018 issue for the new 1500's launch and March/April 2019 for a followup on the 1500 and for the new 2500's launch.)

In addition to new highs in horsepower, torque, payload and towing lineup-wide, the new 2500/3500 trucks are noteworthy for also following suit to the increasing levels of luxury and features that have worked their way into the 1500 trucks. Now, drivers of the toughest-duty trucks can enjoy the same, and this Laramie Longhorn is the perfect example. Check out the specs at right: power sunroof, driving assist electronics, surround-view cameras, trailering tech, 17-speaker premium audio on the popular 12-inch Uconnect screen (with clear and often glove-worthy redundant controls), and so much more. As in the 1500, the cab has grown to provide a bit more legroom in front and a lot more in the rear, now matching the front, so your whole work crew enjoys the same spacious comfort. Storage abounds, including an enormous console bin that accommodated our full camera bag with ease (with plenty of room left for lots more gear).

You may hesitate to drag your muddy boots inside the first time, but the truck's sense of purpose dominates, and you'll find that those boots fit right in. The new HD trucks simply combine their most massive levels of capability ever with a huge dose of, “Hey, this is really nice.” ■

SPECIFICATIONS

BUILDladder-type frame, steel cab, dbl-wall steel box
ENGINE6.7L I-6 Cummins 3500 High Output Turbo Diesel
HP/TORQUE400 hp / 1000 lb-ft
TRANSMISSIONAisin AS69RC 6-spd auto, elec control
TRANSFER CASEBW 44-48 part-time w elec shift
 2WD, 4WD high, neutral, 4WD low; low ratio 2.64
DRIVETRAIN4X4
AXLESF: AAM 9.25" beam w center disconnect
 R: AAM 12.0" beam (w 3500 Max Tow)
SUSPENSION .F: 3-link w track bar, coils, stblzr bar, solid axle;
 R: 2-stg longtdnl leaf (opt suppl air bags), solid axle
STEERINGhydraulic pwr assist
BRAKESdisc w twin-piston pin-slider caliper & ABS,
 Hydro-boost pwr asst F: 14.17x1.54" / R: 14.09x1.34"
LENGTH / WBCrew Cab Long Box: 260.8 / 169 in
TURNING CIRCLE53.7 ft
APPROACH / BRKOVER / DEPART23.3 / 22.4 / 23.5°
GROUND CLEARANCEDRV 12.3 in
HEADROOM / LEGROOM (F/R)40.9/39.8 / 40.9/40.2 in
GVWR / PAYLOAD (per this spec)14,000 / 5800 lb
TOW CAPACITY (per this spec)34,130 lb
FUEL / MPGultra low sulfur diesel / NA

BASE PRICE\$60,750
DIESEL: 6.7L I-6 Cummins HO Turbo Diesel, 220A alt...11,795
OPTIONS: Walnut Brown metallic clear-coat (200); Tri-fold tonneau cover (695); power sunroof (1095)1990
TOWING TECH GROUP: surround-view camera, trailer reverse guidance695
SAFETY GROUP: adaptive cruise w stop, full-spd fwd collision warning-plus, blind-spot & cross-path detect795
PROTECTION GROUP: transfer case skid plate95
MAX TOW PKG: 4.10 axle, 5th wheel prep, Mopar 30K direct mnt 5th whl hitch, auto level rear air susp, CHMSL, cargo view camera, reflecting triangles, vinyl flags, fire extinguisher, roadside safety kit, spare fuses3695
LONGHORN LEVEL 1 EQUIP GROUP: 17-sprkr Harman Kardon premium audio, Uconnect 12", pwr running boards, wireless charge pad, SiriusXM/360L, blind-spot & cross-traffic detection3495
DUALY: dual 17x6 rear wheels, 17" spare wheel, 17x6 premium aluminum wheels, box & fender clearance lights, chrome flat cab-length side steps1,295
DESTINATION CHARGE1695
TOTAL\$86,300



Moving up

Redefined Hyundai three-row
BY JOE SAGE

Hyundai's overall utility lineup has been evolving for several years, as have the three-row models within it. Definitions by size have blurred industrywide, with Hyundai a great example, having added the "small" Kona and non-size-specific Nexo fuel cell utility last year, with an even smaller "urban utility" Venue arriving this fall.

In the upper middle of the scale, the longstanding two-row Santa Fe became Santa Fe Sport in 2013, in time for the three-row Veracruz to be replaced by an all-new three-row Santa Fe, with styling very similar to the midsize Sport. The three-row Santa Fe was not known as full-size so much as a long-wheelbase version of Santa Fe Sport, though this always seemed open to some interpretation. For 2016, Hyundai Tucson—at that time still the smallest of a three-size set—was replaced with an all-new model also bearing the styling of the other two. Appearance was now so similar among the three, we learned to quickly spot them by whether the side glass dipped down, kicked up or met in the middle toward the rear.

In early 2018, the smaller Santa Fe Sport reverted to the plain Santa Fe name (as a 2019 model), while the three-row vehicle became Santa Fe XL. This returned continuity to the two-row midsize Santa Fe name (assuming continuity can include interruption by its time as the Santa Fe Sport). The mama-papa-baby-bear styling remained, but any potential confusion with the Santa Fe XL ("wait, I

thought *this* one was the Santa Fe") would soon be erased, as one year and one model year later, Hyundai now replaces it with the entirely new, seemingly full-size but nominally midsize, individually styled Palisade three-row SUV.

We flew (via Seattle) to Spokane, in way-eastern Washington, then shuttled to Coeur d'Alene, Idaho for a chance to meet and drive the new 2020 Hyundai Palisade in a combination of elegant exurban and rugged wilderness terrain that represent a good percentage of the full range of markets and purposes this vehicle will serve.

Here, senior chief designer Chris Chapman took us through a whiteboard process summing up clean-sheet development of the Palisade—with interlocking shapes and volumes from its "first read" DRLs up top, to the "piercing" shape developed by brushed metal trim visually connecting through sheet metal to the headlights below, creating the feel of "a predator emerging out of the water." Chapman also confirmed what we had noted—that the lineup has changed from a set of stairstep "Russian dolls" to a complex set of "chess pieces," each tailored to a different type of buyer and "infused with more personality and more ownership into what they're going to do with the vehicle." Palisade's cross-section and side profile are proportioned to break away from current trends toward high shoulders, to the power of a flexed biceps, with visual muscle planted closer to the wheels. All this potency is collected in an elegant envelope presenting a main theme Chapman describes as "the serenity of a yacht"—the principles that make a select few SUVs equally at home in the canyons and woods or at the executive

country club.

VP of product planning Mike O'Brien backs up these theories, describing the new Palisade as bold, strong and stable in appearance and content—as protective as a Western fortress for the gentle task of protecting a family. Beyond impressions, O'Brien points out that the new SUV is built with 59 percent advanced high-strength steel—40 percent more than the 42 percent in the outgoing Santa Fe XL—contributing to a primary goal of noticeably improved ride quality, achieved when flex that otherwise makes the body "part of the suspension" is dramatically reduced. A particular point of pride is that even the reinforced build of a dual-sunroof top-trim Limited has closed the gap to match the rigidity of a solid-roof structure.

Sophisticated new suspension (see sidebar) includes aluminum knuckles front and rear (reducing weight by 36 and 39 percent, respectively), combining with body structure for exceptional roll control for what is a typically tall, high-mass vehicle.

Palisade not only receives increased insulation against powertrain and road noise, but the whole sound-deadening process was integrated with structural design, rather than being assigned to an insulation team, as is more typical, after the fact.

Emphasizing again that the Palisade is conceived for that most precious of cargo, your family, O'Brien points out comprehensive crash-specific engineering from bumpers to small overlap structure, to side and roof safety cage, to front impact energy dispersion through the underbody, all aiming toward NHTSA 5-Star and IIHS TSP+ top ratings once testing is completed.

Palisade puts this all in motion with an upgrad-

ed 291-hp 3.8L gasoline direct-injection (GDI) V6 with a twist—the powertrain switches seamlessly between Atkinson and Otto Cycles to provide optimum power when needed for acceleration or quick maneuvers and top efficiency when cruising.

Palisade is available with predictive HTRAC all-wheel drive for just \$1700 additional in any of its three trim levels, featuring drive modes including eco (which can send as much as full power to the front wheels), comfort, sport (which maintains between 35-50 percent rear power) and smart (which automatically responds to your driving style in a range from eco's 100 percent front to sport's 50 percent rear traction), plus a snow mode that allows torque-controlling second gear start and pre-distributes traction (rather than responding) to restrict wheel slip upon accelerating, with additional AWD lock for the most slippery conditions.

Palisade is a healthy tow vehicle, with 5000-lb capacity and new trailer sway control to keep your two-piece rig in a straight line. Optional is a new auto-leveling rear suspension usually only found in larger and/or more expensive utilities.

Our drive in Idaho touched upon a wide range of

these conditions, from city streets and Interstate highway around Coeur d'Alene, to a full day of mountain and rolling meadow driving through central Idaho wilderness and ranches, punctuated by a rough yet reasonably high-speed 15-mile stretch of unpaved forestry roads. We experimented with all drive modes except snow, and we came surprisingly close to maybe trying that—despite being the week of summer solstice, snowstorms rolled into the higher country in the region, dumping as much as two feet in some areas.

Palisade is well wired. Bluetooth hands-free phone and wireless or aux-input audio are included across the lineup. Upper trims feature a 10.25-inch touchscreen, and top Limited trim includes 630-watt, 12-speaker Harman Kardon premium audio with QuantumLogic surround sound and ClariFi dynamic range restoration tech.

The introduction of the Hyundai Palisade brings a solid and handsome new vehicle to the world and also takes a big step toward defining the full Hyundai lineup, a broader set of visible choices sure to strengthen the brand even further, making its breadth and depth easy for everyone to see. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

SEATING CAPACITY	.....seven or eight
ENGINE	.....3.8L Lambda II, Atkinson Cycle alum block/head GDI D-CVVT 24v V6
COMPRESSION RATIO	.....13.0:1
HP/TORQUE	.....291 hp / 262 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....8-spd auto / Shiftronic®
DRIVETRAIN	.....FWD / HTRAC AWD opt
SUSPENSION	.....F: MacPherson strut / coils R: multi-link indep, separated springs & shocks, stblzr bar
STEERING	.....motor driven power rack & pinion, column mounted
BRAKES	.....F: 340x30mm vented, R: 305x11mm solid
WHEELS	.....18x7.5J alloy / 20x7.5J alloy opt
TIRES	.....245/60 R18 / 245/50 R20 opt
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....196.1 / 114.2 in
HEADROOM (F/2/3)	.....40.7 / 40.1 / 37.4 in (with sunroof): 39.3 / 38.8 / 37.2 in
LEGROOM (F/2/3)	.....44.1 / 42.4 / 31.4 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....38.3 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....7.9 in
CARGO VOLUME	.....18.0 / 45.8 / 86.4 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....4127-4387 lb
ROOF RAILS LOAD CAPACITY	.....220 lb
TOW CAPACITY	.....(w trailer brakes) 5000 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	.....18.8 gal
MPG	.....FWD: 19/26/22 (city/hwy/comb) .....AWD: 19/24/21 (city/hwy/comb)

Pricing

SE	FWD	\$31,550
SEL	"	33,500
Limited	"	44,700
	AWD	+\$1700
	Dest.Chg	\$1045





Your world is about to get *Larger*

MEXICO

CLASSIC VACATIONS



FUNJET
MORE OF LAS VEGAS

Funjet Vacations

Your travel center

MEMBER OF THE FROSCH TRAVEL GROUP



Treat yourself to the life of luxury travel

Your Travel Center's phenomenal relationships and reputation within the travel industry provide a bridge from YOU to executives of over 1,000 of the world's finest hotels, cruise lines and tour outfitters. You will be recognized as a VIP guest with privileged access to special amenities and services when available, such as:

- Complimentary room upgrades
- Food & beverage credit
- Cocktail partys
- And much more...
- Breakfast for two daily
- Hosted tours
- Private transfers

Our travel experts

Our Advisors are certified Travel Agents and experienced travelers. Depending on your specific needs, you will be directed to a travel expert who knows your destination and can provide you with the guidance that can best fulfill your travel expectations. Using the latest technology, they keep up with the latest enhancements that will save you time and money.

Our experienced leisure travel specialists can help with all your travel desires, including but not limited to all-inclusive luxury cruise vacations, luxury resort getaways, customized travel vacations, safaris and even guided travel to China, Southeast Asia, Europe, Africa and beyond. Our preferred relationship with the Four Seasons Hotels, Ritz-Carlton Hotels and the Belmond group allow us to offer our luxury hotel clients amazing perks and value-added amenities when available, such as hotel credit, complimentary breakfasts, hotel room upgrades and more! This is also true with many of our luxury and premium cruise partners as well as many of our destination management companies located throughout the world.

We also have a dedicated corporate travel team that handles large accounts across the United States. Our partnership with The Frosch Travel Group gives us the tools necessary to tailor a corporate travel plan for your company, provide travel savings for your employees and give you the personal attention you need in this technology driven era. Our personal commitment to providing you the tools you need to travel safely and at the lowest cost is unmatched.

Arizona headquarters

With 40+ years in the travel business, our travel agency offices in Arizona have a reputation for an outstanding passion regarding the world of travel. Our attention to personal service, along with our preferred travel relationships with many airlines, car rental agencies, hotels, cruise and tour vendors, ensures that we will exceed your travel needs.

Whatever your travel needs may be, allow Your Travel Center the opportunity to serve you.

Your Travel Center

MEMBER OF THE FROSCH TRAVEL GROUP

414 South Mill Avenue, Suite 125
Tempe, AZ 85281
480-496-0160 / 800-952-3174 Toll Free
www.ytc.com

CST# 2019108-10

ROAD TRIP : NURDBERGER : GLOBE, ARIZONA

180-MILE BURGER RUN

BY TYSON HUGIE

Talk about a one-stop-shop: At Nurdberger, off US 60 on Hill Street in Globe, you can get your hands on burgers, coffee, sweets and...nerds? You read that right. This uniquely-themed hamburger joint prides itself in being nerdy. Its main lobby has arcade games, and the walls are covered in posters of comic book characters. Most importantly, the menu is nicely put together. I went with a Power Nurd 1/4-pound burger (or, burger), with a side of onion rings the diameter of pancakes.

Globe is a small mining town about an hour and half east of Phoenix, with about 7,000 residents. When a friend pitched the idea of a weekend group drive, we had no problem rounding up 11 people in eight different (and I do mean very diverse) vehicles to spend the day on the road. For a burger.

Comprising the participating vehicles were two versions of Acura NSX, Acura TSX, Ford Mustang Saleen, Hyundai Elantra Sport, Pontiac G8 GXP, Porsche Cayman and Toyota FJ Cruiser.

The first 35 or 40 minutes are largely flat and straight, but after you pass through Superior and make your way up through the Queen Creek Tunnel on 60, things get a lot more interesting. It was here that I got to have some fun with the NSX.

(At the same time, I enjoyed some recently downloaded road trip music from Tropical House Records. "Feel My Love" by Markvard was one of my faves. It was therapeutic. Picture me blasting that at max volume while rowing gears through the Superstition Mountains.)

Greg brought out his rare 1989 Fox-body Mustang SSC—one of only 160 vehicles built by Saleen that year, and with only 13,000 miles on it. Speaking of rare, Kyle's immaculate 2009 G8 GXP 6-speed manual is a rarity in itself and put us all to shame with its impeccable tire shine. James' Elantra Sport rolled over 3,000 miles along the way. And I must say, Donald's FJ, despite being unlike any of the other contenders, held its own in the twisties. Unfortunately, though, he said he burned through seven-eighths of a tank of gas on the trip. That's okay—the burger and the experience were worth it.

Everyone seemed to have a good time. As someone who is 100 percent nerd, I can appreciate the allure of a place like Nurdberger, and I was glad for an excuse to get some time on the open road and spend it with great people. ■



THE NAME GAME

by Joe Sage

The first thing you notice about the new Chevy Blazer is its name, a pleasant surprise for those who recall the name from long ago, perhaps even a bit of a shock for those who recall it as a different sort of vehicle. The passage of time—28 years since the last original full-size Blazer—can explain the difference. Then again, Chevy Tahoe has held the big Blazer slot since 1991, while the S-10 midsize Blazer held the name till 2001. Next there was the Chevy TrailBlazer (a name that had been an S-10 Blazer trim level for two years prior) for about a decade, followed by about a decade without the name in play (not counting the complexities of parallel evolutions in other parts of the world).

Now, Chevrolet Blazer is back, though while the name is revived, the vehicle is all new. Suburban and Tahoe remain styled and built in the same vein as the Silverado 1500 pickup—following suit to the

original big Blazer—while the 2019 Blazer has unibody build and style in line with Chevy's other utilities—Trax, Equinox, Traverse.

As utility market share continues to eclipse cars, lineups are expanding, as well as their lingo, complicating longstanding compact-midsize-full-size terms. The 2019 Blazer is a new animal and fits in the lineup in a new spot, ostensibly between full-size Traverse and midsize Equinox, though its generous dimensions and cabin make it seem full-size, though with two rows to Traverse's three, while its persona and styling are distinct (even said to contain sporty cues from more distant cousin Camaro).

While folks debate whether the new Blazer looks like the original or was ever even supposed to, we just went for a couple of good long drives in it, one from the Valley to Prescott and back, then a few days later via Cottonwood to Sedona and back. The mission for the second one came up just as we returned from the first. Digging into GM's historic materials for a photo of the original big

Blazer, the blue and white '69 shown below—taken in Arizona—caught our eye. With solid clues from Nena Barlow of Barlow Adventures in Sedona (and Moab), we headed north on a partly rainy Memorial Day to seek the exact same spot. While we understand the evolution of the name versus the models, we found it irresistible to match the then-and-now Blazer nameplates in photos if we could. It took some serious orienteering and miles of vista-matching—and it's paved today—but finally the key elements were a lock. Neat find.

It's also evidence that while some things stay the same, others benefit from inevitable change. It's not your uncle's 40-year-old Blazer, nor is it meant to be (though those who prefer an original from then can of course still go out and find one.)

The all-new 2019 Blazer is a nice package. It's compact enough to provide tight maneuvers, while its power-to-weight ratio, though not extreme, is enough to chirp the tires at a stop sign.

Some features and controls are noteworthy.



Its manual mode is accessed not from D, as most are, but from L, which we were hesitant to try at speed, but rapidly dropping speed limits coming into Cottonwood inspired us, and it switched right over to 7th gear. For solid control on that descent, as well as in the Memorial Day challenge of I-17, 6th conquered almost everything, with an occasional 5 or 7 thrown in.

Deep red anodized-look rings around the center heat-AC vents (a bit of a stylistic mismatch to the rest of the premium contrast-stitched leather interior) are their temperature controls, neat when you know it but not intuitive till you look it up.

As the Chevrolet utility lineup has grown to six, it's been announced that it's slated to grow by another. The TrailBlazer badge will return in early 2020 as a 2021 model, this time called a "small" crossover, smaller than Equinox but presumably larger than the diminutive Trax. While this will perhaps add a new dimension to forum debates about whether the new Blazer spins off the old Blazer, the ongoing Tahoe, the earlier TrailBlazer or all of the above, it will bring the Chevy crossover/SUV lineup to seven, as things now stand. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE3.6L DOHC VVT dir inj, alum block/heads
 DRIVETRAINadvanced dual-clutch AWD
 HP/TORQUE308 hp / 270 lb-ft
 TRANSMISSION9-spd automatic
 SUSPENSION F: MacPherson strut indep w hydraulic control arm bushing, hollow stblzr bar; R: five-link indep w auxiliary spring aids, hollow stblzr bar
 STEERING...elec var rack & pinion, actv return assist
 BRAKES.....variable w pwr assist, Duralife rotors, low-drag calipers. F: 12.64 disc; R: 12.40 disc
 WHEELS(std 20" alum) 21" gloss black aluminum
 TIRESP265/45R21 ALS
 LENGTH / WB191.4 / 112.7 in
 TURNING CIRCLE.....38.7 ft
 HEADROOM (F/R).....(w/o sunroof) 39.8 / 38.6 in
 LEGROOM (F/R).....41.0 / 39.6 in
 CARGO CAPACITY30.5 / 64.2 cu.ft
 TOW CAPACITY.....4500 lb (w AWD & trailering pkg)
 WEIGHT4246 lb
 FUEL / CAPACITY.....regular unl / 21.7 gal
 MPG18/25/21 (city/hwy/comb)

RS INCL: 3.6L V6, blacked-out exterior cures w hexagon black mesh grille, RS badging, dual exhaust outlets w rectangular chrome tips

BASE PRICE\$43,500
 ENHANCED CONVENIENCE & DRIVER CONFIDENCE II PKG: Memory settings, heated-vented front seats, heated rear seats, power tilt/tele wheel, rear camera mirror, HD surround vision, safety alert seat, Chevy Infotainment 3, Bose premium audio, wireless charging, adaptive cruise, IntelliBeam headlights, following distance indicator, forward collision alert, forward auto brake, front pedestrian brake, lane keep assist, lane depart warning3575
 SUN & WHEELS PACKAGE: power tilt/slide pano sunroof, pwr sunshade, 21" gloss black alum wheels2495
 DESTINATION CHARGE1195
 TOTAL\$50,765

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

Welcome to a world where the roads are dry, the cars are slick and the destinations are limitless...



We drive customers to your business.

Focused content for a targeted, engaged audience
 Print, social and web promotional bundles
 Special sections and sponsored content available
 Custom publications, brochures and direct mail

sales@arizonadrivermagazine.com / main office: 480-948-0200
 www.arizonadrivermagazine.com / FB: @arizonadrivermagazine
 IG: @arizonadriver / TW: @arizonadriver / Pedal: @arizonadriver

C7 SWAN SONG

by Joe Sage



It was great having one more week with the C7 Corvette, as not only is the six-year run of this seventh generation coming to an end, but so is the 67-year run of front-engined 'Vettes. This is a remarkable point in the fabled American performance car's history, though maybe less remarkable after literally years of rumors, sketches, spy photos—and lately even official spy photos—a run of the next car through Manhattan in camo, and of course an official reveal date (which will roll around during the run of this issue; see sidebar).

We were also happy with having our last drive be in the Grand Sport, which offers a solid balance between price and performance, at near-base dollars (see full lineup at lower right), with a decent level of enhanced performance. Based on the third-up 3LT trim, the Grand Sport bears the same 460-horse 6.2-liter V8, but enhances everything else that matters—from suspension to shift points to brakes to exhaust and more.

Compare with the Z06, another favorite, with 650 hp from its supercharged version of the 6.2L V8, and compare with the ZR1, which uses a 52-percent-larger supercharger to deliver 755 hp. In the Z06, that's 41 percent more horses for 21 percent more cost, while in the ZR1, you're getting 64 percent more horses, but at 80 percent more cost. On a pro rata basis, it's easy to see the Grand Sport and Z06 give you a lot for your money.

There's a lot more to each model than just price and horsepower, of course, and each Corvette has a justifiable price-performance ratio, but if you still have to look at your wallet before buying, these model stairsteps are great news.

We found our C7 Grand Sport blessedly free of semi-autonomous features like lane-keeping or automatic braking and such. (We suspect they would say that's what their customers want—they just want to drive—though that in turn begs the question of what manufacturers think the buyers of so many other vehicles want.)

We had the GS for a wild weather week, with largely unforecast rain squalls intermingled with beautiful, sunny afternoons with temps in the 70s. The car handled perfectly in the rain, without having to fight painted lines during sporting two-lane curve-carving. During our pre-monsoon monsoons, the convertible top was snug and dry. And during the sunny stretches, we found convertible top operation—a really simple one-button affair—quick and easy. It's almost as quick as some two-seaters, at about 25 seconds up or down, and it can be accomplished at speeds up to 31 mph (50 km/h). If you prefer the coupe, you gain 50 percent more trunk space and can still remove the roof panel and enjoy the wind in your hair.

We suspect the lineup will be similar in the mid-engine C8. We can't wait to find out for sure. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	.....LT1 6.2L V-VT w dir inj & cyl deactivation
DRIVETRAIN	.....RWD
HP/TORQUE	.....460 hp / 465 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION	.....std: 7-spd manual, actv rev match opt (as on this sample): 8-spd paddle-shift auto
FINAL DRIVE RATIO	.....(man) 3.42 / (auto) 2.73
SUSPENSION	.....F/R: short/long arm (SLA) dbl wishbone, cast alum upper/lower control arms, transverse-mount composite spring, Magnetic Selective Ride Control w Grand Sport-specific spring rate & stblzr bar size
STEERING	.....var ratio rack & pinion w elec pwr assist
BRAKES	.....F/R: power-assist disc w 2-piece steel rotors, F: 14.6, fixed 6-piston alum calipers; R: 14.4, fixed 4-piston alum calipers;
WHEELS (F/R)	.....19x10 / 20x12 painted aluminum
TIRES (F/R)	.....P285/30ZR19 / P335/25ZR20
TRACK (F/R)	.....63.5 / 62.5 in
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....176.9 / 106.7 in
WIDTH / HEIGHT	.....77.4 / (convertible) 48.7 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....37.7 ft
HEADROOM / LEGROOM	.....38 / 43 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....(convertible) 10 cu.ft (coupe 15)
WEIGHT	.....(convertible) 3487 lb (coupe 3428)
FUEL CAPACITY	.....18.5 gal
MPG	.....15/25/18 (city/hwy/comb)

GRAND SPORT PERFORMANCE PACKAGE INCLUDES:
Performance gear ratios, dry sump oil system, multi-mode performance exhaust, Magnetic Ride Control, Grand Sport performance suspension, slotted brake rotors, electronic limited slip differential, rear differential cooler, Grand Sport pearl nickel painted aluminum wheels (19" front, 20" rear) with summer-only run-flat tires.

BASE PRICE	.....\$70,400
3LT PREFERRED EQUIPMENT GROUP:	memory package, seat adjusters, power bolster & lumbar, power heated outside mirrors (drive side adjustable auto-dim), inside auto-dim rear mirror, sueded microfiber-wrapped upper interior trim package, Nappa leather inserts, custom leather wrapped wheel-doors-console, heated-vented seats, universal home remote, premium surround sound audio, performance data & video recorder w nav, advanced theft deterrent system, heads-up color display, curb view front cameras.....9745
8-SPD PADDLE SHIFT AUTO	.....1995
GRAND SPORT HERITAGE PKG:	Torch Red hash marks on fenders; interior aluminum hash marks, Grand Sport logo floor mats.....795
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....1095
TOTAL	.....\$84,030

FULL LINEUP (2019)	(coupe / convertible)
Stingray 1LT	.....\$55,900 / 60,400
2LT	.....60,355 / 64,855
3LT	.....65,645 / 70,145
Grand Sport	.....66,995 / 70,400
Z06	.....80,900 / 85,400
ZR1	.....120,900 / 125,400

CORVETTE GOES MID-ENGINE

Years of rumors and sometimes poorly kept secrets (for the past few months intentionally poorly kept) are about to enter full daylight. Chevy calls the generation-eight (C8) Corvette "the most anticipated Corvette ever," and they just may be right.

Rumors of a change to mid-engine architecture—well-established supercar territory—have rolled around before, as prior new generations loomed, but this time they're destined to come true.

Little has been disclosed about engineering specifics—actually basically nothing—but it's a fair bet it will be a mix of the familiar and the revolutionary.

It will be expected to wow everyone with more than just engine placement and profile. Suspension, cooling, drivetrain and exhaust are sure to be new. Engines may or may not be essentially the same. The way it all comes together will be the topic of lively discussion.

From a fan loyalty standpoint—and this is a brand whose customers and fans command loyalty in return from GM—the C8 will have to be readily seen as 100 percent Corvette, which is in fact surely a big reason they've been easing the transition recently, releasing their own camo spy photos and even taking the car out in public (in New York City, where it takes a lot to turn heads).

The wait is almost over, as all will be revealed on Thursday, July 18. We expect good things, and we look forward to getting behind the wheel. ■





MEMBERS *get all the* SAVINGS!



GOODGUYS IS THRILLED TO ANNOUNCE NEW & EXPANDED MONEY SAVING BENEFITS FOR OUR MEMBERS!



AND THE MONTHLY GOODGUYS GAZETTE!

- ★ Save Up To 70% Off On Hotels, Airfare & Car Rentals!
- ★ Discounts on Goodguys Merchandise!
- ★ Discounts On Automotive Parts & Services!

Log-on To join.good-guys.com Today For Complete Details And Information On How To Access These New Benefits!

MEMBER BENEFITS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AT ANY TIME

GOOD-GUYS.COM



#GOODGUYS18

A WEEK WITH : 2020 MERCEDES-BENZ GLE450 4MATIC SUV

Top-drawer midsize

BY JOE SAGE

Mercedes-Benz GLE corresponds to the popular E-Class cars, made clear when utilities were renamed a few years ago: GLC, GLE and GLS as in C-, E- and S-Class. (GLE was formerly the M- or ML-Class.) There are now both SUV and Coupe models of GLC and GLE. Also in parallel to the cars, GLE is the biggest seller in the utility lineup.

The gen-four 2020 GLE is all-new, featured in our Jan/Feb issue at its launch drive in Texas. New or significantly upgraded available features are many, from all-new intelligent suspension, to gesture control, to new engines with EQ Boost tech, to elements from touchpad to shifter to panorama roof, to its new 9-speed transmission.

The wheelbase has grown by over three inches, providing for more second-row legroom and even an optional third row (suitable for anyone up to 5-foot-10, more generous than many full-size SUVs, and with easy second-row power access).

Features are piled on in this sample, bringing its just-over-60 price up to just shy of 100 grand. Creature-feature tech and driver assistance tech galore in particular boost the price. (It might be worth visiting many in detail before just buying them all.)

The clean and impressive real estate of a fully digital double-12.3-inch-screen instrument panel accesses most features—an extensive set, with layers of subsets and subsets of those. Expect to spend time digging for and mastering the details.

The single priciest is perhaps the most distinctive: the E-Active Body Control® Package, at \$8070 (the difference between a build 56 percent higher than base or just 43 percent higher). Essential if you need it (its electronically articulating suspension can rock you out of a jam in sand or snow), superfluous if you don't, though still compelling just in case—or even just to entertain your friends (at launch, we were entertained by a programmed vehicle dance to a powerful house music beat).

You'll find it easy enough to choose from among the 17 freestanding options totaling \$9995 at right. A few more less common yet compelling-to-indispensable include multicontour front seats with massage (\$1100 and worth a dive into the menus every time), that power second row (\$1200), and a personal fave, heated-cooled cupholders (very useful in Arizona in their own right, and for just \$180 also worth it for their show-off value). Heated-vented seats, heated wheel, trailer hitch and Burmeister surround sound are also essential investments (to the point we're surprised most aren't included).

The 2020 Mercedes-Benz GLE is on sale now and includes a GLE 350 model at about \$5000 less than our GLE 450 SUV. A GLE 450 Coupe, not yet announced at the time of our launch drive, is now also available, at about \$15,000 more.

Also available are three AMG models: an AMG 43 starting at just \$68,150, and AMG 63 and 63 S models starting at over \$100k, with engine output as high as 577 hp, from a 5.5L biturbo V8. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	.....3.0L alum alloy inline-6 w EQ Boost
HP/TORQUE	.....362 hp / 369 lb-ft
TRANS/DRIVE	.....9G-TRONIC/paddles / 4MATIC® AWD
0-TO-60 / TOP SPEED	.....5.5 sec (est) / 130 mph (elec lim)
SUSPENSION	.....F: indep dbl wishbone w coils; R: indep multi-link w coils; F/R: single-tube shocks w SSD & tubular torsion bar
STEERING	.....speed-dep electro-mech rack & pinion
BRAKES	.....F: 14.8x1.4, R: 13.6x0.9
WHEELS / TIRES	.....8.0x19 cast / 255/50 R19
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	.....194.3 / 117.9 in
TURNING CIRCLE	.....39.4 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	.....var w Sport+ mode & Airmatic
HEADROOM (F/R)	.....40.5 / 39.6 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	.....40.3 / 40.9 in
CARGO CAPACITY	.....22.2 / 72.6 cu.ft
WEIGHT	.....4991 lb
PAYLOAD / TOW CAPACITY	.....1623 / (est) 7700 lb
FUEL CAPACITY	.....22.5 gal
MPG	.....19/24/21 (city/hwy/comb)

BASE PRICE	.....\$61,150
PAINT: Lunar Blue Metallic	.....720
NAPPA LEATHER: Magma Grey / Black	.....2990
WOOD TRIM: designo® black flamed natural grain	.....850
INDIVIDUAL OPTIONS: (16 various)	.....9995
DRIVER ASSISTANCE PKG PLUS: (16 various)	.....2250
PARKING ASSISTANCE PKG: surround view system	.....400
EXTERIOR LIGHTING PKG: intel LED, adaptive high	.....900
WARMTH & COMFORT PKG	.....1050
NIGHT PKG: black exterior trim elements (6 areas)	.....300
ACOUSTIC COMFORT PKG	.....1100
AMG LINE EXTERIOR: vehicle-color wheel arches, wheels, sport braking, diamond-block grille, sport exhaust	.....3250
PREMIUM PKG: 115v power, SiriusXM trial, rear seat accessory adapters, inductive wireless charging, 64-color ambient lighting w illuminated door sills	.....1000
MBUX TECH: MBUX aug video for nav, HUD	.....1300
E-ACTIVE BODY CONTROL® PKG	.....8070
DESTINATION CHARGE	.....995

TOTAL\$96,320



Mudfest!
utilities and pickups compete
on pavement and off-road



By Joe Sage
 Photos: Ryan Douthit, MediaSpigot LLC

We belong to a number of regional media associations, and we've attended drive events with several, but the ones we try to never miss are road and off-road comparos in Texas and the Pacific Northwest, because both are great places to spend a few days, and both great people in their groups, but also because they have a lot of in common with Arizona.

The Pacific Northwest has a combination of open lands and forest, wild weather, city streets, freeways (sort of) and Interstates, beautiful two-lane blue highways, and significant climbs into the snow country, much like here.

The buying markets have subtle differences—and we judge in line with those—but overall, they have a very high level of similarities.

One big difference: the Olympic Peninsula averages 140 inches of rainfall per year, compared to eight inches in Phoenix, hence the likelihood of enough mud at the Northwest Automotive Press Association (NWAPA) Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year Awards event—this time around celebrating its 25th year—to earn it the longstanding (and better known) nickname, Mudfest.

But the weather is never guaranteed. Just as the Texas Truck Rodeo last year was deluged by a hundred-year flood, Mudfest this year was largely dry. It had rained for several days leading up to the event, but percolation rates are much higher there than in the desert—the rain gets soaked into the ground pretty quickly.

Not to worry—big tankers make up the difference, keeping courses at least a bit muddy and creating a few full-on water hazards for the event.

This year's event was held for the fourth time at The Ridge Motorsports Park, northwest of Shelton, with overnights along Hood Canal (a natural body of water) near Union, Washington. The 170-acre facility features a 2.47-mile, 16-turn track with 300-foot elevation changes (which we don't use); a one-sixth-scale version of that as a kart track (which we do use); and off-road acreage modified or specially built for our purposes.

Day one, paved testing, uses the kart track for acceleration, braking, steering and handling evaluation. Day two is all off-road, with a primary course of dirt, mud, ascent, descent and embankments, plus this year a new separate Extreme Capability course with logs, rock-crawling and generally more challenging conditions.

Vehicles are judged both days by all drivers, with scores assigned to drivetrain and performance; comfort, function and technology; styling; off-roading; fuel efficiency; and value. These tallies are very specific, but are used just as reference, as each judge then simply votes a 1st-2nd-3rd choice in each category. Algorithms used in vote tabulation apply balancing factors between the collective votes for paved and off-road days.

Vehicles are designated by their manufacturers to compete in any of five categories—four for utilities and one for pickups—which apply for both the on-road and off-road days.

A sixth category, Extreme Capability—on the off-road day only—is populated by vehicles from the original five categories, as designated by manufacturers who want to compete in this realm.

Finally, an Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year winner is voted from the overall slate of entries, separately from individual category voting.

Fifteen manufacturers entered 22 vehicles—six from the Detroit Three, six from Europe, seven from Japan and three from Korea. Family utilities were a pretty even mix of all of the above, while Europe dominated the two luxury utility categories (with four out of five entries) and Detroit dominated pickups (also with four out of five). There were a number of brand-new-to-market vehicles, as well as many refreshed models.

Brand specialists are on hand to point out features and answer questions. And an indispensable team of hard-working press fleet representatives prep the vehicles and run the courses.

We learn all we can about all vehicles' features and capabilities within parameters of this event's particular outdoor activity theme, but also in general, all of which proves valuable on an ongoing basis, well after the event is a wrap, whether a particular vehicle receives a trophy here or not.

Twenty-five media members drove and voted. Results can be tight, with casual favorites not always statistical winners or vice versa.

Results follow, with the low and high noted for the range of price, horsepower, torque and highway fuel mileage within each category, to help you gauge where the winners fall.

All are 2019 models unless noted otherwise.

KEEP RIGHT >>



Keith Martin's

AMERICAN CAR COLLECTOR™

The most valuable tool in your box



SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

AmericanCarCollector.com
817.219.2605 Ext. 1

EXTREME CAPABILITY

Ford Ranger SuperCrew 4x4 XLT
Jeep Gladiator Rubicon 4x4 (2020)
Jeep Renegade Trailhawk 4x4
Mercedes-Benz G550
Ram 2500 Power Wagon Crew Cab 4x4
Toyota 4Runner TRD Pro V6

PRICE RANGE\$36,005 Renegade > \$134,715 G550
POWER RANGE...HP.....177 HP Renegade > 416 HP G550
.....TORQUE.....200 LBFT Renegade > 450 LBFT G550

HWY MPG RANGE*17 MPG G550 > 22 MPG Gladiator
*(Ram 2500 Power Wagon as an HD pickup is not EPA-rated)

ANALYSIS: It's up to the manufacturers whether they want to enter a vehicle on the extreme course—in the past a set of more challenging side routes in lieu of portions of the primary course, but this year a dedicated very harsh course of its own. There was a bit of drama, as two vehicles became stuck on one of the trickiest stretches (where it was possible to slide off the edge while navigating rocks atop elevated logs) and had to be rescued by one of the biggest vehicles. It'd be somewhat unfair to name the stuck vehicles, as there were drivers involved, but some irony sits in the fact that the rescue vehicle did not turn out to be the category winner. The winner came to the game, however, with two credentials—it had won one of the above five categories, and it was the all-newest and shiniest entry in the group.

WINNER: 2020 Jeep Gladiator Rubicon 4x4

285 HP, 260 LBFT, 22 MPG hwy, \$59,680 as tested

Runnerup: 2019 Mercedes-Benz G550

OVERALL WINNER

NWAPA Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year

ANALYSIS: Six categories arranged by size, luxury level, vehicle type and, in one collective sub-case, extreme capability are judged by a matrix of criteria, though the final vote in each takes the more subjective 1-2-3 approach. It's theoretically possible that all the data at that point could just be combined and recalculated for an overall event winner. But it's also possible this could be unrepresentative or skewed any number of ways. Instead, the overall winner is determined by its own 1-2-3 vote by each judge. Every vehicle is in play, and the overall winner does not even need to have won an individual category—though that's always likely. This year's overall winner was also winner of both the Pickup Trucks and Extreme Capability categories. Of note, in the seven years we've been involved with the event, this is the first time a pickup has taken the top honors.

WINNER: 2020 Jeep Gladiator Rubicon 4x4

285 HP, 260 LBFT, 22 MPG hwy, \$59,680 as tested

Runnerup: 2020 Kia Telluride SX V6 AWD

Last year's overall champ, the new-that-year Jeep Wrangler JL, had also won one segment category plus Extreme Capability, a total of three out of seven trophies, as the new-this-year Jeep Gladiator has done this year. Being a Jeep at such an event may seem like an obvious plus, and it often is, but Land Rover had taken top prize the year prior. We have an ongoing curiosity about which category might define the event's spiritual core, especially with pavement increasingly considered. The big news this year isn't so much Jeep's winning again, as the shift to a pickup winning—
itself representing a booming market segment. ■



TACOMA TRD OFF-ROAD

SPECIFICATIONS (2019)

CAB / BED / SEATS.....Double Cab / 5-ft bed / 5
ENGINE3.5L DOHC 24v dual VVT-iw V6
DRIVETRAIN4WD
HP/TORQUE278 hp / 265 lb-ft
TRANSMISSION6-spd ECT automatic
TRANSFER CASE(hi/low) 1.00:1 / 2.57:1
SUSPENSION : F: coils, dbl w/ bone, stblzr bar;
R: leafs w staggered outboard gas shocks;
STEERING.....power rack & pinion
BRAKES.....F: 10.75 vented / R: 10.0 drum
WHEELS/TIRES18" mach alloy / P265/70R16
LENGTH/WB/GRND CLEAR ..212.3" / 127.4" / 9.4"
APPR / DEP / BREAKOVER32 / 23.5 / 21°
TURNING CIRCLE.....44.1 ft
HEADROOM (F/R)39.7 / 38.3 in
LEGROOM (F/R).....42.9 / 32.6 in
WEIGHT / GVWR4425 / 5600 lb
PAYLOAD / TOW CAPACITY1175 / 6400 lb
FUEL / CAPAC87 octane reg / 21.1 gal
MPG18/22/20 (city/hwy/comb)

INCLUDES: 4WDemand part-time 4x4 w 2-spd
electr contr transfer case; locking rear diff;
multi-terrain select; crawl control; hill-start
assist; engine oil & power steering coolers;
130A alternator; off-road tuned suspension,
Bilstein shocks; tow receiver hitch, 4/7-pin,
trailer sway control; 120V bed outlet; deck
rail system w tie-down cleats; easy lower
lockable removable tailgate; keyless entry &
start; power hwnzl rear window; and more.

BASE PRICE\$36,465

TRD PREMIUM OFF-ROAD PKG (DOUBLE CAB A/T):

Dual zone auto climate, leather-trimmed
seats, heated front seats, Entune premium
JBL audio w integrated nav & app suite,
auto-headlights, moonroof2890
TONNEAU COVER.....650
TECHNOLOGY PKG: Rear park assis sonar, blind
spot monitor, rear cross-traffic alert770
DESTINATION CHARGE1045

TOTAL\$41,820



TACOMA in TACOMA

It has a renaissance underway, but timber, railroad and port city Tacoma, Washington is long known for a sleeves-rolled-up frontier grit and can-do attitude. The Toyota Tacoma TRD Off-Road 4x4 Double Cab was itself appealing for the miles between the Seattle airport, lodging and our Mudfest event on the Olympic Peninsula, and a ferry ride back to the airport. Since we'd be passing through Tacoma en route, this Toyota Tacoma, with its own grit and can-do attitude, was irresistible.

Tacoma's 33 models run \$25,850 to \$45,665, with the TRD Off-Road about in the middle on price, though well up the scale on capability.

The line-topping TRD Pro (pricier than even Limited luxe trim) runs about \$8000 more than TRD Off-Road. TRD Pro lights, wheels, shift knob, mats and seats are largely cosmetic. Auto-dim mirror and Homelink echo Limited trim. Functional off-road differences on TRD Pro include its front skid plate and more aggressive suspension (with much tighter turns).

Tradeoffs are easy to grasp, with the Off-Road's capability for price value clear. You can even knock another \$1600 or so off with a 6-speed manual (win-win!), though that deletes Entune JBL audio. (Ours brought back the Entune system, along with similar-to-Pro leather seats, all in one \$2890 package).

Our sample's Concrete paint suits the truck's fundamental personality and reasonably extreme function. It also looked sharp in Bremerton next to a few aircraft carriers. ■

TRAVEL SITES TO BE SEEN



sedona.net
flagstaff.com
prescott.com
thecanyon.com
grandcanyon.net
oakcreekcabins.com

Hotels, Resorts and Lodging
 Bed & Breakfasts - Inns - Cabins/Cottages
 What To Do
 Real Estate and Relocation
 Spas - Galleries - Artists
 Restaurants - Shopping
 FAQs - Resources
 Special Offers - 11th Hour Getaways

Southwest Media Communications
 602-892-4766 - info@southwestmedia.net

Near-luxe at a non-luxe price by Joe Sage

We encounter pretty much everything during various regional comparo and awards drives, but this is surprisingly the first Nissan Maxima we've had in our home fleet in over eight years.

Maxima has actually been around considerably longer than that, since 1981. Our last one, a 2011, fell in the middle of generation seven, while 2019 represents gen-eight, new for model year 2016 and midcycle-refreshed this year. Spotters can find evolution in the grille, front and rear fascias, LED lights front and rear, and new quad exhaust tips.

Step inside, and you'll find what we had in fact noted in 2011, a model approaching high-altitude Infiniti style and finish—what Nissan bills as “near luxury,” which is a little modest, given its rich diamond-quilted leather and stylish contrast stitching—at notably down-to-earth prices. And if that's not enough, options and packages are also Nissan-priced, including a chock-full SR Premium Package that would be at reasonable cost if just for its dual-panel panoramic moonroof or its intelligent around-view monitors (the latest in a series

of technologies Nissan has led the way with for years), but it includes both of those and more.

Power is smooth and plentiful from its 300-hp V6, and its CVT (a transmission some profess to dislike, though we figure most owners will never even know they have it) benefits from its efficient Xtronic build and manual mode, as well as light weight for a full-size sedan, bringing it closer in line with the promise of GT-R-derived horses-to-liters power output. We did experience a bit of front-drive torque steer, a trait not found in the rear-drive (or AWD) Infiniti Q50, its most direct cousin from the full-luxe brand.

Creature comforts are extensive—eight-way power adjustable seats for the driver (with two-way lumbar and manual thigh extension), six-way for the passenger, both heated and cooled—and extensive tech features accessed more effectively than average, often via more than one path.

Maxima's styling is distinctive; the car is solid, straightforward and does everything right—a trait that's pretty distinctive in its own right. ■

SPECIFICATIONS

ENGINE	3.5L DOHC 24v V6
DRIVETRAIN	FWD
HP/TORQUE	300 hp / 261 lb-ft
COMPRESSION RATIO	10.6:1
TRANSMISSION	XTronic (CVT) w man mode, paddles
SUSPENSION	sport-tuned F: indep strut w coils, ZF Sachs twin-tube shocks, 26.2mm stblzr bar; R: multi-link indep, ZF Sachs mono shocks, 26.5mm stblzr bar
STEERING	hydro-electric power assist
BRAKES	F: 12.6x1.1 vented; R: 12.13x0.63 vented
WHEELS / TIRES	19" gloss black alum alloy / 245/40R19
LENGTH / WHEELBASE	192.8 / 109.3 in
TURNING CIRCLE	38.1 ft
GROUND CLEARANCE	5.3 in
SEATING	five
HEADROOM (F/R)	(w moonroof) 38.9 / 35.8 in
LEGROOM (F/R)	45.0 / 34.2 in
CARGO CAPACITY	14.3 cu.ft
WEIGHT	3582 lb
FUEL / CAPACITY	prem unleaded / 18.0 gal
MPG	20/30/24 (city/hwy/comb)
BASE PRICE	\$39,530
PREMIUM PKG:	dual-panel pano moonroof, rear auto brake, auto-dim driver side mirror, reverse tilt-down mirrors, intelligent around-view monitor, driver memory seat...1820
SPLASH GUARDS	205
MATS, TRUNK, ETC.:	sport floor mats, trunk mat, trunk net, bag hooks, first aid kit ...360
DESTINATION CHARGE	895
TOTAL	\$42,810



While body styling has largely toned down and smoothed out industrywide over the past few years, Maxima's sheet metal remains among the more angular and aggressive.



▼ **Honda** Aircraft Company plans to expand its global headquarters in Greensboro NC by investing an additional \$15.5 million in a new 82,000-square-foot facility on its 133-plus-acre campus in Greensboro. This will bring the company's total capital investment in its North Carolina facilities to more than \$245 million. Scheduled to break ground in July 2019, the building will house a new wing assembly process for the HondaJet Elite, the fastest, farthest and highest-flying plane in its class. The new facility will allow for more wings to be assembled concurrently, resulting in a major increase in production efficiency. The expansion will also add more storage for service parts for the growing fleet of HondaJets around the globe. The facility is expected to be completed in July 2020.

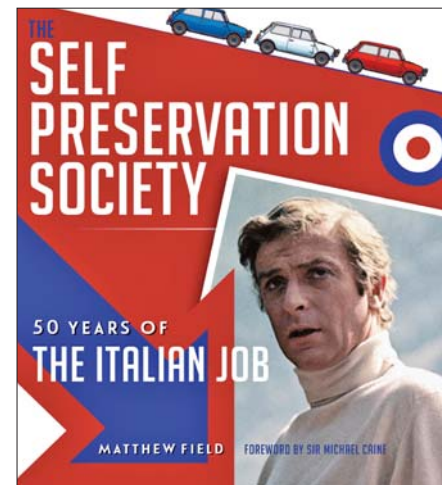
and fits inside a 19-inch or larger wheel rim. The L1500 motor is compatible with rear-, front- and four-or-more-wheel-drive vehicles. In-wheel motor technology can meet and exceed internal combustion engine alternatives in a package that does not invade chassis, passenger or cargo space. At the same time in-wheel motors reduce vehicle part count, complexity and cost. The technology allows for complete design freedom and the potential for



▼ **Elaphe** Propulsion Technologies will begin low-volume series manufacturing of the world's highest performance direct drive, gearless in-wheel powertrain system, the L1500. Elaphe's motors are designed for integration in vehicles ranging from small cars to SUVs and light commercial vehicles, with little to no compromise or re-engineering of the existing wheel hub and mechanicals. Elaphe's in-wheel motors are notable for low weight, unique, compact packaging around standard knuckles and friction braking systems, and extremely high torque—the highest on the market, at 1500 Nm. A single unit can achieve more than 110 kW (147 hp)

increased regenerative braking. In-wheel powertrain can also help reduce the overall required battery capacity and cost. The L1500 D-version in-wheel motor has been optimized for low-volume series production, and its earlier versions have been tested on several vehicles including passenger cars and off-road-vehicles. The company will begin low-volume series production in the fourth quarter of 2019.

▼ Loaded with Sixties swagger, endlessly quotable dialogue and one of the most impressive car chases in movie history, *The Italian Job* is the ultimate celebration of "cool Britannia." The landmark film's 50th anniversary in 2019 is being marked with a new book, *The Self Preservation Society: 50 Years of The Italian Job*, by Matthew Field. Based on more than 50 in-depth interviews with the cast and crew, and beautifully illustrated with hundreds of never-before-seen photographs and production documents from the filmmakers' private collections, this new 335-page book takes a fascinating, behind-the-scenes look at how the British classic made its way to the big screen. As a followup to Field's original book about the film, *The Making of The Italian Job*, which he wrote at the young age of 19, the new compilation—with a foreword by Sir Michael Caine and an introduction by Academy Award-winning producer Michael Deeley—reveals facts about the film that have never surfaced before, including the whereabouts of the iconic cars used in filming. For Field it is more



than just a film: "*The Italian Job* was the first film I ever saw—the first movie to enter my consciousness. I saw it sometime in 1985 when I was four years old. My dad showed me the 15-minute Mini Cooper chase, and I immediately fell in love." Half a century on, Britain's affection for the film shows no sign of waning. In 2017, it was voted the greatest British film ever made, in a survey of 2,000 UK moviegoers.

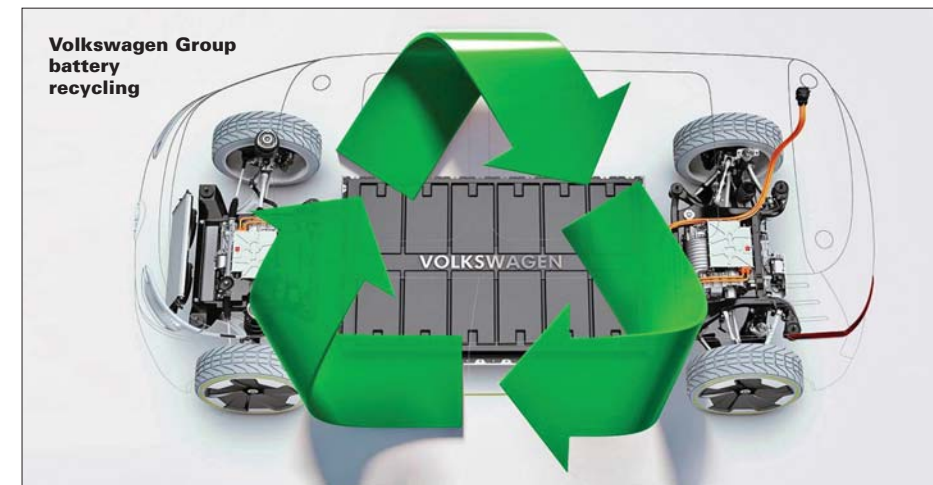
▼ Flying cars, once only seen in science fiction tales, are now becoming reality. At least four companies already offer airworthy models, with dozens more working on



prototypes and investment bank Morgan Stanley estimating the market could grow to \$1.5 trillion over the next 20 years. Most are aiming for a global market of autonomous passenger drones, but Werner Schweizer see potential for point-to-point service to the North Sea island of Sylt in North Frisia, Germany, where he is mayor of the small village of Klixbüll. German start-up **Volocopter** has already carried out first test flights of the 18-rotor Flugtaxi 2X, with rechargeable/replaceable modular batteries and enough power to lift two people weighing a total of 353 lb. Range is currently about 16.8 miles at an average speed of 43.5 mph. Rail traffic over a seven-mile causeway to Sylt has had severe restrictions for years. "When you see how many trades, lawyers or tax consultants have to go to Sylt for small meetings, they've got no desire to use an unreliable railway," says Schweizer, whose town lies directly on the railway line. Leck airfield, an adjacent former NATO site, is being repurposed this year as a business park with a runway, and Schweizer, an Air Force pilot for years, sees an alternative here, with air taxis a realistic option. Volocopter is not alone in pursuing this vision—Porsche is working on a concept for scheduled flights by 2025; German start-up Lilium has attracted \$90 million in investment capital; US helicopter manufacturer Bell presented an Uber-bookable Nexus model at South by Southwest (SXSW) in Austin this year; Airbus wants to test its CityAirbus in Ingolstadt; and US company Kitty Hawk has present-

ed the Flyer, a prototype that can already fly. *Wirtschaftswoche*, a German business magazine, notes that up to 60 different air taxis are under development worldwide.

▼ In the US, 99 percent of lead-acid car batteries are recycled—shredded or melted down and raw materials reused—making them one of the most-recycled goods you can buy. Electric vehicles (EVs) with advanced lithium-ion batteries bring new concerns about how they will be recycled after 10 or 15 years of use, reducing carbon impact over an EV's entire lifespan from raw material to junkyard. **Volkswagen**, which plans to build a million EVs a year



by 2025 (including at their Chattanooga TN plant), is working on a strong second life for these batteries, addressing the fact that they are one of the most expensive parts on an EV, and that their rare metals should be saved. Digging those metals out of discarded batteries may become cheaper than digging ores from the Earth (and can reduce dependence on China). VW is combining work on energy-efficient recy-

cling with a need for portable rechargers. An older Li-ion battery that's been on the road for a decade or more may lose its suitability for powering a vehicle, but still have a sizable energy capacity. And EVs may need charging in places without chargers or power outlets available. Those two problems have the same solution: a portable quick-charging station, holding up to 360 kWh of energy and able to charge up to four vehicles at a time, with maximum output of 100 kW. Like a cellphone charger, it can be used until it's depleted or connected to a power source to stay charged. The charger—small enough to use in hard-to-charge locations—will use the same battery packs as VW's MEB platform, so when those packs reach the end of their EV life, they can have a second career as a recharge station. VW aims for full production in 2020, with the first installed in Germany next year. Nonetheless, at some point all batteries lose the ability to hold energy, so VW's component plant in Salzgitter is expected to be home to their first center for EV battery recycling, with an initial capacity next year of roughly 1,200 tons per year, equal to batteries from about 3,000 vehicles. Battery parts will be shredded, liquid electrolyte cleaned off and components separated into "black powder" containing valuable cobalt, lithium, manga-

nese and nickel for reuse in new batteries. Today, VW can recycle about 53 percent of all raw materials in battery packs. The plant in Salzgitter will raise it to about 72 percent, with a long term goal of additional plans and about 97 percent recycling of all battery pack raw materials. Given the lifespan of EV batteries, it will actually be at least a decade before the battery shredders have that much to do. ■

UPCOMING FEATURES

Mercedes-AMG G 63



Infiniti Q50 Red Sport 400 RWD



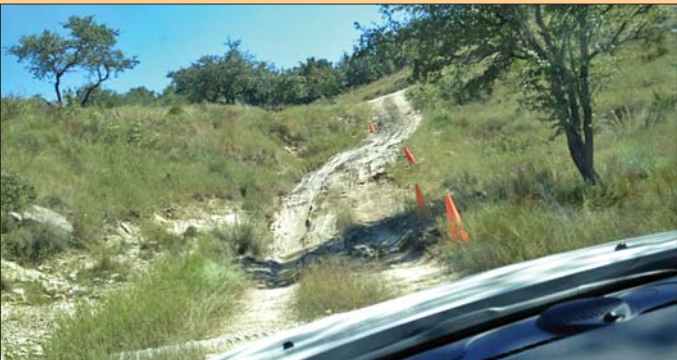
FCA "What's New 2020," Chelsea (MI) Proving Grounds



Monterey and Pebble Beach 2019 highlights



Texas Truck Rodeo 2019



Waymo autonomous ridealong



Southwest Lifestyle Media Drive 2019



TerrainHopper USA (Tempe) off-road mobility vehicles



THE BUSTED KNUCKLE GARAGE AN AUTOMOTIVE GIFT SHOP



Commercial Strength Shop Stools

Heavy duty garage counter shop stool with full swivel seat & great vintage look! Built in the USA, this shop stool is an industrial/restaurant grade counter stool built for long lasting durability, comfort and strength. Available in 36 designs!

- 30" standard counter height to seat • Vinyl covered seat is 14" wide
- Full 360 degree swivel seat • Industrial strength chrome plated legs
- 1600 lb weight capacity (vs imports rated at 300 lb) • Backrest option available
- Built to order, allow 10-15 work days for delivery
- Minor assembly required • Tables to match—please inquire

Miracle Car Repair Shop Stool / SKU: 09-BKG-MCR

Gas, Oil & Toil Shop Stool / SKU: 09-BKG-TOIL

~~Were \$179.95~~ Now \$159.95 each

Free ground shipping in the lower 48 states!

Neon Garage Clocks

USA Made Neon Automotive Garage Clocks with old school vintage car guy looks for your man cave. No disappointments. Highest Quality & Reliability available.

- Features a spun aluminum black case, glass face and a separate on/off switch for the white neon lamp. (100,000 hours of neon, that's 11 years continuous running!)
- Measures a large 20" in diameter and 5" deep • 8' Power Cord, Chain Pull for Lamp • Limited warranty against defects in material and workmanship; runs on 110 Volt AC • Several Car Guy Styles to Choose From...Check 'Em All Out!
- We've been selling these clocks for over 15 years; Never a Return, Never a Complaint, you have our word on it • Looking for something smaller? Check out our BKG-76600 for a 12" alternative

Shown: Vintage Iron Speed Shop Clock / SKU: 09-BKG-VI

~~Were \$399~~ Now \$349 / Free shipping on this item!

All-Steel Toolboxes

The Greasemonkeys have the feeling their full line of durable all-steel portable toolboxes with lift-out tray and a variety of the most cool car guy graphics (five styles now and more coming!) just may be too good to stash tools in—we may have to call them "deco-boxes"!

- Rugged all steel end cap construction • Powder coated, rust resistant
- Heavy-duty stainless steel handle • Nickel-plated steel latch and hinge for added security
- Full length lift-out tote tray
- Cool car guy quality color graphics • 6 lbs • 16" x 7" x 7.5"

Wrench-In-Hand Steel Tool Box / SKU: 10-BKG-WCL

Vintage Pickup Truck Steel Tool Box / SKU: 10-BKG-VT

\$49 each / Eligible for free shipping!

♥ 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



Furnishings | Clothing | Signs | Barware | And More!

FREE FedEx SmartPost Ground Shipping over \$99.99!

Check us out on Facebook and Instagram! / www.bustedknucklegarage.com
Need a volume discount for your shop or business? Call us: 928-708-0987

Since 1957



GO FARTHER



Jeep Rentals • 4wd Instruction
Overlanding & Guided Trips



Barlow Adventures Sedona

3009 W SR 89A

Sedona, AZ 86336

928-282-8700



Barlow Adventures Moab

284 N. Main St.

Moab, UT 84532

435-259-3195

www.Barlows.us