



# AUTO NEWS



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AUTO NEWS

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## Shorty's Diner in Hailey Idaho on the way to Sun Valley has the "Best Breakfast" in the Valley, Plus it's a Favorite "Hang Out" for Sun Valley Celebrities.

by Bill McCallum

I have been traveling to Sun Valley, Idaho for skiing once a year for over 50 years. For the last 30 years I have used the trip to test drive a new vehicle for Auto News and for the last 15 years my vehicle of choice has been a new Toyota or a Lexus. (See front page story & photo.)

For the last 30 year's my restaurant of choice in the "Valley" has been Shorty's Diner in Hailey (see photo) Shorty's on Hailey's main street is also located in the same block as THE MINT previously owned by Bruce Willis and

Demi Moore.

I have met both Bruce & Demi at New Year's parties at the MINT, collector car auctions in the fall at the Sun Valley lodge, and at their home in the valley.

According to Manny, Shorty's Diner owner, Rumer, Bruce & Demi's daughter still "hang's out" at Shorty's with her family, when in the valley, enjoying the best breakfast in the valley with auto memorabilia lining the walls and memories of when her dad was "the-man-about-town" in the valley.



Shorty's Restaurant Owner Manny (right) with older son Adrian (photo Auto News)

## A Road Trip From Seattle To Sun Valley, Idaho & Back In A 2026 Lexus TX 550h AWD



2026 Lexus TX 550h AWD in the parking lot in front of the Sun Valley Lodge (photo Auto News)  
by Bill McCallum

I have been publishing "road-trips" from Seattle to Sun Valley and back during the holidays in Auto News for over 30 years.

For the last 15 years I have been able to arrange for a new Toyota or Lexus from Toyota's PR department. For starters, Toyota & Lexus have created, introduced, and marketed the best fleet of AWD vehicles on the market, which you need as you cross the "blue mountains" above Pendleton,

Oregon travel thru to Boise, Idaho and proceed on to Sun Valley by way of Fairfield or Twin Falls.

My ride this year was the 2026 Lexus TX 550 h+ AWD SUV with 3 row seating giving you space for additional passengers or extra room for luggage and or ski gear. The infotainment system in the Lexus TX 550 h+ AWD SUV is one of the best in the industry and when it comes to power and economy (mpg).

Watch out !!

The 3.5 liter Plug-in Hybrid engine produces 404 net combined horsepower with 76 MPGe and 29 MPG gas only. The base MSRP was \$79,510 as tested and is very competitive in the mid-size luxury SUV market. I strongly suggest a "TEST DRIVE" at your local Lexus dealer. See you next issue with "test drive reports" from 15 automotive writers across the U.S. and Canada.

## 2026 Toyota Tundra Capstone: Hybrid Luxury Meets Full Size Capability



Chris Chung with Toyota Tundra Capstone (photo Auto News)  
(SEE Test Drive Review on page 2)

**Greg Penske  
"Dealer of the  
"Decade"**Bill McCallum  
publisher

We are creating a new award category this year, "Dealer of the Decade." These awards will be presented during "Monterey Car Week" on Thursday night August 13th at a location to be determined in Q1.

We have selected new car dealers from key market areas across the U.S. that have supported their communities with jobs and helped grow the economy.

Our first recipient is Greg Penske of Longo Toyota & Lexus and Longo Auto Group. I first met Greg at Mike O'Brien's wedding in Bellevue, WA. Years ago.

At the time both Mike O'Brien and Greg were busy growing their own Auto Groups featuring both Lexus & Toyota brands. Greg a Southern California Dealer went on the grow Longo Toyota & Lexus to # 1 in the U.S. I also reconnected with Greg when my good friend Bob Bondurant passed. I had heard that Roger Penske, Greg's dad might be interested in purchasing Bondurant Racing School. As things go in the auto industry, it was just a rumor.

In 2023 Penske Automotive named Greg Penske as Board Vice-Chairman. Also as rumor's go, Greg is ready to take over Penske Auto Group if Roger ever "slows-down". We honored Roger Penske as a "Legend of Auto" the year we created "Legends of Auto" awards in LA with the help of Bert Boeckmann and the Galpin family.

**2026 Toyota  
Tundra Capstone:  
Hybrid Luxury**Chris Chung  
Digital editor

The 2026 Toyota Tundra Capstone represents the pinnacle of Toyota's full-size pickup lineup — blending refined luxury, modern tech, and rugged ability into one compelling package. Built on Toyota's all-new Tundra platform, the Capstone is designed for drivers who want a truck that works hard, feels premium, and stands out in a competitive segment.

At the heart of the Capstone is the i-FORCE MAX twin-turbo V6 hybrid powertrain — a setup that pairs a 3.4-liter twin-turbocharged V6 with an electric motor for a 437-horsepower combined output. This hybrid system also delivers a stout 583 lb-ft of torque, giving the Capstone plenty of low-end grunt for towing, hauling, and passing on the highway. Despite its size, the hybrid Capstone still posts respectable EPA estimates in the high teens to low-20s MPG thanks to its efficient power delivery and regenerative systems, which is impressive for a truck of this class and capability.

**Power and Performance**

The Capstone's 10-speed electronically controlled automatic transmission feels smooth and responsive whether negotiating city streets or powering through highway merges. On the road, the Capstone strikes a balance between confident acceleration and composed ride quality — aided by its refined suspension

continued on page 5  
(See photo on page 1)

**Capitol Reef National  
Park In My Hyundai  
Santa Fe**Sally Hanson  
editor

Most of my automotive reviews have been written after driving a vehicle for a week, studying the various models of the brand, and reporting to our readers the new features that I find great. It is my pleasure to share with you an in-depth automotive review of a vehicle I drove a year ago and then went to a local dealership the next week to purchase!

Meet "Big Red", my Hyundai Santa Fe Hybrid with the Limited premium trim. Please join us on our recent road trip to Capitol Reef National Park in south central Utah. In case you are not familiar with this park, I find it to be the most beautiful of the 35 National Parks I have visited. While Zion, Bryce Canyon, Arches and Canyonlands National Parks are beautiful parks in Utah, Capitol Reef is one of the lesser known of the Southwest's national parks.

As I journeyed through parts of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Utah to get to the park, I realized this was my first major road trip in the Santa Fe.

During my around town and shorter trip ventures in the Santa Fe, I had come to appreciate the smooth drive it offers along with very comfortable seating. Dual auto temperature controls with 2nd and 3rd row air vents make a pleasurable trip for the driver and passengers.

Highway travel is also more enjoyable when stops for gaso-

**Dodge  
Charger  
Scat Pack**Dave Kunz  
LA feature writer

Dodge has been a brand of performance over the years, and recently it's been an up-and-down ride. Buyers snapped up the final 2023 "Last Call" Challengers and Chargers, as the Hemi V8 was to be no more moving forward.

Model year 2024 saw an all-new Charger (as a 2-door), powered by electricity. A promise of a new kind of muscle car in the form of a pure EV. Styling was good, performance was great, and it even made fake V8 noises. What it didn't make was sales numbers; die-hard enthusiasts stayed away. A hotter version arrived with 670 horsepower, and so far, that one is still around.

For 2026, gasoline returns to Dodge's big coupe, to the delight of those who favor internal combustion. The Charger brings the high-tech corporate Hurricane twin-turbo inline 6 to the performance party, making 420 horsepower in base trim, or an impressive 550 horsepower in the Scat Pack. Push the Start button, and instead of kilowatts flowing through copper, premium unleaded flows through cylinders. Muscle car tradition, right along with a raspy exhaust note.

At full throttle from rest, the Charger Scat Pack hooks up (thanks to all-wheel drive) and pushes you back in your seat. There's even launch control for those who want to test it out at the local drag strip. And overall, this

**Electric Vehicles  
Sweep Top Spots  
at Best of the Bay**Keith Turner  
SF feature writer

Battery electric vehicles swept the top honors in all categories at the 2025 Best of the Bay Awards presented recently by the Western Automotive Journalists (WAJ). The awards program brought together Northern California's leading automotive journalists to Petaluma, CA, to evaluate and vote on the most compelling new vehicles on the market.

The Jeep Wagoneer S, an all-electric midsize SUV, earned top honors after a competitive evaluation against a diverse field of vehicles spanning multiple price points and powertrains. Judges praised the Jeep for its combination of refinement, performance, and thoughtful execution, as well as its role in advancing the Jeep brand into the electric era.

"A top-notch vehicle, with comfort, upscale appointments, and a 300-mile range. Road trip? Let's go!" said one WAJ juror. Another judge noted that the Wagoneer S "carries on the great Jeep tradition — except this is an EV. Supremely quiet, very classy, and a great value for the money."

Judges highlighted the Wagoneer S's quiet and composed ride, strong acceleration, premium interior materials, and intuitive technology. Many also cited the vehicle's balance, calling it an electric SUV that feels fully realized rather than experimental.

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## I guess you can call me Electric Jim.



Jim Trainor  
feature writer

It all started when my wife and I decided to leave southern California and build a home in northern Michigan shortly after ending our careers and almost 20 years in southern California. How we reached this decision is the topic for another article.

Building a new home comes with an almost endless number of decisions, everything from floors to the number of bedrooms to the design of the door handle to the closet. Oh, one more – should the garage be equipped with a 240-volt outlet that would provide Level 2 charging for an electric vehicle? We opted in.

Besides, I had just bought a new battery-powered lawn mower to go with my electric leaf blower, electric trimmer, electric chain saw and the king of them all, electric snowblower. All battery operated so cords and extension cords were a thing of the past. And, more importantly, no more gas cans, spills in the driveway, mixing oil for two-stroke engines, and messy trips to the gas station.

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## Electric Expo Returns to the Northwest



Vicky Tran  
writer

This year's Electrify Expo in Seattle was buzzing — literally and figuratively — with innovation, energy, and hands-on experiences. Held at Marymoor Park in Redmond, WA, the festival-like atmosphere brought together leading EV automakers, e-bike brands, charging tech companies, and curious consumers ready to experience the electrified future firsthand.

Standout vehicles included the new Subaru Solterra, Ford F-150 Lightning, Kia EV9, and Hyundai IONIQ 5 N, all available for test drives on-site. Brands like Lexus, Kia, Tesla, and Porsche were also present, offering both static displays and drive loops. On the micro mobility side, attendees zipped around on the latest electric scooters, skateboards, and e-bikes from companies like Onyx, Rawrr, and NIU. There even was a flying car brought by Pivotal, a Bay Area startup whose goal is to "turn the art of the possible into everyday reality."

Charging tech demos, solar displays, and family-friendly activities rounded out the weekend. The overall vibe? Accessible, informative, and fun.

## 2025 RAM ProMaster EV



Howard Elmer  
truck writer

Ram is the latest brand to bring electrification to its utility van offerings with a new ProMaster — all electric — for 2025. I recently had a chance to drive one of these at a demonstration in Michigan. It was everything I expected. Quiet, quick, and simple. In fact, electric service and delivery vehicles are an improvement for in this segment that, in my opinion, can't come fast enough. Because delivery vans run set routes — or work in stop/go short range urban service areas; the drawbacks of electric power are very few. These trucks will work all day and recharge over night. Their usage cases have way fewer charging variables than electric passenger vehicles. Also, from a business perspective, over time they will cost less to run, cost less to service and last longer.

Arriving late this year are two EV models. The ProMaster EV delivery model and the Cargo model. The Cargo model is available as a 12-foot box — or as an extended 13-foot box. Both versions come with a 110-kilowatt-hour (kWh) battery pack that has a targeted range of 261 kilometers.

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## Slate Auto-Start with a Blank Slate...Add What you Want!



Jordan Williams  
millennial writer

With taglines such as "Designed for Real Life", "It's a Blank Slate, You Call the Shots", and "Great cars got too pricey. We fixed that", start-up Slate the Shots, and "Great cars got too pricey. We fixed that", start-up Slate auto company launched its entrance into the United States auto market, with its EV basic truck model and is currently taking orders.

Slate's target audience is the price conscious, tech savvy younger generation, i.e. the Millennial and Generation Z market, whose own phones would in most cases replace what has become a typical interior auto screen feature.

The central idea of Slate auto is to start with an affordable "blank slate truck", at a mid-twenties price tag, and then add-on any features one desires. A buyer can even convert the truck to an SUV with an add-on option.

Currently, to begin, the company requires \$50 to place an order hold. Then, each buyer selects which battery they want and any other preinstalled accessories "like wraps or an SUV Kit". The standard battery carries a 150 mile range. An additional battery can

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## Slot Car racing in Europe compared to the USA



Allen Smith  
motorsports writer

In 1957 the Slot Car Racing Industry ignited when Fred Francis, owner of a miniature Model Car Company, electrified his tin plate model cars. His company was called Scalex, as while good models they were not to a specific scale.

This new line was then renamed Scalextric the "tric" because they were now motorized, with a small electric motor, and could be driven on a model race car track.

Sales took off as almost every little boy wanted to be a race car driver, and Model Car racing was born.

The by product of that was a love and passion for Cars that was instilled in generations of children. They became enamored with racing and cars in general, and the real car Industry supported that with themed race sets for their brands.

Across the pond in the USA the first experiences most had with Scale Model Car Racing, or Slot Car Racing as it is known here, was Scalextric. But the cost of an imported toy from Europe and the construction methods was not well received.

Scalextric cars were still tin plate, and their track made of rubber so expensive to ship to America.

Several toy companies here in the USA sent samples to Hong Kong

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**Fun-To-Drive  
vs.  
Technology**Larry Weitzman  
EV specialist

I was a car crazy kid. I remember in the 1950s, the fall was the most exciting time, not because of the World Series, but because of the new car models for next year. Yes, I was horsepower crazy and by nine years old could tell anyone who would listen the horsepower of every car made in America and of models within makes. Like the 1953 Buicks, which was the first year for the "Nailhead" V-8. But the Special still received a 130 hp straight eight, while the Super got the 170 hp, 322 cubic inch V-8 and the Roadmaster received a 188 hp version of same.

Since about 2020, when about the only engine you could get was a turbocharged 2.0-2.5L inline four with say 250 hp, cars haven't done much for me. All the "advances" seem to have been in the spread of technology. It used to be cars were about handling and performance, the "drive". Now cars are about being entertained during the drive. I remember the 1960 Chrysler, with the magnificent "Astrodome"

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**Kia EV9 GT-Line  
AWD "A  
Superlative SUV"**Arv Voss  
feature writer

Kia bowed with their highly successful 3-row Telluride model in 2020 and made the decision to launch into the electric SUV field with what has now grown to suite of six impressive Kia EV9 SUVs covering a wide range of individual tastes and desires, which when compared to other three-row models currently on sale, represent a relatively tolerable expenditure.

There is a Light RWD model, a Light Long Range RWD, Wind e and Land e AWD models, the GT-Line eAWD and finally topped off by the high performance GT. All are four door models and feature three seating rows capable accommodating six or seven passengers depending upon whether the second row has captain's chairs or a bench seat. EV9 Pricing ranges from \$56,395 - \$80,000.

**PROPELLION:**

The EV9 GT-Line AWD is powered by permanent magnet front and rear synchronous AC electric motors with a combined 379 horsepower and combined torque of 516 lb-ft. The battery pack is a 99.8 kWh liquid-cooled lithium-ion with an onboard 10.9 kW charger which is claimed to add

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**Scout®  
Traveler™ SUV  
2027/28**Harold Allen  
Texas feature writer

The Scout® is about to re-enter the U.S. market after being gone for years. Not only is this questionable but with so many sixty-thousand-dollar electric EVs not performing well in today's market. Rivian is narrowing delivery guidance this year, but most U.S. manufacturers are rethinking how to go forward. The only manufacturer that has had the good sense to keep on the right path with hybrid vehicles is Toyota.

I had a chance to see a prototype Scout® at Cow Town, Fort Worth, Texas and yes it looks great. But so does the Rivian and how many sixty thousand plus SUV EV's do we need in the U.S.? You know you're in trouble when you see a Hummer® outside Costco being offered for sale.

The Scout® is backed by Volkswagen® and yes, they are building a new plant to build them. This is a body on frame SUV and that is the biggest feature, keeping this in mind most customers who buy off-road vehicles seldom take them off road. As the Scout® is electric it will offer an optional gas engine to charge the battery and allow it to go 500 miles on a full charge. The Scout® will

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**Michael's Subaru  
of Bellevue Wins  
"Gold Award"**Julia King  
writer

Subaru of America, Inc. honored Michael's Subaru of Bellevue with the Customer and Community Commitment Award, or "Gold Award," a recognition for Subaru's "most elite class of retailers" of 2025. An extension of "The Subaru Love Promise," the award distinguishes both community and customer engagement — retailers are required to win both the Subaru Love Promise Customer Commitment Award and the Subaru Love Promise Community Commitment Award to qualify for Gold.

Over the past year, Michael's Subaru of Bellevue has engaged a diverse range of organizations, including Homeward Pet Adoption Center in Woodinville, the Puesta de Sol Elementary PTA, and the Boys & Girls Club Bellevue.

Alongside community-based efforts, a retailer must also achieve a minimum score for eligibility, based on a variety of measurements. Many measurements surround practical elements of retailers' operations, including maintaining high Purchase and Net Promoter Scores. The awards also observe the state of retailers' locations, with a focus on updated

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**Volkswagen  
ID. Buzz  
"test drive"**Scot McCallum  
feature writer

The 2025 Volkswagen ID. Buzz 1st Edition electric van is a return to the classic vans we remember from Volkswagen. And yet it is replete with new technology and features we all want today. The ID. Buzz has exceptional visibility and spaciousness within its spartan and comfortable interior design. While driving it around town for errands, I received many "wow" and "that's cool" comments due to its sleek exterior design and orange/candy white color. This vehicle is aptly named by Volkswagen as you will experience a consistent parking lot buzz from other drivers.

The ID. Buzz has at least 12 safety and driver assist features we all expect in a new electric vehicle. The back row of seats folds flat or it can be removed, and there are multiple mobile device charging points throughout. The dashboard system is intuitive and includes a Harman Kardon premium audio system with 13 speakers and subwoofer. The ID. Buzz drives smoothly and quietly and corners well for a van. It is rated at 83 MPGe and a driving range of 234 miles. Drop by your local Volkswagen dealer today for a test drive!

**Custom Order your 2026 Hybrid Crosstrek,  
Outback, Trailseeker or Uncharted at Michael's  
Subaru of Bellevue**



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## EV (Electric Vehicles) News and Strategies



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### 2026 Toyota Tundra Test Drive Review

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towing and four-wheel drive system. This is not just a brute force truck; it's a capable cruiser that feels planted at speed and alert in corners.

Towing and payload capability are solid as well, with the hybrid Capstone able to tow over 10,300 pounds and carry a payload that suits weekend projects and adventure gear alike. Though it doesn't push the extreme limits compared to some competitors, it more than satisfies the needs of most truck buyers.

#### Luxury Inside and Out

Where the Capstone truly shines is in its luxury appointments. A premium exterior with 22-inch chrome-and-machined wheels, dark-chrome mesh grille, and elegant lighting details give it a presence that belies its rugged nature. Inside, you'll find semi-aniline leather-trimmed seats, a 10-inch color HUD (head-up display), and heated/ventilated comfort surfaces that elevate the everyday driving experience.

The Capstone also packs advanced tech with a 14-inch multimedia touchscreen complete with smartphone integration, navigation, premium JBL® audio, and a suite of driver-assist features like adaptive cruise control and blind-spot monitoring — all backed by Toyota Safety Sense.

#### Real-World Use and Verdict

In real-world use, the Capstone doesn't feel like a compromise. It's a luxury truck that can still handle job site demands, family duties, and weekend adventure plans with equal competence. Its hybrid powertrain adds efficiency without dulling performance, and the interior is both comfortable and user-friendly.

The 2026 Toyota Tundra Capstone proves that a full-size truck doesn't have to be all work or all luxury — it can be both. Whether you're towing a trailer, hauling gear, or simply cruising through town, the Capstone stands out as a top choice in the increasingly electrified truck market.

### Fun-To-Drive vs. Technology

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dash and now every dash appears as a flat panel electronic screen, overloaded with information and buttons (and touch screens). Nothing anymore is standardized as were the door handles, window lift switches, heater and A/C controls. Now most everything is different from car to car.

I remember receiving a 2004 BMW 7 series. It was my introduction to the new technology. I didn't know how to start it. No starter button or key to insert and twist, starting it took a manual, phone call and more, before I could still enjoy the ride. I even challenged my next door neighbor to start the car. He couldn't.

The publisher of Global Auto News related to me that he was at a manufacturers press event, waiting his turn to sample the latest

and greatest model "Zoomie" but the guy before him still in the left seat wouldn't get out of the car. Finally, he asked the guy "was he going to get out of the car?" to which he replied, "I can't find the door handle!"

Now cars are controlled by computer handling programs and chips. In some makes driving feel is more like a video game, which have no feel. They have lane departure warning systems, automatic emergency braking systems (never mind ABS systems), blind spot detection systems and "adaptive" cruise control and more. These features do a driver a disservice as they make drivers seem to rely on these systems, allowing the driver to be less alert and less attentive to driving.

If you don't operate your turn  
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### Jay Leno Comedy Show Scheduled for April 24<sup>th</sup> as Jay Returns To The N.W.



Bill McCallum (Left) & Chris Chung meet with Jay Leno at Comedy Show in the Spring of 2025 (photo Auto News)

### I guess you can call me Electric Jim.

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But, was I ready for the big step to an electric vehicle?

Honestly, when we made the decision to install the 240V outlet, the thinking was that down the road we might consider an EV. But the decision happened much faster than we anticipated. Part of this was due to leases expiring on our Hyundai Sonata Hybrid and Hyundai Santa Fe. After being treated poorly by the Hyundai dealer in town, we found ourselves at the local Kia dealership. We made the relatively easy decision to replace our Santa Fe with a Sorento Hybrid, rated at 37 MPG. Nice. Fuel economy is important to me.

But, what to do about the Sonata

replacement? After a few days of research (mostly YouTube) and a test drive -- not to mention a \$13,500 company rebate -- we were the proud lessees of an EV6 GT Line AWD in Runway Red and with 327-mile range. All for a lease price of about \$44,000, Here's the six-month review.

For many northern Michigan residents, the idea of switching to an EV comes with a mix of excitement and hesitation. Harsh winters and rural living can make EV adoption feel like a leap of faith. But for me, the transition has been nothing short of exceptional.

The EV6 has the 300+ mile range that many today consider a minimum number. Of course, that number dips substantially in the winter due to the obvious reasons (although I've been a bit surprised by how much juice is used by the HVAC fan.) To this I say: "So what?" We live about eight miles out of town and the vast

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### Michael's Subaru of Bellevue Wins "Gold Award" for Community Service

by Julia King

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facilities and brand validation.

As retailers await numbers from the 2025 Subaru Share The Love

Event, the Subaru Customer and Community Commitment Awards manifest the manifold ways retailers strive to achieve The Subaru Love Promise.

### AUTO NEWS® BYTES

#### Words Matter

**"hoax"**  
**"afford"**  
**"affordability"**

**"HOAX"** — "An act intended to trick or dupe." also --- "Something accepted or established by fraud."

Comments: Over past decades the word hoax was used most often to describe UFO's. While some people agreed with the UFO sightings. There was no proof or agreement on their existence i.e. a HOAX

**"AFFORD"** — vb. "To manage to bear or bear the cost of without serious harm or loss." (NOTE) My 1997 edition of The Merriam-Webster Dictionary does not include the word affordability.

#### "AFFORDABILITY"

Publishers note: In the next issue of Global Auto News (Spring 2026 - April/May) - I will define AFFORDABILITY as it relates to purchasing a new or preowned vehicle.

#### WORDS MATTER AND THEY ARE THE KEY TO INTELLIGENCE

by BILL McCALLUM, Publisher

## Kia EV9 GT-Line AWD "A Superlative SUV"

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100 miles of driving range in only 13 minutes with the maximum DC fast charging speed. Transmissions are direct drive. EPA fuel economy is a combined 80 MPGe with an estimated 270 mile range.

### ACCOMMODATION and CONVENIENCE:

The solid underpinnings of the EV9 add to the refinement and luxuriousness of the cabin's interior featuring quality materials. Comfort is key and infotainment and connectivity features abound with two screens displaying gauge and infotainment controls. Graphics are attractive and menus are arranged in a logical manner.



Kia EV9 GT-Line AWD (photo by Arv Voss)

Rear cargo space nearly equals that of Kia's Telluride at 20 cubic feet or up to 82 cubic feet with both the second and third rows folded flat.

The EV9 comes with standard driver assistance and safety features such as blind-spot monitoring, automated emergency braking and a hands-free driving mode bundled with an advanced adaptive cruise control version.

#### THE FINAL TAKE:

The Kia EV9 GT-Line AWD is truly a superlative electric SUV with outstanding ride and handling qualities, attractive styling and state of the art amenities. It comes with a limited 5 year or 60,000 mile warranty and a 10 year or 100,000 mile powertrain warranty.

Wheelbase: 122",  
Length: 197.4",  
Width: 77.9",  
Height: 70.1"

## 2025 RAM ProMaster EV "Test Drive"

continued from page 3

ters in city driving. Most owners will be using a Level 2 wall charger (which delivers up to 11 kw), however the ProMaster will also accept a Level 3 DC fast charger that delivers up to 50 kw. The charge port illuminates while the vehicle is charging and has an audible sound alert to confirm the connection.

This ProMaster architecture, has been designed specifically for electrification, featuring a unibody design that incorporates the battery pack. The battery is positioned under the floor in the centre of the vehicle, maintaining a flat floor while cargo volume is unchanged from the gas-powered vehicles. The battery pack drives a 200-kilowatt (kW) electric drive module (EDM) which delivers 268 hp and 302 lb.-ft. of torque using the standard front-wheel-drive capability.

All versions have a 159-in. wheelbase, and an extended



2025 ProMaster EV delivery van. Photos are all factory.

super-high-roof. Other new driver features include an available heated steering wheel and heated windshield. New available safety and security features include Park Sense with stop, white noise backup alarm and "normal" backup alarm.

Another new feature on this ProMaster is a rear roll-up door. Built of anodized aluminum its light weight yet durable. A passenger-side sliding pocket door is also now standard on the Ram ProMaster EV delivery vehicle. This will ease ingress and egress while making deliveries.

The handling of cargo is the number one consideration for van buyers. The ProMaster EV includes best-in-class features

continued on page 7

## Auto News Foundation Introduces TAP Tuition Assistance Program

by Bill McCallum, Publisher/Founder

For TWO years we have been developing our TAP (Tuition Assistance Program) for students attending Automotive Tech Schools. Our goal was three fold.

1- To develop a workable program delivering more potential employee's for auto dealers and OEM's across the U.S.

2- Using Global Auto News to highlight each students path to graduation over a two year period.

3- Passing on 70 % of the funds raised by the Auto News Foundation a 501 (3)(c) NON-PROFIT for TAP scholarships starting in 2026. RESULTS TO DATE: 10 TAP scholarships to students attending:

- Shoreline Community College
- Seattle, WA
- Yakima Valley College - Yakima, WA (see page 18)
- Monterey Peninsula College, Monterey, CA
- University of Washington (Business School) Seattle, WA

## Slot Car Racing Europe vs. U.S.

continued from page 3

to be analyzed. They produced a cheaper version with plastic track and cars and Slot Car Racing started to boom in the U.S.A.

So much so that car Manufacturers commissioned Slot Car Sets to be given out to new buyers of cars so their children could play at car racing. This endorsed branding too where children as they grew became owners of real cars from the brands they played with in their childhood.

America's fascination with Slot Car Racing saw an explosion in sales and from that a new Industry grew, and that was Commercial Slot Car Tracks. Across America somewhere between 3000 to 10,000 raceways appeared and the Slot Car craze took off.

With this and the need for speed the industry of hopped-up cars grew rapidly with new motors, gear, tires and bodies arriving every Month or so. The speeds at these Commercial Raceways were more than a plastic car could withstand, so the bodies changed to less detail butylate bodies and finally Lexan.

The cars got faster, and lower and less scale appearing, the branding was gone, no longer were they Fords and Ferrari cars, these were Asp, Manta Ray etc. and the scale cars were gone. Personally, I believe this was part of the end in America of the boom of Model Car (Slot) Car Racing.

It took a while but eventually the

continued on page 19

**Soul, electrified.**

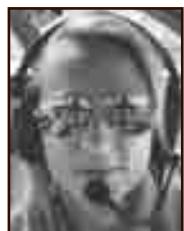
This soul has many aspects. It is visible and constantly changing. When viewing the Porsche Taycan, it reveals itself by a smile that expresses total delight. The Taycan is both performing and perfect for the everyday. Striking simplicity, timeless and instantly recognizable design. With a spacious interior and two luggage compartments, providing comfort and convenience for fo...

Experience true electrified performance.  
The Taycan Turbo S.



PORSCHE

# Flying Car Featured at Redmond, Washington "Electric Expo"



Heather Chirtea  
Flying Cars

## Flying Cars Hit the Skies: The Soar Tour Brings the Future to Life

The future of transportation has arrived — not in the pages of science fiction, but in the skies over America. A small group of pioneers is piloting the nation's first coast-to-coast flying car tour, giving the public a rare chance to witness history in motion.

At the heart of the tour is the BlackFly, an all-electric, vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft designed for everyday people. Unlike traditional planes, the BlackFly doesn't require a pilot's license to fly. If you can drive a car and handle a video game joystick, you have the basic skills necessary to tackle the 2-week training program and learn to fly.

John and Heather Chirtea, are a father/daughter flying duo, and one of the first five civilian owners of the BlackFly in the United States. Their story adds a deeply personal note to this technological leap.

"My dad dragged me to the Oshkosh Air Show year after year to watch the flying car in development," Heather recalled with a laugh. "It wasn't even flying yet. But we kept coming back. We made hats, cheered from the sidelines, and became obsessed with the flying car. When the day came that they started selling them, we were first in line."



Heather Chirtea is the Nation's First Female Consumer Flying Car Pilot.

For more information visit: [www.thesoartour.com](http://www.thesoartour.com)

## Breaking News: Auto News Reader Reach (RR) Scales to 1 Million

Breaking News: Auto News scales readership reach (RR) to 1,000,000 per month. Reader reach (RR), a new terminology of the digital world that includes our national print distribution, direct mail, our print distribution via automotive retail locations located in 7 Western states in addition to our digital editions including email digital fast blasts, YouTube, X (Twitter), Facebook,

Pinterest, LinkedIn, Instagram, TikTok, and impressions from their 15 automotive writers across the United States.

Auto News intends to continue to build its readership reach with an aggressive expansion plan in 2024 for its print, digital and affiliate programs. Make sure to follow their progress at the link below or online at [autonewsonline.com](http://autonewsonline.com).

# Jim Trainor Reports On Buying An All-New Kia EV6 . . . . !

## "Call me Electric Jim...."

continued from page 5

majority of trips are in the 20 mile range. Often, heading to a golf course, or a winery (or two...), or a sightseeing excursion means might travel 50 to 100 miles or more. All super attainable.

Further, I've been pleasantly surprised at how capable the EV6 is in the snow. "Snow Mode" gets us up our steep driveway and through 10-inches of snow without issue. The heated seats and steering wheel got warmer

quickly and hotter than in any other ICE vehicle I've owned. Winter hasn't been an issue at all, including days with below zero temperatures and with snow almost every day.

I cut a deal with our local electric utility for a \$10 monthly rebate if I charge the EV6 from between 11 p.m. – 7 a.m. so that's what I do. It's easy to set a timer or simply plug in the car. We've gone weeks without having to charge while using the car every day. It's surprising how far 250 miles is when tooling around town. Even better, a full charge runs me about \$17 and I figure I'm saving about \$100 per month not having to buy gas. Plus, one gets great pleasure seeing folks at

the gas pumps on 2-degree days fishing for their credit cards and filling up their gas cans for the snowblower. Plugging in at home feels like second nature now.

For anyone on the fence about EV ownership in places like northern Michigan and other cold parts of the country, I can confidently say it's worth it. The one "must have," though, is an EV charger at home. To attempt to do this while only being able to charge remotely would be foolhardy. But with at-home charging capability, and a second vehicle for lengthy road trips, it seems silly and old-fashioned not to.

Oh, did I tell you that my EV6 looks cool?

## 2025 RAM ProMaster EV "Test Drive Report" by Howard Elmer

continued from page 6

tures, such as 524 cubic feet of cargo space, standard best-in-class interior cargo height of 86 inches, a low load-floor height and max width between wheel wells. The cargo van features up to 3,020 lb of payload while the delivery configuration offers up to 2,030 lb of payload.

Ram Commercial is well known for providing upfitter-friendly offerings. The new Ram ProMaster EV continues this tradition. It has standard upfitter electrical connector and an integrated cab configuration for easy upfitter/conversion solutions. Adding to the new ProMaster design for adaptability, virtually all primary vehicle systems are packaged forward of the cargo area. This body can be upfitted for virtually every conceivable commercial need because of its unique front-drive system and body-integral construction. It has the most vertically oriented sidewalls in the cargo van category (nearly 90 degrees in relation to the cargo floor) combined with a best-in-class cargo width of 75.6 inches.

Two key considerations for prospective van buyers are visibility (this means, glass, mirrors

and cameras) and safety systems (both for the driver and for pedestrians). Both of these important features have been addressed in the ProMaster EV. For instance, ProMaster features a standard high-resolution backup camera with dynamic grid lines. The available digital rearview mirror displays video in real time in all driving modes from a rear-facing camera and can be turned off to revert to a traditional reflective mirror. The digital rearview mirror is available on all ProMaster models and provides an unobstructed rear view. Also available on the Ram ProMaster is 360-degree Surround View camera. The system offers 360-degree, bird's-eye views of the vehicle and its surroundings, enhanced by dynamic grid lines displayed on a 10.1-inch digital touchscreen.

For 2025 the safety and security list continue to grow and offers the following features:

Full-Speed Forward Collision Warning,  
Crosswind Assist  
Rear backup camera with dynamic grid lines,  
Post-collision braking,  
Drowsiness Detection  
Traffic sign information

Auto high-beams  
Cornering function fog lamps,  
Push-button starter,  
Keyless entry (all doors)  
Electric parking brake.  
Optional safety and security features include:  
Intelligent Speed Assist,  
Lane Keep Assist,  
Adaptive Cruise Control with Stop & Go  
Front parking sensors  
Rain-sensing windshield wipers.

Ram ProMaster will also feature Secure Park, a feature that prevents the vehicle from being shifted out of "Park" unless a key is present.

Also of note is a continuing progression towards autonomous driving. ProMaster has an Active Driving Assist feature that provides Level 2 (L2) automated driving capability. This consists of hands-on-wheel and eyes-on-road automated driving using lane centring with adaptive cruise control. The system uses multiple sensors, including radars and cameras to dictate appropriate roads for the technology.

The 2025 Ram ProMaster EV is available for order now and should be on dealer lot's late this year.



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## Most Americans Think They're Good Drivers, but Some Have Risky Habits

Written by Jamie Cattanach

Edited by Becca Stanek

**Most of us think we're good drivers — an anecdotal observation that's backed up by a LendingTree survey of 2,015 U.S. consumers.**

But while more than half of drivers (54%) describe their skills as above-average, and almost three-quarters of Americans (74%) rate their driving as 7 or higher out of 10, more than half of drivers (54%) admit to having caused an accident.

Meanwhile, drivers' confidence behind the wheel doesn't extend to others on the road, with 50% of drivers describing the skills of other drivers in their area as average, and 21% describing them as poor. Below, see our full findings.

### Key findings

- Most Americans see themselves as good drivers.** On a scale of 1 to 10, 74% rate their driving a 7 or higher. Of this group, having experience (76%), following traffic laws (68%) and avoiding accidents (59%) are cited as the top reasons for driving confidence. Additionally, 54% of drivers describe themselves as above-average compared to others on the road.

- On the road, confidence is high — just not in the other driver.** 50% of drivers would describe other drivers in their area as average, while 21% would describe them as poor. Additionally, 34% of drivers believe that others on the road make unsafe or illegal maneuvers near them often, and 48% believe that driving in their area has gotten less safe over the past few years.

- Many drivers have risky**

**habits.** 29% of drivers admit to checking their phone at least sometimes while driving, with 48% of Gen Z drivers reporting this behavior. Other common risky actions while driving include eating or drinking (40%), searching for music or podcasts (28%), taking calls (26%) and adjusting the GPS (23%).

The people brave enough to say this to respondents varied, with family members leading the way (50%). Partners were next-likeliest to let surveyed drivers know they weren't great at driving (40%), followed by friends (38%) and acquaintances (11%).

However, drivers are likely to claim that they've become more careful in their driving over the past five years, with 65% of respondents saying as much. Another 29% say their driving hasn't changed at all over the last half-decade, while only 6% admit they've become less careful.

### 54% of drivers have been in an accident they caused

One bit of good news: 46% — or nearly half — of surveyed drivers say they've never been in a car accident they've caused. Another 30% say they have, but not in the past five years, while about 25% have caused a more recent accident.

Still, that means the majority of respondents, or 54%, have been at fault in a car accident.

### 9% of drivers say the last time they were involved in a car accident that they caused as a driver was within the past 12 months.

On the whole, drivers say that if they were to be at fault in an

accident, they'd be likely to admit so: 56% say they'd very likely admit their fault, while 32% say it's somewhat likely they'd do so. (A bold 5% of respondents say they'd never admit fault.)

Drivers often hear that speed kills, yet most drivers we surveyed admit to speeding. Less than half (45%) say they go more than 10 mph above the speed limit on the highway at least sometimes, with men and younger generations more likely to speed often in comparison to women or older generations.

Speeding rates drop for local driving, however: Only 38% of drivers say they sometimes or often exceed the speed limit by more than 10 miles per hour on smaller local roads. Again, men and younger respondents are more likely than their counterparts to say they sometimes or often do so.

### Being a good driver (and not just calling yourself one): Top tips

Thinking you're a good driver is one thing, but walking (or driving) the talk is another. Here are our top tips for drivers looking to increase their skills and stay safe on the road:

- Stay sober.** It might sound obvious, but almost a third of traffic crash fatalities in the U.S. (30%) involve drunken drivers, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). In 2023, more than 12,000 people died unnecessarily in such crashes, which are entirely preventable. If you're going to a party or a bar, take an Uber or a cab, or elect a designated driver. Along with the potentially fatal results, if you're caught driving

under the influence, a DUI can cause your [insurance rate](#) to skyrocket. That means there's a financial reason to avoid the scenario, along with a safety one.

### • Put the phone down.

It's hard to ignore how prevalent mobile technology has become in our lives, and with features like GPS and streaming music, it seems natural to bring phones into our cars, too. But phones can also be incredibly distracting, and distracted driving is one of the primary causes of traffic-crash-related deaths. Along with injuring or killing yourself or others in motor vehicles, distracted driving also has devastating consequences for pedestrians and cyclists — according to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), more than 600 were killed in car crashes that were the result of distracted driving in 2023 alone.

### • Use insurance discounts as motivation.

These days, driving better can save you money. "Many car insurance companies have safe driving programs, also called usage-based or telematics programs, that offer discounts if you have good driving habits," explains Lindsay Bishop, LendingTree auto insurance expert and former auto insurance agent. "The companies outline the behaviors that they track, which gives a clear picture of what insurance companies believe makes a good driver. Most companies consider things like speeding, hard braking, cornering and driving late at night," she explains. "Some also penalize you for using your phone

while driving, even if it's in hands-free mode" — yet another reason to leave it out of your driving experience entirely.

### Methodology

LendingTree commissioned QuestionPro to conduct an online survey of 2,015 U.S. consumers ages 18 to 79 from Nov. 5 to 10, 2025. The survey was administered using a nonprobability-based sample, and quotas were used to ensure the sample base represented the overall population. Researchers reviewed all responses for quality control.

We defined generations as the following ages in 2025:

Generation Z: 18 to 28

Millennial: 29 to 44

Generation X: 45 to 60

Baby boomer: 61 to 79

### Car Insurance Help

Cheap Full Coverage Car Insurance

Car Insurance Quotes

Cheap Liability Car Insurance

### Key findings

Many Americans consider themselves good drivers  
Drivers aren't confident in others on the road  
Drivers have risky habits  
54% of drivers have been in an accident they caused

**Being a good driver (and not just calling yourself one): Pay attention to the road and other drivers . . . . !**

**Slate Auto – Start with a Blank Slate... Then Add What You Want**

by Jordan Williams

*continued from page 3*

be purchased to boost the car to a 250 mile range.

The company states at any time, even after you own the vehicle, you can add and "swap" accessories using its Slate Maker feature.

The car maker so far offers one color, "slate". You can paint or wrap the car any color you would like, Jeff Jablansky, company representative added in a November 2025 interview with Rich DeMuro @ktla Los Angeles.

Slate trucks are made in the USA and the company is hiring with most jobs based in Michigan and Indiana.

In conclusion, Slate believes buyers should call the shots/ pick what they want to make the utilitarian Slate truck theirs, without paying for features they do not want or need. Jablansky stated that there have already been 10,000,000 configurations within the Slate Maker creative process.

Do you like their concept? Have you placed an order? I would love to hear from you.

Slate has close to 200,000 followers on Instagram and states it has received over 100,000 reservations/orders. Deliveries are planned for late 2026. For those interested, you can check them out on IG.

## INSIDE MALAYSIA AUTO NEWS BYTES

by Bill McCallum

**Automechanika Kuala Lumpur 2025 advocates for green and innovative developments in automotive mobility for Malaysian and ASEAN markets**

Automechanika Kuala Lumpur Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre, Malaysia, 15 – 17 May 2025

Malaysian government policies and a shifting market landscape towards AI, digitalisation, electrification, energy efficiency, and sustainability have resulted in the country becoming an attractive investment destination, driven by demand for sustainable products and solutions in the automotive industry. This year, Automechanika Kuala Lumpur 2025, taking place on 15 to 17 May, features an expanded showcase across six halls at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre. The exhibition will showcase the evolution of the Malaysian market through new zones, the return of specialised areas that spotlight new mobility solutions, the vibrant automotive culture at autoFEST@KL, and green development throughout Southeast Asia, all around the fairground.

Under its Green Investment Strategy (GIS), Malaysia is targeting seven key areas of investment potential: bioenergy, carbon capture, circular economy, energy efficiency, green hydrogen, green mobility, and renewable energy. Nearly all of these areas intersect with the automotive sector, and green mobility, in particular, is gaining prominence in Malaysia. The drive for sustainable development has prompted leading automotive brands to enter the Malaysian market, further enhancing its appeal for auto investors and stakeholders.

Of late, Malaysia has attracted substantial investment and co-operation from global industry leaders. For instance, the Hyundai Motor Company (HMC) plans to invest USD 479 million in Malaysia over the next five years. As part of this initiative, around 30 percent of the company's vehicles that are manufactured in Malaysia will be exported to other countries in Southeast Asia [1], adding to the development of the industry and Malaysia's status as an automotive manufacturing hub for the region.

Building on this momentum, domestic leader Proton has also made significant strides by launching its first electric vehicle. With much of its stake held by Chinese manufacturer, Zhejiang Geely Holding Group, Malaysian firms such as Proton are presented with opportunities for growth and innovation as expertise is transferred through this collaboration.

Ms Fiona Chiew, General Manager of Messe Frankfurt (HK) Ltd, commented: "Malaysia is gaining significant traction from foreign investments and government policies aimed at sustainable technologies. Together with Malaysia's ASEAN chairmanship for 2025, this positions the country to strengthen its leadership in the Southeast Asian automotive industry. However, the development spurred by these changes is rapidly reshaping the market, and local players must prioritise workforce training, skill development, and modern technologies to adapt effectively. The innovations at the 2025 edition of Automechanika Kuala Lumpur are vital for Malaysia and the global automotive industry in meeting the rising demand for charging technologies, electric parts and solutions, and automotive talent, fuelled by the energy transition."

### Answering the needs of the industry throughout the fairground

To address the new ideas, technologies, and innovations in the market, the Automotive Mobility Solutions Zone makes a return in 2025. The area will explore innovative solutions based on the latest advancements in green mobility as a response to the heightened focus on new energy efficiency, new materials, advanced technologies, and more. Exhibitors will cover topics such as AI and autonomous driving, automotive manufacturing and automation, connectivity, electrification and digitalisation, energy, logistics, and warehousing and supply chain.

## INSIDE CHINA AUTO NEWS BYTES

by Bill McCallum

**Automechanika Shanghai's 2025 fringe programme spotlights sustainability, fosters collaboration, and drives transformation**

In its largest edition yet, Automechanika Shanghai's fringe programme featured over 90 concurrent events, including forums, conferences, training sessions, and interactive experiences to foster collaboration, technical advancements, and global exchange. The rapidly evolving automotive industry faces several challenges, including stricter emission requirements and safety standards, but this also represents opportunities for innovative solutions. In response, events will focus on technological breakthroughs, talent development, and business matching, while also bringing together domestic and international leaders for discussions on the trade climate and strategies to enhance competitiveness through cross-border and interdisciplinary cooperation. The exhibition featured over 7,000 exhibitors from 44 countries and regions across all 15 halls of the National Exhibition and Convention Center (Shanghai) from 26 to 29 November 2025.

### Collaborative innovation creating mutually beneficial solutions

One key event is the International Automotive Industry Conference 2025 Presented by Automechanika Shanghai – CEO Summit was on 25 November, convening senior decision makers from the world's leading enterprises. Topics cover the automotive landscape, emerging opportunities, global expansion and local innovation, sustainable tech-service integration, and supply chain resilience. Notably, Mr Ron Zheng, Senior Partner and Asia Head of Automotive Practice from Roland Berger, will discuss value reform and strategic decisions in the new normal of the global automotive industry. Other speakers include insights from Mr Henry Ying, Vice President of Shanghai Electric Drive; Mr Hank Yang, Vice President and General Manager of Fuel Systems Asia Pacific for PHINIA; and, Mr Imelda Labbé, President of the Association of International Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (VDIK).

Cooperative activities continue through supply-demand matchmaking sessions that connect enterprises in intelligent connectivity and new energy vehicles, fostering collaboration between carmakers and component suppliers.

The Intelligent Connected New Energy Vehicles Supply Chain Trends Forum and Matchmaking Conference, Intelligent Connected New Energy Vehicles In-depth Matchmaking Conference, Automotive-Grade Chip Supply Chain Ecosystem Forum, and Global Automotive Supply Chain Integration and Innovation Conference are among the highlights.

The Automotive Aftermarket Summit, returned on 27 November, explored global aftermarket changes, focusing on technological innovation and strategies for growth. Speakers include Ms Lang Xuehong, Deputy Secretary General of China Automobile Dealers Association, discussing government policy impacts on China's aftermarket; Mr Sun Xiaohong, Chief Expert of CCCME Automotive Internationalization Professional Committee, offered insights on overseas business development; and Mr Paulo Mutuc, Associate Director at Frost & Sullivan, sharing future industry and aftermarket perspectives.

Additionally, the new Global Collective event focused on investment and expansion tools for emerging markets in Latin America and the ASEAN region.

### Facilitating innovation

Emphasising technological advancements, the debuted Technical Seminar Series featured seven conferences on thermal management for new energy vehicles, advanced driver assistance systems, intelligent chassis technology, and more.



## International Auto News



# EVs Sweep "Best of the Bay" Awards

by Keith Turner

continued from page 2

With the average price of a new vehicle now exceeding \$50,000, value played a key role in the under-\$50,000 category. The winner was the 2026 Subaru Solterra XT, an all-electric crossover that impressed judges with its comfort, usability, and price-to-content ratio.

Jurors praised the Solterra XT's improved electric drivetrain, standard all wheel drive, safety technology, and cabin features. "Subaru has wheel drive, safety technology, and cabin features. "Subaru has substantially upped its EV game with the Solterra," said one judge. "Everything from the dual wireless phone chargers to the redesigned interior makes this the best bargain in the group."

The runner-up in this category was the Kia Sportage Hybrid, which judges called "very close to perfect," citing its solid platform and well-designed interior.

In addition to its overall win, the Jeep Wagoneer S also captured Best Vehicle Under \$75,000. Judges praised its driving dynamics and overall execution. "Outstanding road manners. Powerful powertrain. Quick, solid, quiet, and handsome," said one juror, who also noted the quality of the sound system and interior materials.

Runners-up in this category included the 2026 Honda Pass-

port TrailSport, the 2026 Genesis GV60, and the 2025 Kia EV6 GT AWD, all of which received strong praise for performance, comfort, and design.

The 2026 Dodge Charger Daytona EV won in the over-\$75,000 category by successfully reinventing the American muscle car for the electric age. Judges applauded its performance, handling, and character. "They made the Charger look, feel, and sound like an old-school muscle car — while making it faster, smoother, and non-polluting," said one judge.

The runner-up was the all-new 2026 Hyundai Ioniq 9, a three-row electric SUV that impressed with its spacious interior, quiet ride, and relative value.

Judges awarded Best Technology to synthesized sound systems for EVs, specifically the Dodge Charger Daytona's Fratzonic Chambered Exhaust and the Kia EV6 GT's Active Sound Design. Judges were surprised by how much the systems enhanced engagement. "Aside from the fun factor, they provide useful audio feedback during spirited driving," said one juror.

Judges also praised thoughtful hardware design, including physical knobs and buttons for often used controls, and attention-monitoring safety systems that help keep drivers focused.

Together, the results of the 2025 Best of the Bay Awards underscore how electric vehicles have matured in the U.S. automotive landscape.



2025 Jeep Wagoneer S (photo Keith Turner)

## Bardahl Manufactures & Ships Automotive Products Worldwide

by Chris Chung

There's something poetic about cruising through Seattle in the all-electric Volkswagen ID.Buzz, heading toward a company that has fueled innovation since the 1930s. My recent visit to the Bardahl Headquarters was more than a factory tour—it was a deep dive into one of America's most iconic automotive brands.

Tucked into the Ballard neighborhood, Bardahl's U.S. facility still operates with the precision and passion that Ole Bardahl brought to the business nearly a century ago. From the moment you step inside, it's clear this isn't just a company—it's a legacy. The walls are lined with memorabilia, racing history, and framed photos that tell stories of Bardahl's rise from a Depression-era dream to a globally recognized name in fuel and oil additives.

But even for a brand so rooted in tradition, Bardahl continues to look ahead, developing additives compatible with today's electric and hybrid vehicles.

During the tour, I watched technicians work on formulations that are used in everything from everyday vehicles to high-performance racing engines. I learned how Bardahl's polar attraction technology reduces friction and improves engine life—something they've been perfecting for decades and that vehicles like the VW Bus have relied on for years to keep them running strong. The company's commitment to research and quality control is evident at every stop on the tour.

And while the Bardahl legacy was the star of the day, I'd be remiss not to give a quick nod to the vehicle that got me there. The Volkswagen ID.Buzz is more than a retro throwback—it's a smooth, spacious, and quiet ride that turns heads wherever it goes. Perfect for urban adventures like this one.

As I pulled away from the Bardahl HQ, I couldn't help but reflect on how fitting it was to experience this journey in a car that represents the future—on the grounds of a company that's helped shape the past and continues to disrupt the future.

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## Around the Track – Racing News



### First Look: The 2026 Cadillac Vistiq Premium Luxury – A Tech-Laden, All Electric People Mover

The all-new 2026 Cadillac Vistiq arrives with bold ambition, offering a refined blend of luxury, technology, and family-friendly practicality. Positioned between the compact Lyriq and the flagship Escalade IQ, the Vistiq is Cadillac's answer to growing demand for three-row electric SUVs — and it hits the mark.

#### Power & Performance

The Vistiq comes equipped with a dual-motor all-wheel-drive powertrain producing approximately

615 horsepower and 650 lb-ft of torque, making it one of the most powerful vehicles in its class. With the available Velocity Max mode, Cadillac estimates a 0–60 mph sprint in just 3.7 seconds — remarkable for a full-size SUV weighing 7,540 lbs. It's quick, smooth, and confidently composed, whether merging on highways or navigating city traffic.

The Vistiq uses a 102 kWh usable battery, offering an estimated 300–305 miles of driving range. DC fast-charging adds up to 80% battery in about 30 minutes, keeping the vehicle road-trip ready.

#### Interior & Comfort

Inside, the Vistiq sets a new benchmark for American EV luxury. The centerpiece is a stunner—

continued on page 20



2026 Cadillac Vistiq (photo Chris Chung)

## Scout® Traveler™ SUV 2027/28 Test Drive Review by Harold Allen

continued from page 4

have a host of features, and it looks outstanding, the interior is high-end. The Scout® will have a Terra™ truck later in the production cycle. My guess is if the Scout® does not take off Volkswagen® could produce VW vehicles later in time at this plant. I understand they are going to sell them directly to customers like Rivian® and Tesla®.



Scout Traveler (photo Harold Allen)



Scout Traveler Interior (photo Harold Allen)

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## From Around the U.S.



# "One More Look Back to 2025 Pebble Beach Automotive Week"... with partial list of events attended by Auto News

### *An Unmatched Tradition of Automotive Excellence*

The year 2025 is coming to a close, and even as we build toward our 75th celebration next August, we want to take the time to recall the many great cars, special gatherings, and magical moments that made the 2025 Pebble Beach Concours so memorable.

### Great Cars, Special Gatherings & Magic Car Moments

#### THE PEBBLE BEACH TOUR d'ELEGANCE CELEBRATED 27 YEARS THIS AUGUST

On Thursday morning of Pebble Beach Automotive Week, the vast majority of Pebble Beach Concours entrants rose before the sun to queue up for the 27th annual

### Pebble Beach Tour d'Elegance presented by Rolex.

#### SHELBY COBRAS SHINE AT THE PEBBLE BEACH CONCOURS d'ELEGANCE

To mark the 60th anniversary of one of the most intimidating cars of its era, the Shelby Cobra 427, the 2025 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance featured a historic class

of Shelby Cobras, showcasing the car's lineage from the First Production Cobra to the Last 427.

#### THE 74th PEBBLE BEACH CONCOURS d'ELEGANCE FEATURED LAND ROVER SPECIAL EXPEDITION CARS

The colorful details, unique configuration, and varied equipment on each car heightened the curiosity of anyone who took an up-close look. They captured the attention of people and left them wanting to know more about each car's story.

#### 100 YEARS OF MORETTI CELEBRATED AT THE PEBBLE BEACH CONCOURS d'ELEGANCE

This class was created in celebration of Moretti's centennial anniversary. Of the seven cars, two traveled from out of the country while the other five came from different areas within the United States.

On Concours Sunday, all cars were judged apart from one exhibited car.

#### THE BMW ART CAR MARKS ITS 50th ANNIVERSARY

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of its iconic series of Art

Cars, now 20 in number, BMW brought two stellar examples to the 2025 Pebble Beach Concours show field: the latest BMW Art Car No. 20 by Julie Mehretu was paired with the BMW Art Car No. 4 by Andy Warhol.

#### EIGHTICONICROLLS-ROYCE PHANTOMS GATHER AT PEBBLE BEACH

Rolls-Royce marked the centennial of the Phantom this year. All eight iterations of the Phantom, from I to VIII, were present on the lawn of The Lodge at Pebble Beach for Pebble Beach Automotive Week, and the gathering was preserved for posterity in both photos and videos.

#### *Purchase Tickets to the 2026 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance*

Join us on August 16, 2026 for the 75th Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance at The Lodge at Pebble Beach in California. Watch style icons, innovative prototypes, and racing greats compete for the top prize in the collector car world, while you enjoy the camaraderie of auto enthusiasts from around the globe.



Chris Chung, Auto News Digital Editor pictured at Monterey Car Week at Pebble Beach (photo Auto News)

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## Gary Williams to be Honored During Monterey Car Week 2026



Gary Williams (left) and George Barris both have passed. (photo Auto News)

## 2025 Monterey Car Week

This was our 20<sup>th</sup> year of attending "Monterey Car Week" the second week in August each Year.....!

### Events include but not limited to:

- Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance
- 5 Collector Car Auctions
- "The Quail" in Carmel Valley
- Legends of Auto Event & Presentations
- Carmel Car Shows
- Monterey Car Shows
- Seaside Car Shows
- Laguna Seca Racing Events
- Retro Auto Forum Events
- Automaker Events, Private and Public
- Events at area Golf Courses
- Auto Memorabilia Show Displays
- Monterey Canery Row Events

**Hope to see you next August!!!**



## From Around the U.S.



### A Double Pleasure: Capitol Reef National Park In My Hyundai Santa Fe

continued from page 2

line are minimal. With the Santa Fe hybrid's powertrain a 1.6-liter turbocharged Gasoline Direct Injection(GDI) 4-cylinder engine coupled with a six-speed automatic transmission, the combined city/highway fuel economy is estimated at 34mpg. With an 18 gallon gas tank, this puts the driving range at over 550 miles.

The 12.3-inch high resolution touch screen is easy to see without a glare on the screen on sunny days. Maps and other navigation information are easy to access and read. A fully digital instrument cluster shows your speed, the speed limit, your driving mode, blind spot detection, gas gauge and other information to make your drive safe. One of my favorites on the interior design is an open area in front of the center console that is a perfect spot to stash a purse out of view.

After the 850-mile trip from the Columbia Basin in Washington to Torrey, Utah near the entrance to the park, we visited the park's visitor center to learn that a Park Ranger-led stargazing program was happening that evening. As the daylight dimmed, the stars shined over the desert landscape while planets appeared in all their glory. The Milky Way shone through the very dark skies. A dual pane sunroof in the Hyundai Santa Fe is perfect for stargazing by front and backseat occupants.

Panorama Point at sunset offers an amazing view of changing colors as the play of light against the cliffs sets to end another day at Capitol Reef National Park. "Capitol" came from the resemblance of the high, white sandstone dome in the park referred to as Capitol Dome because it reminded travelers of the US Capitol building. The Waterpocket Fold, a 100-mile-long fold in the earth's crust exposes a high ridge running north-south through the narrow park. The word "Reef" was used by early pioneers to describe the high ridge as a barrier to travel — much like a barrier reef in an ocean.

The park has rich history of American Indians, pioneers and outlaw cowboys. The Fruita Rural Historic District contains a blacksmith shop, a one-room schoolhouse and the Gifford homestead. A thriving orchard of over 2,000 fruit trees is protected and cultivated by park staff. A 10-mile scenic drive runs south from the visitor center where spectacular sandstone formations and white domes line the length of the road. Over a dozen trails varying from easy to strenuous feature dramatic canyon views, hidden canyons and mountain top panoramas.

A local resident in Torrey suggested that we take a drive on Utah's Scenic Byway 12 which is considered one of America's most scenic roads. We drove from Torrey to Boulder stopping at three amazing overlooks that displayed the rugged cliffs of Capitol Reef National Park from the highway that climbed to 9,600 feet on the east slope of Boulder Moun-

tain. Vegetation along the highway was beginning the beautiful autumn transformation to golden and red hues. Another hint that fall was arriving was the sound of elk bugling as we stopped at one viewpoint. The drive in "Big Red" made the trip almost as incredible as the surrounding scenery.

After owning the Hyundai Santa Fe Limited Hybrid for just over a year, I continue to be happy with the buying experience at Speck Hyundai, the follow up by the sales staff to cheerfully help me (the low technology customer) figure out how to navigate some of the features, and the service department employees who have been efficiently doing their job.



Sally Hanson's Hyundai Santa Fe (photo Sally Hanson)



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# Top Five Worst Drivers by Car Brand

[LendingTree Report]

*Tesla drivers are involved in more accidents than drivers of any other brand for the 2nd year in a row.*

**Top 5 Worst Drivers by Car Brand (Driving incidents per 1,000 drivers)**

1. Tesla (37)
2. Ram (34)
3. Subaru (33)
4. Audi (32)
5. Mazda (32)

*LendingTree's auto insurance expert and licensed insurance agent, Rob Bhatt, had this to say:*

*"It often costs more to insure a car with high crash rates. Regardless of your car's reputation, you will pay more for insurance if you have moving violations or accidents on your driving record. It's important to stay alert and responsible behind the wheel, regardless of the vehicle you drive.*

*No car makes you invincible. Not even a Tesla can protect you from getting into an accident or getting a ticket. Nor can a Subaru or Ram truck."*

Tesla, Ram and Subaru have the worst drivers in the nation, according to a LendingTree analysis of 30 car brands. For the second year in a row, we found that **Tesla drivers are involved in more accidents than drivers of any other brand**.

Researchers calculated the number of driving incidents per 1,000 drivers for every brand to determine the best and worst drivers by car brand. The rankings include; accidents, DUIs, speeding-related incidents, and citations. Here is what we found:

• **Tesla, Ram and Subaru have the worst drivers.** Nationally, Tesla continued on page 15

**Auto News Introduces 501 (3)(c) Non-Profit Foundation SEE:**



## SHOWCASE REVIEWS

### 2026 Hyundai Ioniq 9 EV



The Hyundai Ioniq 9 is rated by most as, the "Top Selling" Electric EV in its class. Lot's of room, power, and loaded with all the latest technology up-dates.

**BASE PRICE: \$76,490 \***  
**TYPE: 3 row Electric SUV**  
**ENGINE: Dual Electric Motors**  
**HORSEPOWER: 215 to 422 hp**  
**TRANS: HTRAC AWD**  
**MPG: 91 MPGe**

### LEXUS RX 350h AWD



The Lexus RX 350h AWD fits nicely into the Lexus line-up of mid sized SUV's while offering buyers a Hybrid. The base MSRP offers buyers a great value in a 4 door SUV.

**BASE PRICE: \$55,705 \***  
**TYPE: 4 door Hybrid SUV**  
**ENGINE: 2.5L 4 cyl Hybrid**  
**HORSEPOWER: 246 Net Combined**  
**TRANS: CVT**  
**MPG: 36 combined**

### 2026 Mazda CX 70



Mazda has made great progress in offering buyers AFFORDABLE vehicles while growing their brand nationwide. The all new Mazda CX-70 is an example of that strategy.

**BASE PRICE: \$ 56,670 \***  
**TYPE: 4-door SUV**  
**ENGINE: G 3.3L i6 Turbo**  
**HORSEPOWER: 340 hp**  
**TRANS: SKYACTIV-DRIVE 8-sp**  
**MPG: 28 highway**

### TOYOTA Corolla Cross XLE



When it comes to "affordability" Toyota leads the industry. The Corolla Cross is an example. Under 40K, as tested, packed with extras and above average MPG rating.

**BASE PRICE: \$ 31,010 \***  
**TYPE: 4-door SUV**  
**ENGINE: 2.0L 4-cyl**  
**HORSEPOWER: 169 hp**  
**TRANS: CVT**  
**MPG: 31 highway**

### Toyota Tundra Capstone CrewMax Hybrid



As Toyota gains market share in the U.S. truck market the Tundra leads the way with new models. The Tundra Capstone CrewMax 4 x 4 will make all truckers "take notice" (see page 1 photo)

**BASE PRICE: \$ 80,800 \***  
**TYPE: Crew Cab**  
**ENGINE: i-Force Max Twin-Turbo V6 Hybrid**  
**HORSEPOWER: 437 hp**  
**TRANS: 10 speed-AT**  
**MPG: 22 highway**

### VW Golf GTI Autobahn



Driving a VW Golf GTI is the definition of "fun-behind the-wheel." The current GTI offers improved handling, more power and a new Infotainment package all at an affordable price.

**BASE PRICE: \$ 40,880 \***  
**TYPE: Hatchback**  
**ENGINE: 2.0 liter DOHC 4 cyl**  
**HORSEPOWER: 241 hp**  
**TRANS: 6 speed**  
**MPG: 32 highway**

\* All information listed "AS TESTED"

## SHOWCASE REVIEWS

## 2026 Lexus TX 550 h AWD



The Lexus TX 550h has it all !! Power Performance & Packed with all the latest technologies. (See page 1 story on a Road trip from Seattle to Sun Valley, Id. and back during the Holidays !)

BASE PRICE: \$ 79,510 \*  
TYPE: 4 door Hybrid SUV  
ENGINE: V6 Plug-in Hybrid  
HORSEPOWER: 404 Net  
Combined  
TRANS: CVT  
HORSEPOWER: 76 MPGe

## 2026 Mazda CX-50



Once again, Mazda is a leader in marketing "affordable" vehicles for U.S. customers, while increasing their market share. The 2026 CX-50 & CX-70 are examples of that strategy.

BASE PRICE: \$ 42,900 \*  
TYPE: 4 door SUV  
ENGINE: SKYACTIVE 2.5I  
HORSEPOWER: 227 hp  
TRANS: 6-speed AT  
MPG: 29 highway

## Toyota Camry Nightshade AWD



The Toyota Camry is Toyota's all-time best selling model. The Nightshade HYBRID fits into the line-up as Toyota grows the brand. An affordable vehicle available from the # 1 brand in the U.S.

BASE PRICE: \$ 33,825 \*  
TYPE: Hybrid Sedan  
ENGINE: 2.5I 4 cyl.  
HORSEPOWER: 232 Net  
Combined  
TRANS: eCVT w/ paddle shifters  
MPG: 46 highway

## Toyota Crown Signia Ltd



Toyota continues to expand their line-up the SUV segment. Why ? More customers are buying SUV's and looking for more choices. The Crown Signia gives them that choice And more !!

BASE PRICE: \$ 47,990 \*  
TYPE: 4 dr Hybrid SUV  
ENGINE: 2.5I 4 cyl.  
HORSEPOWER: 240 Net  
Combined  
TRANS: eCVT  
MPG: 37 highway

## VW Atlas SEL Premium R-Line



The Volkswagen Atlas keeps VW in the SUV market with a lower price vehicle and lots of new features.

BASE PRICE : \$ 53,205 \*  
TYPE: 4-door SUV  
ENGINE: 2.0L -DOHC-TURBO - 4 CYL  
HORSEPOWER : 269 hp  
TRANS: 8 speed AT  
MPG: 25 highway

## Volkswagen ID. Buzz



The VW ID BUZZ van gets the Auto News "thumbs-up-award" for 2025 during an "test drive" SEE STORY ON PAGE 4

BASE PRICE: \$ 65,495  
TYPE: Minivan  
ENGINE: Electric  
HORSEPOWER: 282 /335 hp  
TRANS: 1-speed direct  
MPG: 83 MPGe

## Top 5 Worst Drivers by Car Brand . . . . !

continued from page 14

drivers had 37 incidents per 1,000 drivers — up significantly from 31 in last year's analysis. Ram and Subaru driver are involved in 34 and 33 incidents, respectively. Tesla drivers are the worst in nine states.

• **Mercury, Pontiac and Cadillac have the best drivers.** Mercury drivers had 19 incidents per 1,000 drivers nationally — about half the rate among Tesla drivers — making it the best brand two years in a row.

• **Pontiac overtakes BMW as the brand with the highest DUI rate.** Pontiac drivers had a DUI rate of 3 per 1,000 drivers — a massive jump from 1 in last year's analysis.

• **Ram has the worst drivers in 16 states.** That means Ram drivers had the highest incident rates among the 30 brands analyzed in nearly a third of states.

LendingTree's auto insurance expert and licensed insurance agent, Rob Bhatt, had this to say:

"The data shows that those who drive practical vehicles like Subarus and RAMs are involved in incidents nearly as frequently as those in zippier models like Teslas. This is a good reminder of how important it is to drive responsibly, regardless of the vehicle you drive."

**Tesla has worst drivers**

Going fully electric may not mean as much if you're a menace on the streets.

In fact, from Jan. 1, 2024, through Dec. 31, 2024, Tesla had the worst drivers, at 36.94 incidents (accidents, DUIs, speeding and citations) per 1,000 drivers. When we conducted this study in late 2023, Tesla ranked second-worst with 31.13 incidents from Nov. 14, 2022, through Nov. 14, 2023.

The car brands with the most driving incidents per 1,000 drivers are Tesla, Ram and Subaru.

Speed can play a role here. The cheapest Tesla — a standard Model 3 with rear-wheel drive — can accelerate from zero to 60 mph in 5.8 seconds. Other packages of the Model 3 can accelerate from zero to 60 in 4.2 and 3.1 seconds.

Ram — which became a stand-alone brand in 2009 — follows at 33.92. That's an improvement from our last version's worst ranking, though it had a similar incident rate of 32.90. Subaru (32.85) remains third-worst, though it saw an uptick from an incident rate of 30.09.

What does that mean for drivers of these cars? According to LendingTree auto insurance expert and licensed insurance agent Rob Bhatt, it could affect insurance rates in a few different ways.

"The immediate impact is on the individual," he says. "Most of these incidents are going to make your rates go up. The insurance rates for specific models are more impacted by accidents than some of these other incidents. If Tesla drivers get into accidents at a higher rate than other drivers, insurance companies will probably spend more to insure them than other vehicles. This, in turn, may prompt insurance companies to charge higher rates to insure a Tesla."

\* All information listed "AS TESTED"

**WOMEN in the AUTO WORLD**

## Women in the Auto World

**WOMEN in the AUTO WORLD**

### Previously Featured: "Women in the Auto World"

Lyn St. James – Indy Race Driver  
 Felicia Fields – Ford HR VP  
 Mary Barra – GM CEO  
 Michelle Christensen – Acura Design  
 Lisa Copeland – FCA Dealer  
 Sandra Button – Pebble Concours  
 Courtney Kramer – Auto News  
 Amber Geissler – Reaction Motorsports

Monika Kalenski – MEK Magnet  
 Chanterria McGilbra – Prancing Ponies Foundation  
 Nancy LeMay – LeMay Family Collection  
 Muffy Bennett – Car Collector  
 Jennifer and Abbie Biggs – Repair Shop Owner  
 Carolyn Jackson – VP Brand Strategy Barrett-Jackson  
 Monterey Touring Vehicle (MTV) Heather Gardner  
 Pam Nelson – Nelson Auto Group

Joyce Chow – Social Media Mogul in Hollywood  
 Sarah Deccio – Distribution Mgr.  
 Valerie Thompson – Motorcycle Racer  
 Ashley, Courtney & Brittany Force – Drag Racing Champions  
 Toyota of Marysville – Ladies at Work  
 Dana White – Chief Comm. Officer - Hyundai N. America  
 Rita Case – Rick Case Auto Group  
 Connie Peters – Automotive Writer

### Rick Case Bikes for Kids Makes Holidays "Wheely" Bright

*Rick Case Automotive Group distributed gently used bicycles donated by the community.*

Rita Case, President and CEO of the Rick Case Automotive Group, is making spirits bright one bicycle at a time. Now in its 44th year, Rick Case Bikes for Kids has gifted children in South Florida with gently used bikes that have been donated by the community.

The Rick Case Volkswagen showroom in Weston was filled with bikes that were presented to members of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Broward County, many receiving their very first bike.

"These boys and girls are so happy and excited to have a bike, and that is what the holiday season is about," said Case. "The generosity of our customers, friends and neighbors in donating these bikes is extraordinary."

We all remember our first bike and the joy of that first ride. It's that sense of freedom and a feeling of independence that comes with riding a bike that makes it so special."

Since 1982, Rick Case Bikes for Kids has collected upwards of 124,000 gently used bicycles and distributed them to children through the Boys & Girls Clubs, Habitat for Humanity, Women

in Distress and other local charitable organizations, churches, synagogues and schools.

"This annual tradition is so special for our kids. We thank Rita and the entire Rick Case Automotive Group team for spreading the joy of the holiday season through the gift of bicycles," said Matt Organ, Co-CEO, Boys & Girls Clubs of Broward County.

*About The Rick Case Automotive Group*

Founded in 1962, the Rick Case Automotive Group has been honored by Automotive News as the National All-Star Dealer and President and CEO Rita Case was named the 2024 TIME Dealer of the Year. Rick Case Automotive Group is the nation's largest female owned and operated automotive dealer group in America, offering Honda, Hyundai, Genesis, Ioniq, Volkswagen, Kia, Acura, Audi, Mazda, Maserati, Fiat, Alfa Romeo, Honda Motorcycles and E-Z-Go golf carts. Celebrating more than 60 years in business,

the Rick Case Automotive Group has 12 dealerships in South Florida and Georgia. The South Florida dealerships are known for holding national sales records, consistently ranking among the top performers in markets they serve. Rick Case Automotive Group is headquartered at 14500 W. Sunrise Blvd. in Sunrise, Florida. For more information, visit [www.RickCase.com](http://www.RickCase.com).



Rita Case with Lucas and Gert from Boys & Girls Clubs of Broward County

### Spread Holiday Cheer at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital

*Rita Case and Broward County Property Appraiser's office teamed up to lift spirits at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital by delivering gifts to patients this holiday season.*

*Pediatric patients receive toys, puzzles, books, blankets and more*

To lift the spirits and bring comfort to pediatric patients and their families at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital in Hollywood, Florida, Broward County Property Appraiser Marty Kiar's Outreach Program in partnership with Rita Case, president CEO of the Rick Case Automotive Group, and Ron Cacciato, Director of Professional Standards and Compliance for the Broward County Property Appraiser's office, visited with them delivering a sleigh filled with gifts.

"We collect books, toys, blankets and more for these children and their families who are going through so much. It's particularly difficult this time of year," said Case. "If we can bring them some comfort with a blanket and a book or a toy, it makes what we do all

*continued on page 25*



(left to right) Ron Cacciato, Rita Case, Marty Kiar, Lori Manly and Caitlin Stella Photos courtesy of Rick Case Automotive Group

### Dodge Charger Scat Pack "Test Drive Review"

*continued from page 2*

is a pretty nice big coupe, with a rear hatch, making it a practical daily driver in a pleasing shape. For a base price of \$54,995 the Charger Scat Pack is not cheap, but it's not crazy-expensive either.

More practicality is on the way in the form of a 4-door Charger, which likely means a return to the law enforcement market in sedan form. Charger is now a sub-brand

of its own, in a matter of speaking. Two body styles (three if you count the way the front of the electric Daytona differs from that of the gasoline powered one), three powertrain options, and knowing Dodge, special packages are probably in the works.

But what about that thing die-hard American muscle car enthusiasts are really crying out for: a Hemi V8? Company officials

have been coy about that, even amid persistent speculation that engineers are working to shoehorn the Hemi into this new platform. As I write this, no confirmation, just rampant rumors on social media.

For now, Dodge is back in the old-school muscle car game. You just have to be okay with the sound of six cylinders, instead of eight.



Dodge Charger Scat Pack (photo Dave Kunz)



# Car Collections



## McCormick's Palm Springs Exotic Car Auction Scheduled for February 20<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>

Excitement is building as McCormick's Palm Springs Exotic Car Auctions prepares for its upcoming live auction, taking place February 20th, 21st, and 22nd at the Palm Springs Convention Center. The three-day event will showcase an impressive and diverse lineup of vehicles, offering something for every type of enthusiast and collector.

Hundreds of cars are expected to cross the block, ranging from iconic American muscle cars and beautifully preserved vintage European classics to modern-day luxury and performance

vehicles. Whether buyers are searching for a timeless collectible or a late-model showstopper, the auction promises a dynamic mix of quality, rarity, and value.

With decades of experience and a reputation for lively, in-person bidding, Palm Springs Exotic Car Auctions continues to attract buyers and sellers from across the country and world. The February auction is shaping up to be one of the highlights of the season, delivering three days of automotive excitement in the heart of the desert.



1968 Chevrolet Camaro RS/SS Lot #252 Muscle Car Entry

## Fun-To-Drive vs. Technology

continued from page 5

signal, the lane departure screams at you when changing lanes, even if there is no vehicle within a quarter mile. The adaptive cruise control brakes your car if you get "too close" to the car in front. These systems are made for the lowest common denominator of driver, not the attentive driver who drives "a half mile ahead" and is watching for every contingency.

Now cars have connectivity and FSD (full self driving). Perhaps the leading cause of accidents and deaths today (aside from drunk driving) is inattention. And the more distractions a driver has, the more likely an accident. I don't claim to be the perfect automobile driver, but the worst thing I do when driving is listen to the radio. No cell phone, no texting, no having three course meals (I eat takeout at home) and I don't talk much if there is a passenger. If it's my wife, she does all the talking anyway. I am watching cross traffic, anticipating what other drivers might do, watch the signals, two lights down. I don't drive fast (my rule of thumb is 5 mph over), but by driving ahead, I coast more, using up more of my energy, less braking. I make it a game to see what kind of fuel economy I can achieve. I am engaged in my driving and the only way to do that is to pay attention to driving.

New cars take away the fun of driving. They nudge your steering wheel, they put your brakes on if your cruise control says you are too close, they even tell you to put your hands on the steering wheel if you remove them just to play with the lane keep assist. Will I ever buy a new car? I doubt it, as my last new car buy was over 20 years ago when cars were more fun. Yes I did buy another car about a year ago, a 2017 MBZ GLE400. It goes like stink, handles like a sports sedan, has informative analog gauges and has a surround camera so you can park without fear of banging your car. It has everything I like and need without the intrusion. And it starts with a big silver push button.

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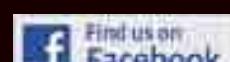
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## 2025 Land Rover Defender 110 X-Dynamic SE

The 2025 Land Rover Defender 110 X-Dynamic SE continues the legacy of one of the most iconic names in off-road adventure – but this version doesn't just conquer trails, it does so with poise, comfort, and serious V8 power. Finished in striking Carpathian Grey and sitting on gloss black 22-inch wheels, the Defender X-Dynamic SE blends heritage styling with modern attitude.

Under the hood is a formidable 5.0L supercharged V8 delivering 493 horsepower and 450 lb-ft of torque, paired with an 8-speed automatic transmission and Land Rover's advanced all-wheel drive system with a twin-speed transfer case. Whether navigating urban streets or rocky mountain passes, the Defender feels capable, confident, and composed.

The drive experience is elevated by Adaptive Dynamics, Terrain Response 2®, and air suspension – which can raise or lower the vehicle to suit the environment. Configurable drive modes, Hill

Descent Control, and an electronic active rear differential all contribute to the Defender's true go-anywhere capability.

Inside, the Defender feels upscale and purposeful. The Ebony Windsor leather seats are heated and cooled, the cabin is trimmed with premium materials, and the technology suite is modern without feeling overcomplicated. The 11.4" Pivi Pro infotainment system integrates Apple CarPlay®, Android Auto™, SiriusXM, and a 700W Meridian surround sound system. Meanwhile, the 3D Surround Camera, Head-Up Display, and Adaptive Cruise Control provide daily-driving practicality.

With 3-zone climate control, panoramic sunroof, cabin air purification, and 40:20:40 folding rear seats, this Defender is also highly livable. Storage is versatile, and the durable rubber flooring shows it's still ready for dirty boots and muddy gear.

At \$108,278 MSRP as equipped, the Defender X-Dynamic SE isn't cheap – but it delivers an unmatched blend of legacy, luxury, and capability. For those seeking a vehicle equally at home on a dirt trail or a downtown valet stand, the 2025 Defender 110 is hard to beat.

## 2025 Land Rover Defender X-Dynamic SE "Test Drive Review"



Chris Chung with Defender (photo Auto News)

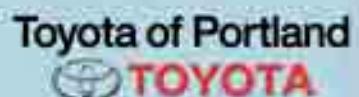
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## Slot Car Racing Europe vs. U.S.

continued from page 6

love of cars, and the excitement of racing a Ferrari, or Ford etc. at least for now was gone.

Back in Europe, speeds stayed more scale appearing, the cars stayed models of real cars, and the hobby continued and still is going on to this day.

Model Car racing inspires children of all ages, the thrill of racing, the excitement with almost no chance of injury, except maybe to your ego.

There are tournaments where 100's will attend, races are staged some even as long as 24 hours. Where racers young and old can pit their skills against each other and the clock.

The Hobby of Model Car racing has grown again in North America, first from Scalextric, and then other brands being reintroduced here.

This hobby has created many famous real race drivers and Team owners, but that is another story.

Hopefully we will see you at the Races!!

## BRM Slot Cars & SCALE RACING Celebrate 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Event "24 Hours of Tacoma" with International Teams from Europe



Alan Smith (center) Kicks Off BRMS "24 Hours of Tacoma"



Alan Smith Scale Racing Center's wife Audra (left) & daughter Julia at Event

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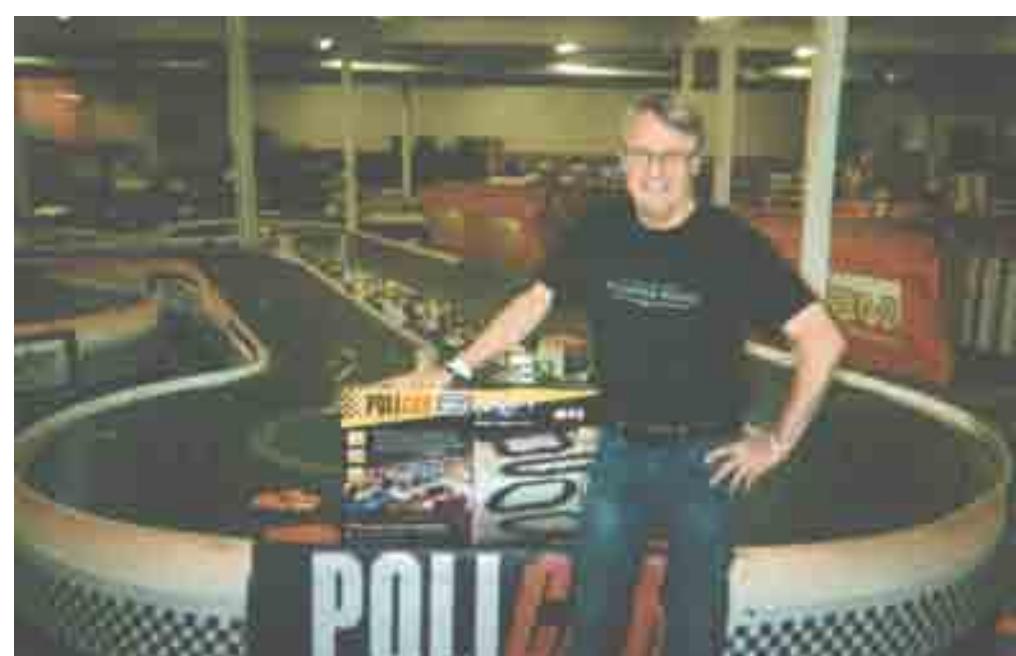
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Alan Smith, Scale Racing Center Owner, Demonstrates PoliCar Slot Car Starter Kit at his Center in Tacoma



## Tires



## 2026 Cadillac Vistiq "TestDrive"

continued from page 10

ning 33-inch curved LED display powered by Google-based infotainment. Super Cruise, Cadillac's advanced hands-free driving system, comes standard with a 3-year plan.

Seating for seven is generous and plush. Heated, ventilated, and massaging front seats, avail-

able heated second-row outboard seats, and a dual-pane panoramic sunroof create a cabin that feels upscale and relaxing. Interior materials and trim reflect Cadillac's commitment to craftsmanship.

### Technology & Utility

A 23-speaker AKG® Studio audio system with Dolby Atmos®, built-in Night Vision, and a suite of safety systems provide peace of mind and entertainment. Cargo

space is ample, with up to 80.2 cubic feet available with all seats folded.

### Design & Pricing

Cadillac's signature design elements — the Black Crystal Shield grille, vertical lighting, and sculpted bodywork — give the Vistiq a premium presence. Wheel options range from 21- to 23-inches, adding customization.

The Vistiq starts at \$78,790 for the base Luxury trim. Premium

trims reach up to \$97,890, with fully loaded models exceeding \$100K — placing it competitively in the luxury EV segment.

### Final Verdict

The 2026 Cadillac Vistiq is more than just Cadillac's next EV — it's a confident step forward in the electric luxury space. With thrilling performance, premium amenities, and family-first design, the Vistiq redefines what an American electric SUV can be.

# Auto News Introduces 501 (3) (c) Non-Profit Foundation (see page 24 & 25)

## More Than One Lap Record Per Year For Pirelli At The Nürburgring Nordschleife

The Most Recent Records Set This Year With The Audi RS 3 And Audi RS Q8 Performance

From 2019 up to now, Pirelli has set more than one lap record per year on average at the legendary Nürburgring Nordschleife in Germany. These records have been established with all sorts of vehicles, ranging from electric supercars to SUVs to compact hatchbacks, yet Pirelli has been a constant when it comes to lowering the Nordschleife lap times across every category of car.

All the tires in the P Zero range but the novelties introduced recently can boast a lap record around the Ring in the last five years: PZero Trofeo R on the Audi RS 3 and P Zero on the Audi RS Q8 performance in 2024; P Zero Trofeo RS on the Porsche Taycan Turbo GT in 2023; P Zero Corsa on the Porsche Taycan Turbo S in 2022; P Zero Corsa on the Porsche Cayenne Turbo GT and P Zero Trofeo R on the Audi RS 3 in 2021; and finally P Zero on the Audi RS Q8 in 2019.

The most recent records have come this year with the Audi RS 3, set on the P Zero Trofeo R — a semi-slick tire specialised in circuit use — and Audi RS Q8 performance equipped with the P Zero: the Ultra High Performance tire most frequently chosen by manufacturers to equip their top models. The Audi RS 3 record of 7m33.123s lowered the benchmark for compact cars by more than five seconds, while the RS Q8 performance became the fastest production SUV ever to lap the Ring, in a time of 7m36.698s that broke the existing record by more than two seconds. The same models had previously established the class records in 2021 and 2019 respectively, again on PZero Trofeo R and P Zero tires.

The Nürburgring Nordschleife, one of the most challenging circuits in the world, serves as a key testing ground for Pirelli, where the company rigorously evaluates its tires and latest developments on high-performance vehicles, particularly in partnership with German carmakers. A standout example is the P Zero Trofeo RS for the Porsche Taycan Turbo GT: the most sporting tire in the P Zero range, designed for track use but fully approved for the road.



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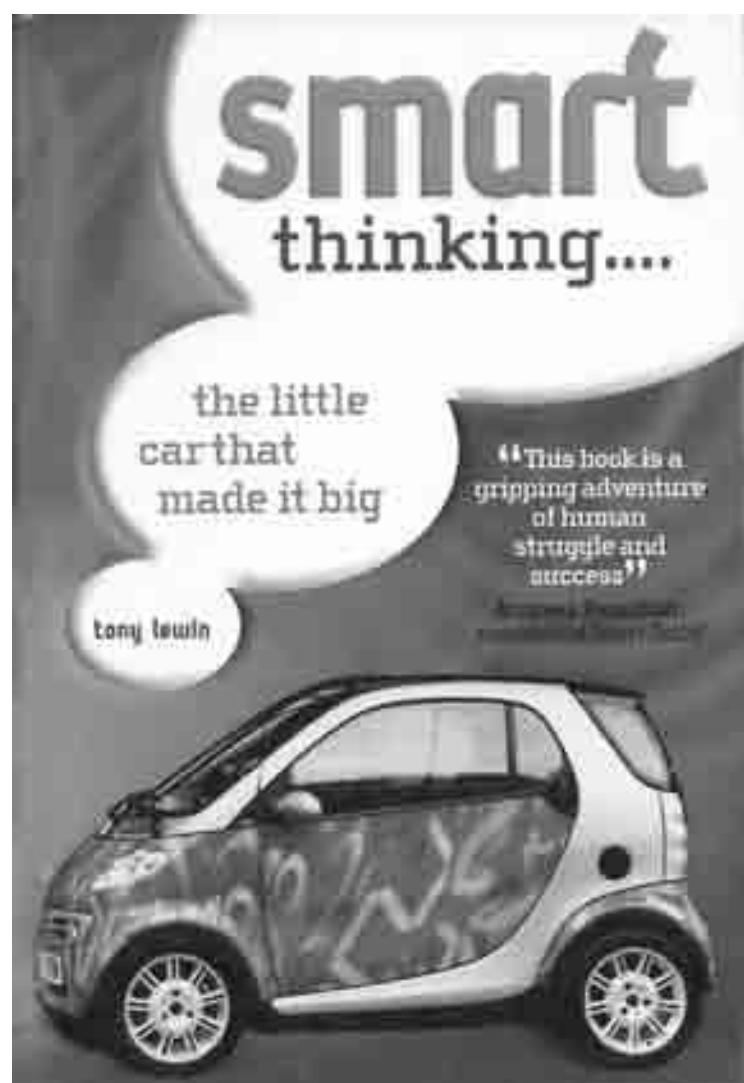


## Book Reviews

### Was It A Smart Idea To Bring The Smart Car To The U.S.?

- ★ Owners Say..... Yes
- ★ Some New Car Dealers Say .. No
- ★ U.S. Auto Makers Say..... No
- ★ I Say..... Maybe

**Stay Tuned For My Thoughts In Our Next Issue "Spring" (April/May)**



### Why Media Interviews, Consumer Polls, and Surveys May Not Reflect Your Actual Opinion

I have had some “push-back” from my comments when I referred to “talking heads” as I outlined in the process of news cycles in the last issue.

For the record, “all talking heads are BEAUTIFUL its part of the job. If you want to be considered UGLY that’s your choice not mine.

Back to the subject at hand, MEDIA INTERVIEWS AND CONSUMER POLLS.

As I may have mentioned earlier, I was born into the car business, but took a 15 year career change in the pharmaceutical & vitamin supplement industry. As a founding partner of Nature Made Vitamins (Pharmavite Pharmaceutical) and VP of sales and marketing for the brand I did hundreds on media interviews. I soon learned that some interview questions have a potential positive and/or negative intent depending on subject of the news cycle and position of the media outlet.

Therefore your interview results can end up as the OPPOSITE of your actual opinion.

The result being “... I never said that.” I have not done a media interview in 4 decades !!

**CONSUMER SURVEY'S & MEDIA POLLS :** The result's of a consumer survey or media poll can be influenced by the questions asked. I have always been suspicious of the term “Margin of Error” used by consumer & media pollsters.

Sometimes I think the ‘Margin of Error’ could be as high at 50%. Stay tuned as we get closer to our review of THE MAN THAT OWNS THE NEWS (First published in 2008)

**A PUBLISHING EVENT—the most powerful media mogul of our time is brilliantly captured by one of the most influential media writers of our time.**

**MICHAEL WOLFF**, a columnist for *Vanity Fair* and two-time National Magazine Award winner, is one of the nation's most influential writers about media, culture, and politics. He is a commentator for *CNBC* and a founder of *Newser* ([www.newser.com](http://www.newser.com)), the news aggregator. In 2003, he achieved international recognition for his dispatches from the Persian Gulf as the Iraq War began. His work, which has been widely anthologized, has appeared in numerous publications in the United States, including *New York* magazine, where he was a columnist, and the *Guardian* and *Spectator* in the United Kingdom. He is the author of four other books, including *Autumn of the Moguls* and *Burn Rate*. He lives in New York City.

**MICHAEL WOLFF**

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**RUPERT MURDOCH**

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## Time to Start Traveling “Again”

Alfa Romeo Stelvio Quadrifoglio  
"Test Drive" Review

by Arv Voss

*A Race machine in compact wagon or SUV Guise”*

## OVERVIEW:

The Alfa Romeo Stelvio Quadrifoglio AWD first appeared as a 2019 compact wagon, or was it a compact SUV, or was it a race car in disguise? Its styling is unmistakably Italian with curvaceous, sexy lines. Its power is surprising as is its overall handling and performance.

In any case, it is a front wheel drive, four door set of hot wheels that seats five in comfort – at least in the front seats.

## FERRARIESQUE MOTIVE FORCE:

The engine is a 2.9-liter Twin Turbo/intercooled DOHC 24-valve with Port Direct Injection V6 with Stop/Start. It is not a Ferrari power plant, but was designed by former Ferrari engineers.

Horsepower is 505 @ 6,500 rpm with 443 pound feet of torque @ 2,500 rpm. The engine mates to an 8-speed automatic transferring energy to all four wheels. It's capable of catapulting this Alfa from 0-60 mph in 3.3 seconds. The EPA rating is 17 mpg city, 23 mpg highway and 19 combined mpg.

## INTERIOR AMBIENCE AND CARGO SPACE:

The Stelvio Quadrifoglio is well appointed with intuitive switch gear thoughtfully placed and the front seating provides an ideal driving position for performance maneuvers. The comfortable rear seat is limited in space and headroom is short with the sloping roofline.

## CONNECTIVITY AND INFORMATION:

Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, a wireless phone charger, built-in navigation and a Wi-Fi Hotspot are available. A 12-speaker, 900-watt Harmon/Kardon sound system will satisfy discerning audiophiles.

## DRIVER-ASSISTANCE AND SAFETY FEATURES:

The Stelvio Quadrifoglio comes equipped with a host of standard driver-assistance fare – automated emergency braking, blind-spot monitoring, Adaptive Cruise Control with stop and go, Lane Departure Warning, Lane-keeping Assist and automatic high-beam headlights.

## AS TESTED:

The base price of my tester was \$87,370.00 while options such as the Verde Montreal tri-coat exterior paint, Quadrifoglio AWD, dual pane sunroof, 5-hole aluminum alloy wheels and destination charge elevated the final sticker to \$95,360.

## WARRANTY AND MAINTENANCE COVERAGE:

Complimentary maintenance is covered for one year or 10,000 miles. A limited Warranty and Powertrain warranty covers four years or 50,000 miles.

## PERFORMANCE:

The Red Start/Stop button on the steering wheel and the drive mode selector knob with Dynamic, Natural, Advance Efficiency and Race settings allows the driver to choose the level of performance for the engine, transmission, steering, suspension and brakes as well as accelerator response.

## OUR FINAL ANALYSIS:

The Alfa Romeo Stelvio Quadrifoglio is not for everyone's taste as a daily driver. It is exceptionally well balanced, but may be too firm for some. The nimble steering and aggressive braking are admirable. The Race exhaust note alone is worth the price of admission.

## SPECIFICATIONS:

## Alfa Romeo Stelvio Quadrifoglio AWD

Vehicle Type: Front engine AWD 5-passenger Four Door wagon or SUV

Base Price: \$87,370.00

As Tested Price: \$95,360.00

Motor Size and Type: 2.9-liter Twin Turbo/ intercooled DOHC 24-valve with Port Direct Injection V6 with Stop/Start.

Horsepower(bhp): 505@6500 rpm

Torque (lb.-ft.) 443@ 2500 rpm

Transmission: 8 speed automatic

Drive Train: Front mounted engine – AWD

Brakes: Power-assisted Brembo high-performance four wheel cross drilled vented ceramic discs with ABS.

Suspension: Front double wishbone and Rear multilink control arms with front and rear anti-roll bars.

Tires: Pirelli P Zero PZ4 – Front – 255/45 R20 101Y AR Rear 285/40 R20 104Y AR mounted on Graphite finish 5-Linked loop alloy wheels.

Wheelbase: 110.9 inches

Overall Length: 185.1 inches

Width: 77.0 inches

Height: 66.3 inches

Curb Weight: 4,309 lbs

Fuel Capacity: 16.9 gallons

EPA Mileage Rating: 17 mpg city / 23 mpg hwy combined 19 mpg

0-60 mph: 3.3 seconds

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Founded by Larry Schick, longtime Seattle meteorologist and avid skier, Powder Poobah delivers free, sponsor-supported snow forecasts to more than 10,000 subscribers. Schick has been writing reports since the mid-90s — long before social media.

Curious about the season? Larry says "Winter 2025–26 kicks off with a neutral-to-weak La Niña pattern — good news for Northwest skiers and snowboarders."

"Before social media allowed anyone to post their thoughts about snow (or anything else), Larry was giving the heads-up



about powder days," said Joel Gratz, founder of OpenSnow.

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- Q&A Zooms with Larry and guests
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Larry's Dedication: Sending out a Powder Alert is a process that can take hours as Schick tracks changing weather patterns before finalizing a forecast.

"Weather has a rhythm to it," Larry said. "People take powder seriously, and I take the weather seriously. I always pick the most confident forecast."

The Powder Alert team includes forecaster Michael Fagin and marketing led by Andrea Hamilton, with sponsor support keeping it free for readers.

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*"Reaching Out To Community Colleges Across The Nation, with Automotive Programs To Attract A Younger Generation To Enter The Automotive Industry"*

*(See Story on Page 25)*



## Auto News Foundation



**Twisp WA., a small town in North Central Washington, partners with local School District and Residents to create Automotive Tech School**



Twisp, WA. Automotive Tech School students with Matt Kennedy, Instructor (second from right in Blue Shirt)

## Auto News Editor Sally Hanson Has Foundation Fundraising Experience

When the Auto News Foundation was beginning to take shape, I was told by dear friends about the amazing accomplishments that their friend had achieved in his life after completing the Automotive Technology program at Columbia Basin College (CBC) located in

the Tri-Cities in Washington State. His success story resonated with me over the past few years as we formed the foundation to invest in education and innovation at automotive technology schools and to encourage passion for automobiles and technological advancement in that field.

Now it is my pleasure to introduce you to John Strege. He graduated in 1970 from Columbia High School in Richland, Washington—a dozen years before the school was renamed Richland High School. His grades in high school were poor, he had no clear direction or plans for the future and doubted any college would accept him based on his high school transcripts. What he did have going for him was the encouragement of his girlfriend, Terry, who inspired him to apply and enroll at CBC in the Automotive Technology classes. (John and Terry have now been married 53 years.)

After acceptance into the two-year associate degree program at CBC, Strege attended general studies classes the first half of the day and classes in the automotive shop in the afternoon. The general studies classes serve to complement the automotive technology career by including reading improvement, psychology, and mechanical drawing. Upon completion, he received an Associate degree in Applied Science with a 3.96 GPA. Strege then began a long career using the knowledge, mentorship and hands-on experience that CBC offers in the automotive technology program.

The final quarter of his last year in the program, he was sent to work at Al's Repair Shop in Pasco, where he continued to work for two and a half years after graduation servicing automobiles, trucks and a wide variety of farm machinery. Then he put in a stint at a lube shop before becoming a mechanic at a service station in Richland.

In 1976, he was offered a job at the Hanford Site as an industrial mechanic using skills he had learned at CBC working on fans, bearings and pumps. Four years later he moved up the ranks to become a planner/scheduler with a contractor at Hanford. Later he became a manager of an insulator crew and then manager of various maintenance crews. Strege has been retired for ten years.

John Strege could be a poster person for CBC because he has plenty of rave reviews about what the Automotive Technology program and related courses provided to create his successful career. "I became excited about learning at CBC," Strege states, "Everything I learned there, I can apply to everyday life in order to excel. My entire life is a direct result of my education at CBC." And this includes the person who encouraged him to attend — John and Terry have been married 53 years!

The Auto News Foundation is exciting as we grow and continue to offer scholarship opportunities and educational resources designed for students, apprentices and young professionals who plan to enter automotive technical training. It is our mission to nurture passion in the industry and encourage students like John Strege.

If you would like to learn more about the Auto News Foundation, please visit our website: [autonewsfoundation.org](http://autonewsfoundation.org).

### Foundation QR Code



501(c)(3) NON PROFIT

### "Finding Tomorrows Technicians for New Car Dealers"

#### About the Auto News Foundation

The Auto News Foundation is a 501c3 non-profit foundation that was created with the intention of empowering the next generation of automotive technicians while supporting community colleges and tech school automotive programs.

#### Donation Tiers

All donations are tax deductible. 100% of donations shall go towards starting the Auto News Foundation Scholarship Fund to help aspiring youth join the automotive industry.

<b>"Biggs Rover" Tier</b> Up to \$1,000	<b>"Drager" Tier</b> Up to \$2,500	<b>"Doug Ikegami" Tier</b> Up to \$5,000	<b>"Rita Case" Tier</b> Up to \$10,000
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**\*Denotes Added Benefits**

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## Auto News Foundation



### Auto News Foundation Presents "TAP"® Awards To NW Students At An Event



Sylvie Madson, a TAP recipient accepts Award from Alan Smith owner of Scale Racing Center at a Northwest Legend of Auto Event in the Spring of 2025 (photo Auto News)

### Top 4 States With Automotive Tech Programs

#### 1. Michigan

1. Baker College of Owosso
2. Delta College
3. Ferris State University
4. Kalamazoo Valley Community College
5. Lansing Community College
6. Macomb Community College
7. Monroe County Community College
8. Northwest University
9. Oakland Community College
10. Schoolcraft College
11. University of Northwestern Ohio
12. Washtenaw Community College
13. Wayne County Community College District
14. Western Michigan University
15. WyoTech

#### 2. California

1. Cerritos College
2. Chaffey College
3. Citrus V
4. College of Alameda
5. College of San Mateo
6. Cypress College
7. Diablo Valley College
8. Los Angeles Trade Technical College
9. Miramar College
10. Palomar College
11. San Diego Miramar College
12. Santa Barbara City College

#### 2. California continued

13. Skyline College
14. Universal Technical Institute (UTI)
15. WyoTech

#### 3. Ohio

1. Cincinnati State Technical Community College
2. Clark State Community College
3. Columbus State Community College
4. Cuyahoga Community College
5. Lorain County Community College
6. Northwest State Community College
7. Ohio Technical College
8. Owens Community College
9. Sinclair Community College
10. University of Northwestern Ohio

#### 4. Illinois

1. Black Hawk College
2. College of DuPage
3. College of Lake County
4. Danville Area Community College
5. Lincoln Land Community College
6. Lincoln Technical Institute
7. Moraine Valley Community College
8. Parkland College
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10. Universal Technical Institute (UTI)

### Auto News Foundation Introduces "TAP"® (Tuition Assistance Program) in 2025...!

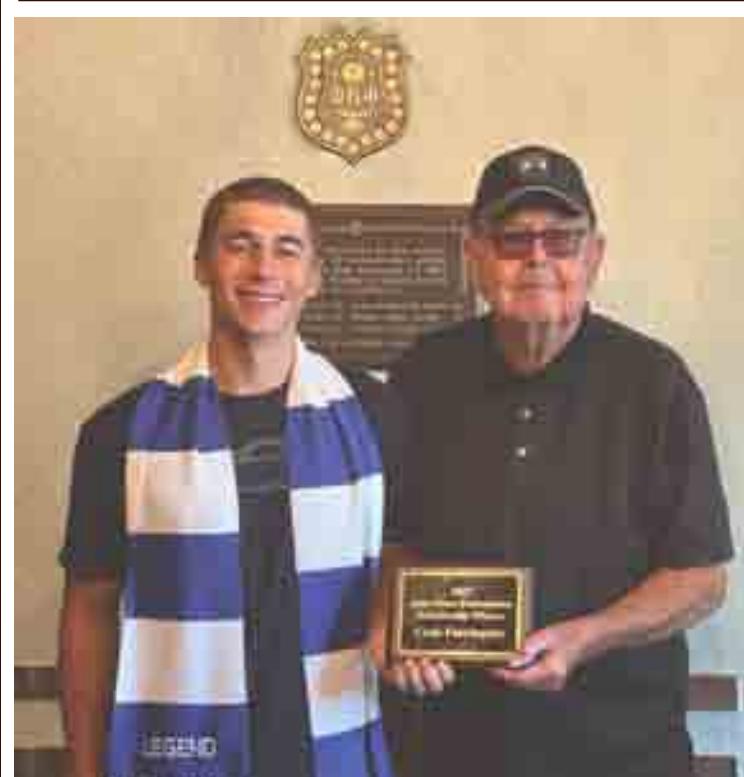
by Bill McCallum, Publisher/Founder

For TWO years we have been developing our TAP (Tuition Assistance Program) for students attending Automotive Tech Schools. Our goal was three fold.

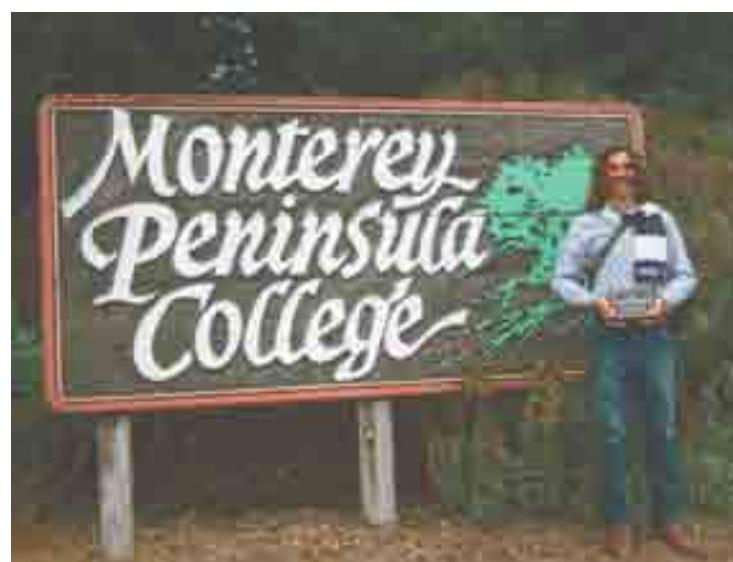
- 1- To develop a workable program delivering more potential employee's for auto dealers and OEM's across the U.S.
- 2- Using Global Auto News to highlight each students path to graduation over a two year period.
- 3- Passing on 70 % of the funds

raised by the Auto News Foundation a 501 (3) (c) NON-PROFIT for TAP scholarships starting in 2026. RESULTS TO DATE: 10 TAP scholarships to students attending:

- Shoreline Community College - Seattle, WA
- Yakima Valley College - Yakima, WA (see page 18)
- Monterey Peninsula College, Monterey, CA
- University of Washington (Business School) Seattle, WA



Cade Farrington Phi Kappa Psi Member and Univ. of Wash Graduate accepts TAP Award (photo Auto News)



Dan Brigantino First TAP Award recipient receives Second TAP Award during "Car Week" (photo Auto News)

### Rita Case Spreads Holiday Cheer at Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital

continued from page 16

worthwhile."

The toys, puzzles and books will keep families entertained and young minds stimulated during this period of healing and crib sheets, blankets and socks will keep patients comfortable and warm.

"We appreciate Rita, Ron and Marty for their kindness and for always keeping our kids top of mind for comforting and fun experiences like this," said Caitlin Stella, CEO of Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital. "Today is extra special since the holidays are so hard on our families. We are so grateful for their ongoing support of the hospital and those we care for."

The Broward County Property Appraiser's Outreach Program aims to provide joy to the most vulnerable population during their most difficult times, support local communities and make a positive difference in the lives of all who call South Florida their home.

"We are continually humbled by the generosity of our community," said Kelley Morris, President of Memorial Foundation and Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital Foundation. "Our mission is to ensure patients have access to the highest quality care, and philanthropy makes that possible. Together, we are making a meaningful difference in the lives of those who rely on the Memorial Healthcare System."

#### About Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital

Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital is one of the nation's leading pediatric hospitals, offering a comprehensive scope of healthcare services and programs in a caring, compassionate setting designed specifically for children. The level one pediatric trauma center combines advanced technology, the expertise of some of the region's most diverse, board-certified specialists, and a patient and family-centered focus to heal the body, mind, and spirit. Part of Memorial Healthcare System, the pediatric hospital in Hollywood, Florida, recently doubled in size, adding four floors, including a comprehensive cardiac care floor, an intraoperative MRI, an inpatient rehabilitation gym, family and staff support areas, and the 14th Garth Brooks Teammates for Kids Child Life Zone, among other offerings.

**Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital Foundation** focuses on philanthropy to positively impact patients, families, and underwrite programs, facilities, and equipment that support the pediatric facility's mission. To learn more, visit jdch.com and connect with @jdchospital on Facebook, X, YouTube and Instagram.



**Shoreline**  
COMMUNITY COLLEGE



## Auto News Foundation



### Auto News Introduces 501 (3) (c) Non-Profit Foundation SEE:



Distribution Outlets in Apartments, Condos, Post Offices and Retail Automotive Outlets in 7 Western States (photo Auto News)

### Global Auto News Expands

- ★ Retail Location
- ★ Direct Mail
- ★ Email "Fast Blasts"
- ★ Social Media
- ★ AI Platforms
- ★ Auto Show Events

by Bill McCallum

When you start on a journey sometimes you have no idea when or where it will end. That's where I was 40 years ago when the idea of an auto newspaper was born. I was publishing 2 weekly newspapers at the time "Uptown News" in Bellevue WA and the Coal Creek Newcastle News to the South. Both papers had a small auto section and were growing. I wasn't a car guy but I grew up in the business with family members involved with new car dealerships. I discussed the idea of an auto newspaper with Jim Hammond, the founder of the Puget Sound Auto Dealers Association and the original organizer of the Seattle Auto Show. He said "go for it" and you can count on my support. Thus Puget Sound Auto News was born. A few years later we expanded to Eastern WA, and Oregon and changed the name of the paper to Northwest Auto News.

With California being the largest new car market in the U.S. that was the next big step in our expansion and another name change to Auto News of America.

Enter Jay Leno. I first saw Jay at a comedy club on Sunset Blvd. shortly after we started circulating our paper in LA. Jay was the "car guy" that inspired me to expand our reach to include car collectors and collector car auctions. (see back page ad) I watched Jay's first TONIGHT show and attended his last TONIGHT show in person.

Next chapter. From our launch in Calif. we build a network of over 1,000 retail automotive distribution locations in four more states. (Ariz, Nv. Id, & Mt) and changed the name of our paper to GLOBAL AUTO NEWS and launched our online program. (www.autonewsonline.com) Currently we have added a digital platform sending out e-mail "fast blasts" reaching over 500K auto enthusiasts, media & PR firms, OEM's and car collectors.



Legends of Auto Gala Event attendees at dinner during presentations at previous event.

### Auto News Foundation Presented Awards at Monterey "Car Week" August 2025

#### Honored Members of Legends of Auto

George Barris\*  
Beau Boeckmann  
Bert Boeckmann  
Bob Bondurant\*  
Sandra Button  
Rita & Rick Case\*  
Corky Coker  
Frank Corrente  
Tom duPont  
Vic Edelbrock\*

Ryan Falconer  
Jim Farley  
Mark Fields  
Henry Ford Family  
Galpin Group Family  
Ken Gross  
Dan Gurney\*  
Lee Iacocca\*  
Craig Jackson  
Lyn Hiner

Lyn St. James  
Parnelli Jones  
Ed Justice Jr.  
Jay Leno  
Ken Lingenfelter  
Keith Martin  
Barry Meguiar  
Bruce McCaw  
Dana Mecum

Tim McGrane  
Bruce Meyer  
Peter Mullin\*  
Roger Penske  
Pierre Ford Family  
Stewart Reed  
Steve Saleen  
Carroll Shelby\*  
Danny Sullivan  
\*Departed Legends

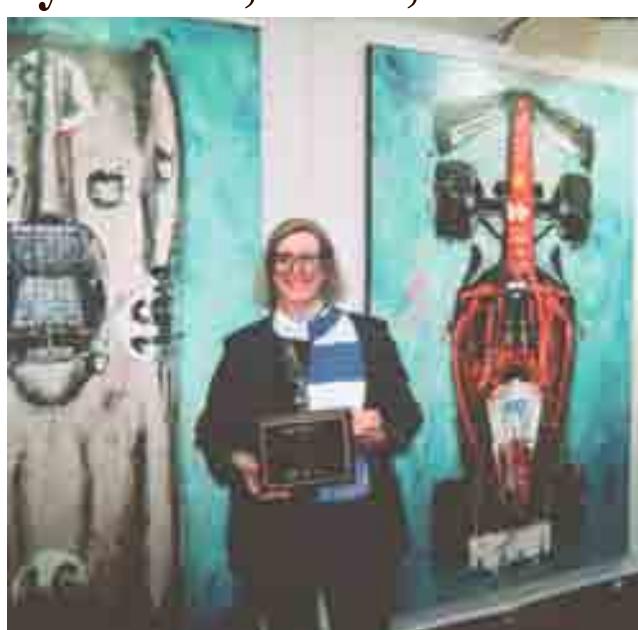
SEE - [www.LegendsofAuto.com](http://www.LegendsofAuto.com)

### Rita Case, C.E.O. of Rick Case Auto Group was recently honored as the Philanthropic "Dealer of the Year for 2025"



Rita Case with Legends of Auto Award at Rick Case Auto Group Headquarters honored in Monterey

### Lyn Hiner, Artist, Honored



Lyn Hiner, with Legend of Auto Award in Monterey during 2025 "Car Week", has studios in San Clemente, CA and Yokohama City, Japan SEE: [www.lynhiner.com](http://www.lynhiner.com)

**Mission Statement** To recognize and award individual accomplishments, that have significantly advanced the auto industry around the world and to help develop the next generation of auto industry leaders.

### Auto News Introduces 501 (3) (c) Non-Profit Foundation SEE:



# Pierre Ford - Seattle Adds New Inventory and More Promotion To Their Performance Brands



Ron Mondragón (far right) and his wife Betty, take delivery of GTD (photo Auto News)

## A Hero's Horsepower: Ron Mondragón Takes Delivery of "The Spirit of America" Mustang GTD .....

by Christopher Chung

It's not every day that a Mustang this special finds a home—and not every home belongs to a local legend. But at Pierre Ford in Seattle, Washington, Ron Mondragón, retired Deputy Chief of Fire Operations at the Seattle Fire Department, became the first in the state to take delivery of the new Spirit of America Edition Mustang GTD.

Mondragón is no stranger to Ford's finest. A lifelong Blue Oval enthusiast, he's owned multiple one-of-a-kind Mustangs, including a uniquely spec'd GT500 with chassis number 125 that drew serious attention back in 2020. His collection isn't just impressive—it's deeply personal.

Now, he adds to it one of the most elite Mustangs ever built.

The Spirit of America Edition GTD pays homage to both American racing heritage and Ford's modern performance legacy. Developed as a track-focused, street-legal powerhouse, the GTD boasts a supercharged 5.2L V8 pushing over 800 horsepower, a carbon fiber body, semi-active suspension, and state-of-the-art aerodynamics. The Spirit of America variant is even more exclusive—fitted with patriotic design elements, a limited badge, and bespoke color schemes that evoke American pride. Only a handful will be delivered across the country.

Delivery took place at Pierre Ford, a long-standing Seattle dealership with deep performance roots and home to the Pierre Performance division—focused on delivering specialty Ford vehicles to passionate enthusiasts.

And as the Spirit of America Edition Mustang GTD hits the road, it does so in the hands of someone who embodies its name.

## AutoNation & Orange Bowl Committee Unveil New \$600,000 STEAM Center in Miami Gardens

AutoNation, in partnership with the Orange Bowl Committee, Miami-Dade County and the City of Miami Gardens, recently celebrated the grand opening of the new Orange Bowl STEAM Center presented by AutoNation at Bunche Park West Recreation in Miami Gardens, Florida.

"Through our partnership with the Orange Bowl Committee, AutoNation is giving back to the community, ensuring that local educators and students have a true 21st-century learning environment," said Marilité Vazquez-Gonzalez, Senior Director, Sponsorships and Co-op, AutoNation and member of the Orange Bowl 2026 Host Committee. "This state-of-the-art STEAM Center is a powerful example of what's possible when public and private partners come together to invest in the future of the community."

The Orange Bowl STEAM Center presented by AutoNation is a \$600,000 investment featuring a dedicated workspace equipped

with robotics, engineering kits, maker materials, and a high-tech multimedia room with green-screen capabilities, audio-visual tools, and editing stations. These legacy gifts are possible because of the Orange Bowl Committee and its leadership of the 2026 Miami Host Committee, which will host the 2026 College Football Playoff National Championship on January 19, 2026, at Hard Rock Stadium in Miami Gardens. For over 90 years, the Orange Bowl has served as a primary civic engine for South Florida, using premier sporting events to fund year-round community

engagement, education, and youth sports programs.

"We're proud to play a key role in the Host Committee's Legacy Program and help bring the 2026 College Football Playoff National Championship to Miami. As one of South Florida's largest employers, we know that hundreds of millions of dollars in economic impact and a national spotlight can yield tremendous opportunities for the region, and we're excited to help our South Florida community maximize those benefits in the most impactful ways," said Vazquez-Gonzalez.



AutoNation's Marilité Vazquez-Gonzalez, Senior Director, Sponsorships and Co-op (back row, second from left), alongside representatives from the Orange Bowl Committee, Miami-Dade County and the City of Miami Gardens, celebrate the grand opening of the new Orange Bowl STEAM Center presented by AutoNation at Bunche Park West Recreation in Miami Gardens, Florida. Photo courtesy of Orange Bowl Committee)

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