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A Visit To Bardahl in a VW ID. Buzz

AUTO NEWS

FEATURES



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Volkswagen ID. Buzz at Bardahl Headquarters (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

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

VW 70th Year & ID. Buzz

by Bill McCallum

2025 marks the 70th year Volkswagen of America started selling “the bug” in the U.S. As an owner of a 1965 VW convertible I was part of the group that considered the VW bug the “peoples car.”

As VW expanded it's product line in the U.S. they introduced the Microbus and my family also owned an original VW Microbus. The original VW Microbus started

another new movement in the U.S. which lead to the birth of the SUV and other family friendly vehicles.

Leading up to the Volkswagen's “70th Anniversary” Volkswagen also introduced the “eye-catching” ID Buzz Microbus EV (see photo above the fold and reviews on page 4 and page 15)

VW is also investing 2.7 Billion in a Chattanooga assembly facility that will employ 4,000 U.S. employees. Volkswagen is “on-the-move” in the U.S.

A Visit to Bardahl in a VW ID. Buzz

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.

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A Hero's Horse Power: Ron Mondragon Takes Delivery of the Spirit of America MustangGTD



Ron Mondragón (right) and his wife Betty, take delivery of their Mustang GTD at Pierre Ford Lake City (photo Auto News)

SEE 12 SHOWCASE TEST DRIVE REVIEWS ON PAGES 14 & 15

“Supporting New Car Dealers”



Bill McCallum
publisher

As the publisher and founder of Global Auto News and www.autonewsonline.com I have supported new car dealers for over 4 decades. The new car dealer is the main reason we can offer the best vehicles available for purchase from around the world here in the U.S. The new car dealer sells, services, and accepts your trade-in while supporting your local community with employment opportunities and philanthropic projects. As I have stated before, I was “born into the car business, with my uncle owning a new car franchise and my dad managing a lease company for a new car dealer in Tacoma, WA. (Thank you, to Toyota for naming their truck after my home town)

As we have expanded our reach in North America we have focused on “New Car Dealer Groups” including; Page 2 - Open Road Auto Group - Canada (recently purchased by Fields Auto Group); Page 2 - Rick Case Automotive Group (Florida/Georgia); Page 3 - Haselwood Auto Group; Page 4 & 9 - Michael’s Subaru (a Litha Auto Group dealer); Page 11 - Doug’s Auto Group; Page 18 - O’Brien Auto Group; Page 28 - Heartland Toyota (a Haselwood Auto Group dealer) We also mail the “Top 150” Dealer Auto Groups in the U.S. with each issue.

Happy Holidays and Santa may have a new vehicle for you this Christmas !!



2025 Land Rover Defender 110 X-Dynamic SE



Chris Chung
Digital editor

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

(photo on page 18)

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-

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2026 Nissan Leaf Test Drive Review



Dave Kunz
LA feature writer

As the near-term and long-term adoption of electric vehicles navigates ever-shifting headwaters, one word has become prevalent in the discussion: affordability.

Sure there are all kinds of great EVs out there for \$60,000 and up (and up...and up). But that leaves a lot of buyers sticking with internal combustion due to the cost. In that regard, Nissan has launched its third-generation 2026 Leaf at just the right time. A clean-sheet design, the new Leaf offers range of up to 300 miles, for a starting price of just over \$30,000.

Keep in mind, that price has to stand on its own, with the federal tax credit of \$7500 no longer in play. No shell games in the sales office with regard to cost, at least for now.

Tesla gets a lot of credit for making electric vehicles cool, but it was Nissan that first put a relatively affordable mass-produced EV in showrooms 15 years ago. The 2011 Leaf wasn’t perfect, but it was a start. Driving range was just okay for urban dwellers; under 75 miles. And there was no public quick charging, so highway travel was essentially ruled out.

Nissan updated the battery in the ensuing years, so range finally topped 100 miles in that first generation. For 2017, the second-gen Leaf arrived, with a more SUV-like design, and range of up to 225 miles.

Now, the third-generation Leaf

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Kia EV9 GT-Line: A confident step into the EV future



Keith Turner
SF feature writer

Kia’s transformation over the past decade has been nothing short of remarkable, and the 2026 EV9 GT-Line Long Range stands as its most ambitious effort to date. Positioned at the intersection of advanced electrification, premium design, and family-focused practicality, the EV9 is a clear signal of where the brand intends to compete — and how seriously Kia is approaching that mission.

From the exterior alone, the EV9 communicates a distinct identity. Its geometric surfaces, high shoulder line, and crisp lighting elements evoke the spirit of a concept vehicle brought to production with minimal compromise. The GT-Line trim enhances that impact with a contrasting black roof, unique fascia treatment, and 21-inch alloy wheels that lend the SUV a commanding stance. The result is a vehicle that appears both technologically advanced and unmistakably robust, a difficult balance to achieve in the EV space.

Under its sculpted sheet metal, the EV9 GT-Line Long Range features a 99.8-kWh battery paired with a dual-motor all-wheel-drive system. The configuration delivers an EPA-estimated 280 miles of driving range—a competitive figure considering the vehicle’s size and three-row configuration. Charging convenience is improved further by Kia’s adoption of the North American Charging Standard, opening access to an

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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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2025
Electrify Expo
Seattle Recap



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 kilome-

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Kelly
Blue Book Best
Buy List



Jordan Williams
millennial writer

Kelley Blue Book and company recently published their 11th annual Kelley Blue Book Best Buy Awards, featuring their favorite cars, trucks, and SUVs.

Executive Editor, Brian Moody, states the awards span a range of vehicle sizes, prices and other financial considerations, such as reliability and the resale market.

Take a look at what made their 2025 Best Buy Awards list:

Best New Model

- 2025 Toyota Camry

Best in Class Subcompact SUV

- 2025 Hyundai

Best Compact SUV

- 2025 Honda CR-

Best 3-Row EV

- 2025 Kia EV9

Best Electric Vehicle

- 2025 Hyundai Ioniq 5

Best Compact Car

- 2025

Best Midsize Car

- 2025 Toyota Camry

Best Minivan

- 2025 Toyota Sienna

Best Compact Truck

- 2025 Ford Maverick

Best Midsize Truck

- 2025 Toyota Tacoma

Best Full-Size Truck

- 2025 Ford F-150

Best Electric Truck

- 2025 Ford F-150 Lightning

Check them out! Click onto the links to learn about each model or visit www.kbb.com/awards/best-buy-awards-2025/

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 produce 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 sample to Hong Kong

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History of EV's In the U.S.



Larry Weitzman
EV specialist

As with the early 1900s, EVs as a competitor to conventional gasoline and diesel powered (Internal Combustion Engine-ICE) cars are just about done. EVs are not ready for prime time. As I have related in prior columns, in 1900 and for a few years thereafter, EVs dominated the “car” market with a 38 percent market share compared to ICE car sales holding just 22 percent of the market. But in a purely competitive market with no government interference, by 1905, EVs had just 7 percent of the market while improved ICE cars dominated, and that’s with crank starters. By 1911, when Charles Kettering invented the electric starter for Cadillac, EVs were sold in liveries and department stores next to the buggy whips.

Since about 2012, when Tesla introduced the Model S, governments have been mandating EVs. Many European countries with dictating governments have mandated the EV as the only form of automobile while banishing the ICE vehicle. And in the United

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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.

PROPULSION:

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. manufactures 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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Subaru Share the Love Event Returns for 18th Year of Giving



Julia King
writer

Subaru of America, Inc. kicked off its 18th annual Subaru Share the Love Event on Nov. 20, aiming to raise a cumulative \$350 million in donations across 640 retailers nationwide before the campaign ends Jan. 2.

Fundraising encompasses national organizations and over 830 local hometown charities, picked by retailers across the country. Alongside the \$250 customers can donate to a national partner of their choice — the 2025 lineup includes Make-A-Wish and Meals on Wheels America, among others — retailers will also send an additional \$50 to a pre-approved local charity on qualifying purchases.

The campaign arrives amidst an uncertain period for retailers. September saw an unexpected boost in new vehicle sales, attributed to tax benefit provisions in The One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA), and concern around U.S. tariffs. Simultaneously, new car affordability continues to decline for the third month in a row.

While it is yet to be seen whether the Share The Love Event will greatly impact consumer behavior after an unpredictable 2025, the holiday season often prom-

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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!



2026 Crosstrek Hybrid

2026 Outback

2026 Uncharted

2026 Trailseeker



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EV (Electric Vehicles) News and Strategies



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Bellevue, WA 98009
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Distributed Monthly
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Auto News Management Team Meets With Jay Leno At 2025 Comedy Show



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

In the Early 1900s, EVs Represented 38% of the Market, Gas 22% & Steam 40%, by WWI EVs were 0% of the Market!

continued from page 4

States, this was attempted under the Biden Administration with mandates banishing ICE vehicles by 2035. The Congress has recently repealed (a resolution signed by the President) the California mandate to banish ICE cars by 2035.

Going back to the Tesla, it was and is a terrific looking and performing car, but it came with huge baggage, range and refueling anxiety. And after over 12 years since the Model S, there still is no significant refueling infrastructure in the U.S., even after the promise by the Biden Admin. of building 50,000 new charging stations for about \$8 Billion of spending. Biden is gone (has been for about 4 years) and his legacy will be 7 working charging stations, about a \$Billion apiece.

Most of those U.S. mandates have been repealed by the new EPA and now in the Big, Beautiful Bill, in 2026 so will be the \$300 Billion to - \$1 Trillion in \$7,500 to \$10,000 in government buyer tax credits. Think of it as a scheme to transfer money from lower middle class taxpayers to wealthy taxpayers, as EVs are more expensive than their ICE counterparts.

EVs sales are continuing their decline. In April, with new car sales up 10 percent, EV sales were down 5 percent. In 2024 EVs had just 7 percent of new car sales and that’s with huge incentives paid by the manufacturers and of course, the government. Without them, dealers can’t give them away. Rivian sales were down by 50% in April with the average Rivian sticker for \$88,000. And Rivians are also great driving cars, but range and refueling issues detract markedly from their utility as cars.

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, You Tube, 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.

I guess you can call me Electric Jim.

continued from page 3

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 **continued on page 7**

Subaru Share the Love Event Returns for 18th Year of Giving

by Julia King

continued from page 4

ises a surge in spending, despite higher prices. If the previous 17

years are any indication, Subaru customers are sure to take part in the holiday giving.

AUTO NEWS® BYTES

Words Matter “DATA DRIVEN” (dd) "HALLUCINATION" “A.I. BUBBLE”

“DATA DRIVEN” (dd)

As the developers and promoters of A.I. try to define A.I. They say A.I. is Data Driven. Actually, Data Driven technology is nothing new. A.I. merely accelerates the process making it more accessible.

“HALLUCINATION”

When you or I make a mistake we call it what it is, a mistake. In the confusing world of A.I. a mistake is called a Hallucination. The dictionary defines Hallucination as “... a perception of objects with NO reality.

“A.I. BUBBLE”

As an investor in 3 chip manufacturers I follow the stock market daily and the term “A.I. BUBBLE” is being mentioned more frequently. In my humble opinion, because no one can define A.I. and the basic technology is not new that an “A.I. Bubble” is as we say, coming.... “down the road” as more businesses invest in A.I.

WORDS MATTER AND THEY ARE THE KEY TO INTELLIGENCE

by BILL McCALLUM, Publisher

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2025 BMW M3:
A Dream Realized,
and Then Some

by Christopher Chung

As a longtime BMW enthusiast and someone who has always dreamed of owning an E46 M3, stepping into the 2025 M3 Sedan felt like a personal milestone. Having owned five “Bimmers” in my past, I thought I knew what to expect—but the new M3 still found a way to surprise me.

Powered by a 3.0L Twin Power Turbo inline-six, the M3 dishes out 473 hp and 406 lb-ft of torque, rocketing from 0–60 in just 4.1 seconds (or 3.4 in Competition trim). But numbers only tell half the story. The manual transmis-

sion is pure magic—arguably the best I’ve ever driven.

Finished in Dark Emerald Metallic with bold Kyalami Orange and Black leather inside, this M3 doesn’t just go—it stuns. With the Carbon Package and Executive Package adding features like a power tailgate, heated wheel, and Alcantara accents, it’s as luxurious as it is aggressive.

The stance, curves, and that signature grille all scream performance, while the M Driver’s Package unlocks a top speed of 180 mph and adds serious track capability.

BMW has taken everything I love about its past and fused it into a modern, daily-drivable masterpiece. For me, the M3 isn’t just a car—it’s a dream realized.



Chris Chung with BMW General Manager London Agrawal at Seattle BMW Dealer (photo Auto News)

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

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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 USA.

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.

Americas 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 crazed 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 butyrate 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



Flying Car Featured at Redmond, Washington "Electric Expo" in August



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."

That persistence turned them

into the nation's first father-daughter flying car team. John, now the oldest flying car pilot in the country, and Heather, the first female consumer to fly one, embody the passing of the torch between dreamers and doers.

The BlackFly itself is deceptively simple: just 18 moving parts, a vertical liftoff that takes about ten seconds, and a glide into forward flight that resembles a small biplane in motion. Flights last about 20 minutes on a charge, and recharging takes only 40 minutes. With no airports required, pilots can take off from driveways, fields, or open spaces.

"Really, the computer does the flying," explained tour pilot Tim Lum, a former Air Force pararescueman and smokejumper. "You tell it where to go with the joystick, and the computer won't let me push outside safe limits. It feels like freedom, without the danger."

For Lum, who has spent his life in high-risk environments, the BlackFly is something different: thrilling but accessible. "I've jumped out of planes, fought wildfires, taken risks most people wouldn't dream of. But this? This feels like a new chapter. It's exhilarating, and the margin of safety is somewhere between motorcycle and automobile."

The Soar Tour is crisscrossing the nation, giving thousands their first up-close encounter with a flying car. Attendees can sit in the cockpit, grip the joystick, and imagine themselves lifting off.

For Heather, it's about more than technology. "This is about wonder," she said. "It's about giving people that spark—that feeling of, wow, the future really is here. For us, it's the Jetsons come to life."



Heather Chirtea is the Nation's First Female Consumer Flying Car Pilot.
For more information visit: www.thesoartour.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 of 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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Top 5 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

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.”

Disrupting EV Charging Chaos: Bradford Crist’s AI Fix for a Broken System

Electric Vehicle (EV) adoption faces significant challenges due to inadequate charging infrastructure, leading to the growing issue of “charging anxiety.” Bradford Crist, Co-founder and CEO of Chargemate, shares how his AI-powered solutions aim to make EV charging as seamless as refueling a traditional car.

Electric Vehicle (EV) sales hit an all-time high of 1.3 million units in 2024, reflecting an impressive 7.3% growth compared to the previous year. (1) Yet, despite this milestone, the EV revolution faces a significant roadblock—charging anxiety. Nearly 20% of public charging attempts fail, leaving drivers frustrated and hesitant about the shift to electric. (2) On the latest episode of the Disruption Interruption podcast, Karla Jo Helms (KJ) welcomes Bradford Crist, Co-founder and CEO of Chargemate, a climate tech innovator helping drivers overcome these hurdles. Crist is rewriting the future of Electric Vehicle (EV) adoption by enabling AI to address real-time charging concerns while ensuring public charging systems operate efficiently.

“Our goal is a world where EV ownership is practical for everyone.” — Bradford Crist, Co-founder and CEO of Chargemate

“Imagine pulling up to a gas station, only to find 20% of pumps out of order,” Crist emphasizes. “We’re tackling the same friction for EV drivers, empowering infrastructure providers and vehicle owners to bridge the confidence gap.”

Charging Anxiety is Stalling EV Adoption

Despite its rise, EV adoption remains limited at approximately 7–10% of vehicle sales in the U.S., a figure projected to grow to 25% in a few years. However, the underlying Achilles’ heel is charging anxiety, which stems from broken chargers, inconsistent payment methods, and the lack of a cohesive support system for public chargers.

“EV owners outside early-adopter hubs like California face what we call charging deserts,” Crist explains. “This creates regional disparity, with urban centers seeing adoption while rural or Midwest states remain reluctant.”

Unlike filling up a traditional gas tank, EV charging requires precise coordination between hardware, networks, apps, and vehicles. The failure of any one component, like payment terminals or software handshakes between EVs and chargers, can derail an entire charging session. For new EV users, this complexity can feel overwhelming.

“Drivers shouldn’t have to act as troubleshooting technicians,” Crist states. “This complexity undermines the scalability of EV infrastructure, leaving prospective EV buyers skeptical.”

Chargemate’s AI-Powered Roadmap to Simplify EV Charging

Chargemate offers a game-changing solution to failed charging sessions with its AI-powered platform. Its flagship product, an AI agent, interacts with both infrastructure and drivers in real time, automating troubleshooting and restarting failed sessions in seconds. “At Chargemate, we solve two key problems,” Crist explains. “First, educating drivers on proper charger use. Second, reducing friction by detecting and resolving failures with AI workflows.”

No app downloads are needed—drivers simply scan a QR code on chargers for instant assistance. For operators, this platform delivers valuable insights and diagnostics, cutting downtime and improving customer experience. “Imagine a road trip where EV charging is seamless,” Crist says. “Our goal is a world where EV ownership is practical for everyone.”

Chargemate’s pilot programs span ten U.S. states, including California, Texas, and Illinois. “This is just the beginning,” Crist concludes. “EV drivers and operators don’t just need infrastructure—they need infrastructure they can trust.”

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

Kia EV9 GT-Line: A confident step into the EV future

by Keith Turner

continued from page 2

DC stations. For home charging, a complete Level 2 cycle requires approximately 10.5 hours, easily accommodated during overnight downtime.

The interior showcases Kia’s most refined execution to date. Anchoring the cabin is a sweeping digital interface comprised of dual 12.3-inch screens for instrumentation and infotainment, joined by a 12-inch panel dedicated to climate and vehicle controls. The layout is clean, intuitive, and free of unnecessary ornamentation. Material quality is consistent throughout, with a clear emphasis on durability and modern aesthetic.

Passenger comfort is a standout strength, particularly in this GT-Line configuration equipped with the second row “Relaxation Package.” The power-reclining captain’s chairs offer unexpected levels of adjustability, including deployable leg support that rivals high-end luxury SUVs. The front seats provide heating, ventilation, and memory functions, while the third row is functional for daily family use and folds flat via power switches for expanded cargo flexibility.

Kia has also equipped the EV9 with one of the segment’s most comprehensive driver-

assistance suites. Highway Driving Assist 2, Forward Collision-Avoidance, Blind-Spot Avoidance, Rear Cross-Traffic Avoidance, Parking Collision Avoidance, and a Surround-View Monitor all contribute to a reassuring driving experience. Remote Smart Parking Assist 2 adds a layer of convenience, enabling the vehicle to maneuver into tight spaces autonomously.

Audio quality receives attention as well, courtesy of the Meridian Premium Sound System, which delivers impressive clarity and depth. Added features such as the smart power liftgate, wireless charging, and multi zone climate control reinforce the EV9’s role as a premium family flagship.

With a tested price of \$76,670, the 2026 EV9 GT-Line Long Range occupies a competitive but increasingly crowded space. Yet it distinguishes itself through cohesive design, thoughtful engineering, and a level of refinement that positions Kia comfortably among established premium manufacturers. The EV9 is not simply an alternative in the electric SUV market — it is a compelling benchmark for what a modern, full-size electric utility vehicle can be.

Keith Turner is an auto journalist based in Northern California. Look for his video reviews on YouTube at Carguy Drives



Kia EV9 GT-Line (photo Keith Turner)

"World Famous" Bardahl Co. Manufactures & Ships Automotive Products Around the World.....!

continued from page 1

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.

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

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

Scout® Traveler™ SUV 2027/28 Review

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 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®.





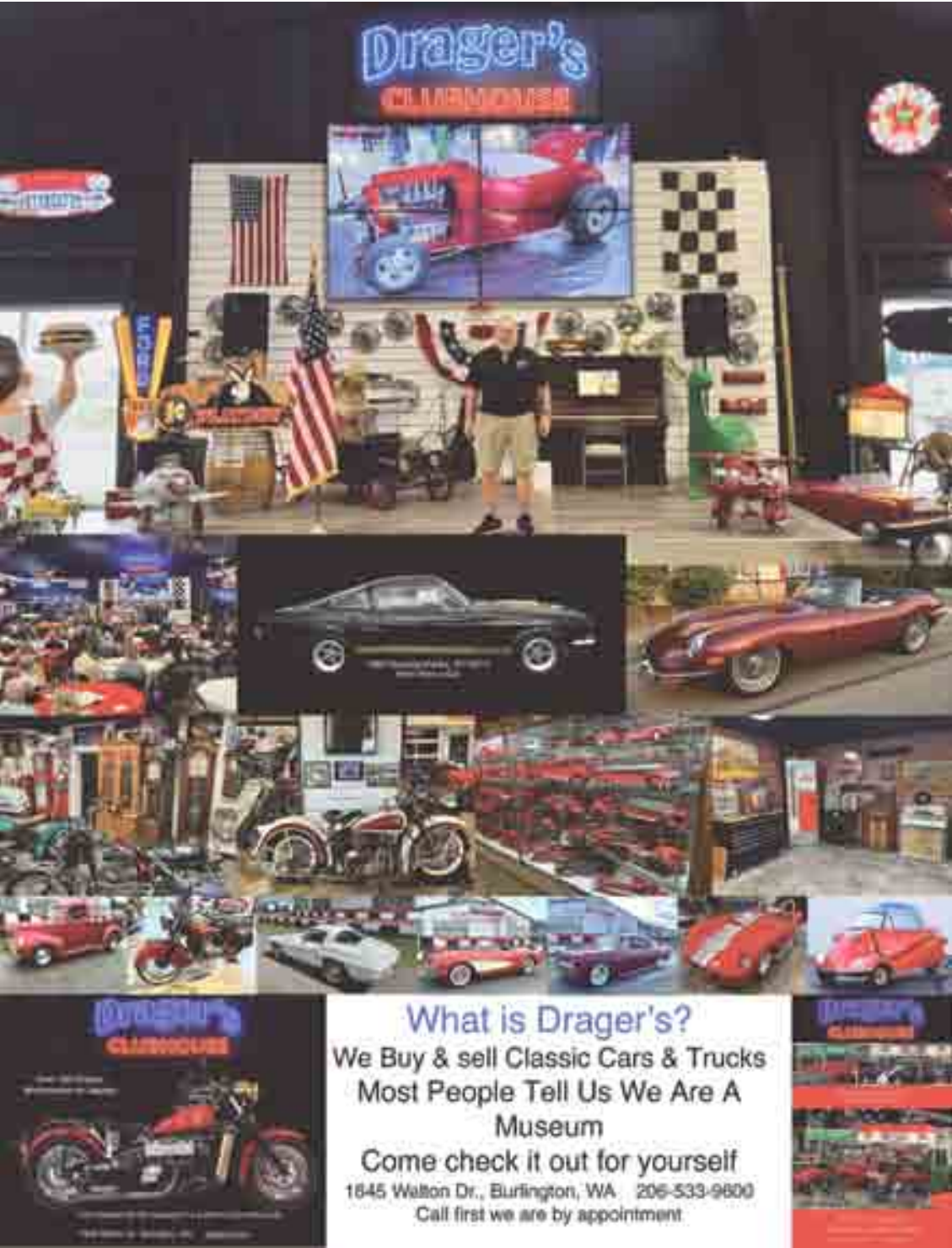
Scout Traveler (photo Harold Allen)



Scout Traveler Interior (photo Harold Allen)

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From Around the U.S.



Gary Williams our "Good Friend" Passed Away

Earlier this fall we lost my “best friend” Gary Williams as he fought a life ending illness. He was surrounded with his family & friends in Hollywood, CA.

Gary was with me when I started my Auto News journey over FOUR decades ago in Bellevue, WA. He was a luxury home builder in Bellevue, Mercer Island, and Hollywood, CA. I was with him when he married his wife Amy, and raised is daughter Jordan (see page 3) and his son Garrett who has followed his dad as a builder. Gary defined the word “Car Guy” and became a feature writer for Auto News. He traveled with me on our many trips to Monterey “Car Week” and the SEMA show in Las Vegas, Nevada. (see photos on same page) Gary was also a pilot owning 3 airplanes, a sea-plane, a helicopter, and a six place Cessna he used to commute to Monterey “Car Week” from Hollywood.

Gary’s grandfather was a pioneer in the movie industry during the period when his friend Ronald Reagan was making movies. When Gary moved to Hollywood he supported the UCLA film School and other LA film schools offering student scholarships. He went on to produce a number of International Short Films. We will honor Gary as a “Legend of Auto” during Monterey “Car Week” August 2026.

“Gary, my friend. I think about you every day, God Bless you and your family!!” Bill McCallum



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

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George Barris, a Legend that has departed, with Gary Williams at Pebble Beach Concours (photo Auto News)



Gary Williams at SEMA Show in Las Vegas (photo Auto News)



Gary Williams at Monterey Week Event (photo Auto News)

2025 Monterey Car Week

This was our 20th 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 Canary Row Events

Hope to see you next August!!!

AUTO

NEWS

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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Rita Case presented with Lifetime Achievement Award for Philanthropy with Alisa Bert, Rebecca Bratter, Cindy Mason and Julie Price

Leadership, service and community impact were in the spotlight as Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida hosted the prestigious Emerald Awards honoring female leaders in Broward County, raising more than \$110,000 to support programs that inspire girls to build courage, confidence and character as they become change-makers in their communities and the world.

The women who were honored shared inspiring, powerful stories that recounted their unique paths to success to an audience of more than 200. Rita Case, president and CEO of Rick Case Automotive Group, who celebrated by wearing her Girl Scouts sash decorated with badges she received, was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award for Philanthropy, in recognition of generous philanthropic support for the children and families in the community.

Four exceptional women were also honored for their professional achievements and community service that distinguish them as role models and leaders for young women. The 2025 Emerald Awards honorees were Alisa Bert, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for Broward Health; Rebecca Bratter, Deputy Managing Partner for Greenspoon Marder; Cindy Mason, Market Leader – Broward County for Florida Blue; and Julie Price, President and CEO of Arc Broward.

Rita Case

Case is a trailblazing entrepreneur, philanthropist, author and jet pilot whose decades-long legacy of leadership and service has transformed South Florida. As President and CEO of Rick Case Automotive Group, the nation’s largest retail automotive group owned and operated by a woman, she oversees 12 award-winning dealerships across South Florida and Georgia. A 2022 Horatio Alger Award recipient, Case was named the 2024 TIME Dealer of the Year, one of the automotive industry’s most prestigious honors, and received the 2024 National Association of Minority Automobile Dealers’ Lifetime Achievement Award. Together with her husband Rick, she has spearheaded fundraising initiatives that have generated more than \$100 million for local organizations. She co-founded landmark programs including Rick Case Bikes for Kids, Rita Case WOMEN Build with Habitat for Humanity and 4EveryKid with Soles4Souls, initiatives that continue to provide critical support to children and families. Her philanthropic impact extends to countless causes including the Boys & Girls Clubs, American Heart Association, Broward Health, Joe DiMaggio Children’s Hospital and United Way, to name a few.

Alisa Bert

Bert is Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer for Broward Health, one of the nation’s largest public health systems, where she oversees a \$1.9

continued on page 15

SHOWCASE REVIEWS

Hyundai Ioniq 5 XRT



The “award winning” Hyundai Ioniq 5 XRT AWD EV is one reason Hyundai’s EV program is a leader in the U.S.

BASE PRICE: \$ 55,400 *
TYPE: 4 door SUV
ENGINE: Dual Electric Motors
HORSEPOWER: 168 HP, 225, HP
TRANS: 1-speed DIRECT
MPG: 94 Combined

Hyundai Palisade XRT Pro



The 3 row Palisade SUV has the room you need for those family trips to sporting events and is “priced right”

BASE PRICE: \$ 49,870 *
TYPE: 4-door 3-row SUV -
ENGINE: 3.5L V-6
HORSEPOWER: 291 hp
TRANS: 8 speed AT
MPG: 22 highway

Mazda3 Premium Plus HB



The Mazda3 hatch-back offers the driver the fun-to-drive feeling of a sports car with the price of a sedan.

BASE PRICE: \$37,890 *
TYPE: Hatch Back Sedan
ENGINE: SKYACTIVE-G 2.5L
HORSEPOWER: 227 hp
TRANS: SKYACTIVE 6 SPEED
MPG: 31 highway

Mazda CX-5 Carbon



Mazda has positioned its self as a “leader” in the “low priced” SUV market with products models like the CX-5

BASE PRICE: \$ 32,350 *
TYPE: 4-Door SUV
ENGINE: SKYACTIVE-G 2.5L
HORSEPOWER: 187 hp
TRANS: 6-speed
MPG: 30 highway

Toyota Prius Plug-In Hybrid



Toyota started the “hybrid movement” decades ago & they continue to bring new products to market like the “Nightshade Plug-In Hybrid”

BASE PRICE: \$37,795 *
TYPE: Plug-in Hybrid
ENGINE: 2.0L DOHC 4-cyl
HORSEPOWER: 220 combined hp
TRANS: CVT
MPG: 114 MPGe

Toyota Tacoma Trailhunter Hybrid



Toyota continues to add new models to the to “bestselling” line of Tacoma trucks as their truck market share continues to grow

BASE PRICE \$ 63,235 *
TYPE: Extended Cab
ENGINE: I-FORCE MAX 2.4 L
HORSEPOWER: 326 hp
TRANS: 8 sp. AT
MPG: 24 highway

* All information listed “AS TESTED”

SHOWCASE REVIEWS

Lexus GX 550 4WD



In most U.S. markets Lexus has become the leading “luxury brand” by introducing new like the “GX 550”

BASE PRICE :\$ 79,345 *
TYPE: 4-DOOR SUV
ENGINE: 3.4L V6
HORSEPOWER: 349 hp
TRANS: 10 speed AT
MPG: 21 highway

Lexus NX 350h AWD



The Lexus NX 350h 4 door SUV fits into the Lexus Luxury Line-Up as a “best value”

BASE PRICE :\$54,200 *
TYPE: 4-door SUV
ENGINE: 2.5L 4 cyl. Hybrid
HORSEPOWER: 246 HP
TRANS: CVT
MPG: 37 highway

Mazda CX-90 Premium Plus



The Mazda CX-90 has been a “best seller” for been a “best seller” for Mazda and offers seven safety features with above average MPG

BASE PRICE: \$ 50,270 *
TYPE: 4 -door SUV
ENGINE: E-SKYACTIVE-G 3.3 L TURBO
HORSEPOWER: 280 hp
TRANS: 8-speed AT
MPG: 28 highway

Toyota 4Runner Hybrid



The Toyota 4Runner is popular with the “off-road” crowd and also offers more safety & towing features plus good MPG.

BASE PRICE: \$ 66,900 *
TYPE: 4-door SUV
ENGINE: I-FORCE MAX 2.4L
HORSEPOWER: Hybrid Powertrain
TRANS: 8-speed AT
MPH: 24 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

continued from page 14

billion budget and has led transformative initiatives resulting in multiple credit rating upgrades. With more than 30 years of experience in healthcare and finance, she is recognized as a trailblazer who has broken gender barriers in leadership while building mentorship and career pipelines for young professionals. Beyond her role at Broward Health, Bert serves as Treasurer of the Broward College Foundation, the Florida Atlantic University/Broward Health Academic Practice Plan and the Children’s Diagnostic & Treatment Center’s Board of Directors, as well as a board member of the South Florida Hospital & Healthcare Association.

Rebecca Bratter

Bratter is Deputy Managing Partner for Greenspoon Marder, where she has spent more than two decades driving national strategy, growth and operations. She is the founder of Kids Can, a nonprofit that encourages children to embrace volunteerism and support their peers through service. Bratter also serves on the Performing Arts Center Authority, shaping the future of the Broward Center for the Performing Arts. Her leadership and commitment to mentorship have earned her recognition as a “Distinguished Leader” by the Daily Business Review and “Managing Partner of the Year” by Corporate Counsel’s Women, Influence and Power in Law Awards.

Cindy Mason

As Market Leader for Florida Blue in Broward County, Mason oversees operations, sales and marketing strategy for one of Florida’s most dynamic health-care markets. With more than 20 years of leadership experience, she has held senior roles at Eli Lilly & Company and Kindred Healthcare, where she ultimately served as market CEO for hospitals and acute rehabilitation units in Fort Lauderdale and the Palm Beaches. Deeply committed to community service, Mason serves on the boards of Junior Achievement of South Florida and the Urban League of Broward County, where she champions youth empowerment and equity.

Julie Price

Price is President and CEO of Arc Broward, where she has dedicated nearly 40 years to advancing inclusion and equity for individuals with disabilities. Rising from Direct Support Professional to CEO, she has led the organization in delivering innovative programs that empower children and adults to achieve their full potential. Active on numerous state and local boards, Price is deeply committed to advocacy, education, diversity, aging services and social equity.

“These outstanding women are an inspiration, leading with vision and heart,” said Lisa Johnson, CEO of Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida. “We all want our daughters to find their voice, dream big and become confident, strong women who create meaningful change, and they will do just that through the Girl Scouts.”

Guests at the luncheon, held at the Four Seasons, enjoyed a silent auction, honoree recognition and a lively panel discussion with the honorees. Serving as emcee for the luncheon was Katie Phang, an accomplished trial lawyer, legal analyst and former host of The Katie Phang Show on MSNBC News.

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* 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

Rita Case Donates \$2 Million to Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital and Unveils the Rita and Rick Case Corridor

The gift supports continued research, education and innovation

Rita Case, president and CEO of Rick Case Automotive Group, presented Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital with a \$2 million gift to support research, education, patient care, programmatic and capital needs.

“We have always looked for opportunities to improve the healthcare needs of our community by supporting the growth and advancement of healthcare services and supporting the many healthcare professionals who are truly the unsung heroes,” said Case. “Working together, we can continue to build a thriving and healthy community.”

In recognition of this gift, Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital unveiled signage for the Rita and Rick Case Corridor in its primary multi specialty and ambulatory surgery clinic, which serves as a prominent pathway for patients, visitors and caregivers. Case was joined at the ceremony by leadership from Rick Case Automotive Group and Cleveland Clinic including Conor Delaney, MD, PhD, Executive Vice President, Cleveland Clinic and President, Cleveland Clinic Florida Market; F. Scott Ross, MD, Vice President and Chief Medical Officer for Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital; and Michael Maroone, Chair, Cleveland Clinic Florida Regional Hospital Board of Directors; as well as City of Weston Mayor Margaret (Peggy) Brown, Town of Davie Mayor Judy Paul and Broward County Commissioner Nan H. Rich.

“We are deeply grateful to Rita Case for her ongoing support of Cleveland Clinic,” said Dr. Ross. “Generous gifts like hers directly fuel the research, education and innovation that create opportunities for our caregivers to better serve the needs and well-being of our patients.”

Case and her husband, Rick Case, have been long-time supporters of Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital. Since 2016, they’ve gifted \$3,115,500 to the hospital. The family’s first gift supported the hospital’s expansion with the naming of The Rick Case Automotive Group Cafeteria in their honor. The cafeteria was remodeled for patients, their families and caregivers, serving as a central gathering place in the hospital for dining and connection. Throughout the years, when a hurricane is imminent, the Case family has opened the gas stations at their dealerships exclusively for the hospital’s doctors, nurses and staff. Case also serves in a key leadership role as a member of the hospital’s board of directors.

“Rita is doing a remarkable job leaving an incredible legacy in the community and preserving Rick’s memory,” said Dr. Delaney. “Her support means so much to all of us, inspiring and strengthening Cleveland Clinic’s mission of world-class care, research and health. We are proud to join with the Case family as we continue working together to enrich the health and well-being of our community.”

Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital was named the No. 1 hospital in Miami-Fort Lauderdale, according to the 2025-2026 U.S. News & World Report “Best Hospitals” rankings. The hospital was also named Newsweek’s World’s Best Hospitals 2025 list, earning the highest ranking in South Florida.



(left to right) Ryan Case; Raquel Case-Travalline; Rita Case; F. Scott Ross, MD, Vice President and Chief Medical Officer for Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital; Conor Delaney, MD, PhD, Executive Vice President, Cleveland Clinic and President, Cleveland Clinic Florida Market; and Michael Maroone, Chair, Cleveland Clinic Florida Regional Hospital Board of Directors, unveil signage for the Rita and Rick Case Corridor at Cleveland Clinic Weston Hospital.

2026 Nissan Leaf "Test Drive Review"

continued from page 2

is even more like a small SUV and boasts maximum range of 303 miles. And yes, you can quick-charge it while on the road, as it has the NACS port compatible with Tesla Superchargers. Oh, but if you have an older J1772 home charger, you won’t need an adapter. The new Leaf has one of those ports too, on the opposite-side front fender.

Inside, the ubiquitous wide touchscreen display to make it feel as modern as anything else on the road. And Nissan’s full suite of safety technology will make it extremely tough to get in a crash. My test vehicle, in Platinum+ trim, had Pro Pilot adaptive cruise control for very easy highway travel.

The road ahead for electric vehicles isn’t necessarily a smooth one, with policies changing and automakers canceling or delaying new models. Heck, just as Nissan was launching the new Leaf, word got out it was discontinuing the larger Ariya. Such is the precarious nature of the EV market. But the Leaf is as good as it’s ever been, with an attractive sticker price.



2026 Nissan Leaf (Photo by Dave Kunz)



Since 1982, over 122,000 bicycles have been donated to underserved kids in our communities through the “Rick Case Bikes for Kids” program.

Our goal this year is 2,000 bikes. If you have a bicycle in working condition that you no longer need, please bring it to any Rick Case dealership.

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Car Collections

Habitat for Humanity of Broward Celebrates Completion of Founders Park at ‘A Rick Case Habitat Community’ in Pompano Beach

Habitat for Humanity of Broward hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Saturday, October 25, marking the official completion and dedication of Founders Park, the central green space honoring Edmund Ansin, Rick Case, and Bob Leider, at “A Rick Case Habitat Community” in Pompano Beach.

“Rick and I were enthusiastic about this unique opportunity to build a Habitat community on such a large piece of property 13 years ago. Seventy-six homes would be a first for Habitat for Humanity of Broward and we wanted to lead the project,” said Rita Case, president and CEO of Rick Case Automotive Group. “It is rewarding to see the community completed and all the families safely playing and smiling in their new neighborhood.”

The ceremony brought together city officials, Habitat Broward leaders, and community partners to celebrate the park’s opening, which stands as a tribute to the visionary philanthropists who helped make Broward County’s largest affordable workforce housing neighborhood possible.

“This park represents the heart of the community, a place where families can gather, children can play safely, and neighbors can connect,” said Nancy Robin, CEO and Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity of Broward. “It’s also a living tribute to the generosity of those who believed in this project from the very beginning.”

Following the ribbon-cutting, attendees joined homeowners for a family-friendly Fall Festival and Trunk-or-Treat celebrating the vibrant new park space.

The Founders Park dedication marks a milestone in Habitat Broward’s ongoing mission to build strength, stability, and self-reliance through home ownership.

The park and playground, open to residents and neighbors, serve as a lasting reminder of the collaborative spirit and community partnership that brought this vision to life.

“A Rick Case Habitat Community” was made possible through the generosity of Edmund Ansin of Sunbeam/WSVN Channel 7 and Rita and Rick Case of Rick Case Automotive Group, whose leadership gift helped name this historic neighborhood and funded much of its infrastructure.

“Habitat offers many opportunities. There are workdays where you can come out and help build a home and you can give financially,” said Sunbeam/WSVN Channel 7 CEO Andrew Ansin. “The homeowners help to build their own home and qualify for the home loan. Habitat communities are where families thrive and take pride in home ownership.”

With a total project cost exceeding \$20 million, the community was brought to life through funds raised and leveraged from corporations, foundations, government agencies, the faith community, and countless generous individuals.

Additional key contributors include Bob Leider, the Mary N. Porter Legacy Fund of the Community Foundation of Broward,

the City of Pompano Beach, the Hudson Family Foundation, Burdette Beckmann, Inc., the Robert Taylor Family, the Wadsworth Family Foundation, the Elizabeth Peters Estate, the Frederick A. DeLuca Foundation, the Estate of Renate Wylie, the Robert L. Elmore Estate, JM Family Enterprises, and many other dedicated partners and volunteers.

The completed community includes 76 affordable homes, 41 one-story and 35 two-story residences, ranging from 1,200 to 1,300 square feet. Each home was built using sustainable, energy-efficient materials, including impact windows, designed to minimize environmental impact, improve indoor air quality, and

reduce utility and maintenance costs.

About Habitat for Humanity of Broward

Seeking to put God’s love into action, Habitat for Humanity of Broward brings people together to build homes, communities, and hope. Habitat Broward offers a “hand up” not a “hand out” to families who are unable to qualify for conventional home financing but are willing to work hard to improve their family’s lives and achieve the economic empowerment of home ownership. For more information about Habitat for Humanity of Broward please call (954) 945-8031 or visit habitatbroward.org or check us out on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.



Left to Right: Rita Case, James Ansin, Andy Ansin, Ryan Case and Raquel Case-Travalline (Photo Blue Eye Images)



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2025 Land Rover Defender 110 X-Dynamic SE

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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 puri-

fication, 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.



Chris Chung with Defender (photo Auto News)

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)

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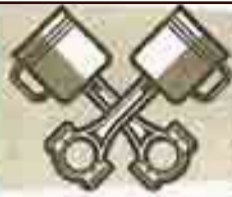
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Slot Car Racing
Europe vs. U.S.
continued from page 6

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 10th Annual Event "24 Hours of Tacoma" with International Teams from Europe



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

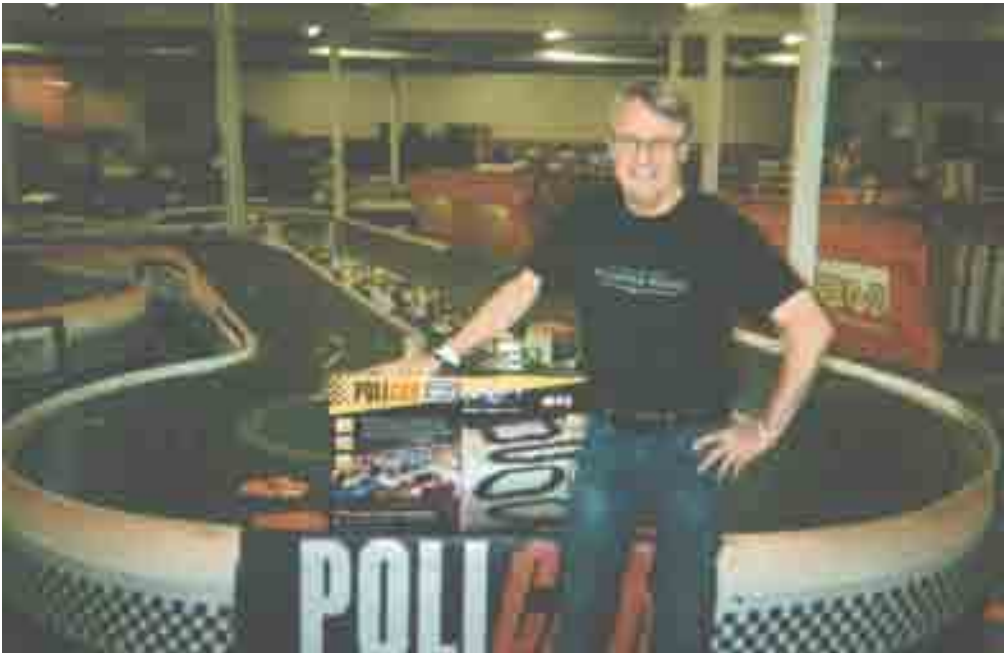


Alan Smith Scale Racing Center's wife Audra (left) & daughter Julia at Event

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





TIRE CENTERS FAST FACTS

Les Schwab Tire Centers (www.lesschwab.com) started in 1952 with just one small tire shop in Prineville, Oregon. After more than 70 years of building on our founder’s belief in honesty, service, and hard work, Les Schwab Tires is one of the leading independent tire dealers in the United States. Now, more than 8,500 employees in more than 590 locations across 15 states take pride in doing the right thing every day. That shows up in our unique tires—those we crafted specifically for the roads our customers drive on. It’s in the best tire warranty in America. It’s in how we stand behind the promise to do more for customers and communities, every step of the way.

Auto News Introduces 501 (3) (c) Non-Profit Foundation (see page 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: P Zero 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 P Zero 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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"The Man Who Owns The News"

by Bill McCallum

As a small newspaper publisher, who has grown our list of followers from a few NW readers, 44 years ago to over 1 million today. (See page 20)

Why review a book first published in 2008 ? Because, what interests me today is not the story of the Rupert Murdoch family history as a global leader in communication, but how the content relates to the last 17 years following the publication of this book.

FIRST: Let's start with the author Michael Wolff. (see his bio as published in the book) I have to say, I have never seen an author with the huge number of contacts Mr. Wolff used while researching the Murdoch family history.

SECOND: The title of the book. THE MAN WHO OWNS THE NEWS.

Clever, but NOT TRUE ! Book titles are usually created by publishers, authors, ad agencies, PR firms or a combination there of.

FACT: No one "owns the news." Fox Network, a Murdoch owned company, is one of the best at "controlling the news cycles" i.e. ONE DAY, TWO DAY or THREE DAY. Breaking news usually starts with an interview by a reporter, in person or at an event. On-the-scene news can be planned in advance, or a result of info from a wire service or picked up from a competitor. Then the news item is forwarded to a "producer" who evaluates the content then gives it a "go" or "no-go" and passes it on to a network "talking-head" or a publication editor or reporter for publication. In some cases Network "talking-heads" actually conduct the interviews but "producers" or "editors" review the content prior to release or publication.

In 44 years I have never agreed to an interview and I'll explain why in our next issue as I continue this book review !! Hope you have a Happy Holiday Season !!

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), 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

THE MAN WHO OWNS THE NEWS

Inside the Secret World of RUPERT MURDOCH

Book first published in 2008

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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? It’s styling is unmistakably Italian with curvaceous, sexy lines. It’s 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 INFORMATIONMENT:

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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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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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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Jennifer Biggs recently Honored as a "Legend of Auto"

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(See Story on Page 25)

Auto News Foundation

AUTO NEWS EXPANDS DISTRIBUTION



Auto News Foundation Introduces "TAP"

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

Auto News Editor Sally Hanson Has Foundation 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: auto-newsfoundation.org.

Foundation QR Code



Foundation QR Code



"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.

"Biggs Rover" Tier Up to \$1,000	"Drager" Tier Up to \$2,500	"Doug Ikegami" Tier Up to \$5,000	"Rita Case" Tier Up to \$10,000
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		*Recognition Plaque & Honor Roll Scarf	Recognition Plaque & Honor Roll Scarf
	Two Tickets to next Legends of Auto Event	Two Tickets to next Legends of Auto Event	Two Tickets to next Legends of Auto Event
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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.



Auto News 501c(3) Non-Profit Foundation Presents "TAP"® Tuition Assistance Program® Awards At NW Legends Event



Sylvee 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)



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

Girl Scouts Honor

- Rita Case
- Alisa Bert
- Rebecca Bratter
- Cindy Mason
- Julie Price

..... At
Florida Event

continued from page 15

Ellice Martinez served as honorary event chair. Host committee members were Ashley Boxer, Malka Cabral, Kim Kasslan, Robin Mason, Jennifer Montalto, Roseline Philippe and Stephanie Richards.

Diamond Sponsor of the 2025 Emerald Award Broward County was UKG. Ruby Sponsors were Publix Super Markets Charities and Rick Case Automotive Group; Award Sponsors were Amazon, Florida Power and Light, and HCA Florida Healthcare; Fiserv was the Sapphire Sponsor; Comcast was the Opal Sponsor; Southern 441 Nissan was the Valet Sponsor; and Pearl Sponsor was LaCroix. Friends of Girl Scouts Sponsors were Ann's Florist and Coffee Bar, Linda Strutt Consulting Inc. and Munyon's Paw-Paw. Table sponsors were Broward Health, Florida Blue, Kaufman Rossin, Right Management and United Way of Broward County.

For more information about the Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida or to find a local booth, visit www.gssef.org.

About Girl Scouts

The preeminent leadership development organization for girls, Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida provides a safe, supportive environment for girls to learn, lead and thrive, surrounded by a supportive network of peers and caring adult mentors. Through unique, impactful experiences, girls from kindergarten through 12th grade are empowered to become confident, capable and compassionate leaders who engage their communities, inspire lasting change and make a positive difference in the world. They are encouraged to explore their full potential, dream big and act boldly. Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida serves 6,100 girls and engages 3,600 volunteers across Broward, Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, Indian River and Okeechobee counties. To explore opportunities to volunteer, donate or partner with Girl Scouts, call 561-427-0177 or visit www.gssef.org.

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

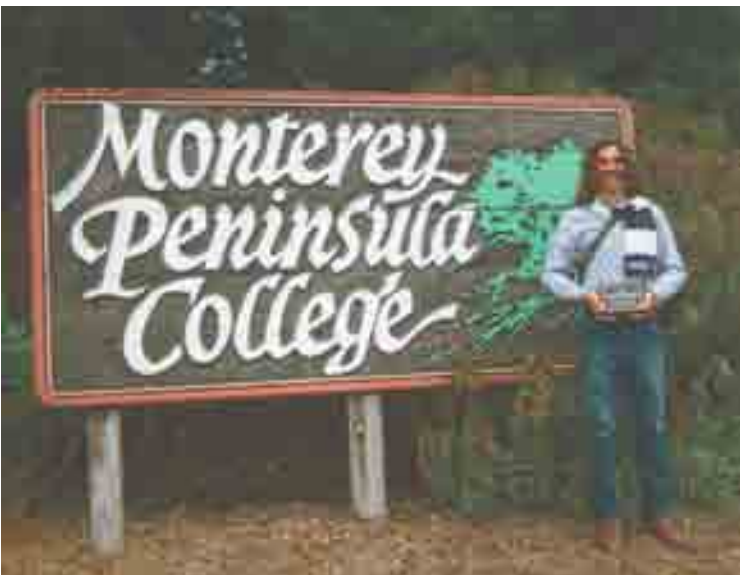
8. Parkland College

9. Prairie State College

10. Universal Technical Institute (UTI)



Steve Saleen presents Fabian Jimenez a Scholarship with Murray Ruggles, Tech School Instructor (photo Auto News)



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





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- ★ 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.



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



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

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Tom duPont
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Dana Mecum

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

SEE - www.LegendsofAuto.com

*Departed Legends

Rita Case Auto Group
C.E.O. was honored as a
Legend of Auto



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

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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.



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

Kia EV9 GT-Line "Review"

continued from page 4

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. 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.

A Hero’s Horsepower: Ron Mondragón Takes Delivery of the Spirit of America Mustang GTD

continued from page 1

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.

Keith Turner's "Overview" of the Mustang Brand

Battle of Ponies: EcoBoost Mustang vs. Mustang GT 5.0

by Keith Turner

If Ford Mustangs were siblings, the 2025 EcoBoost and the 2024 GT 5.0 would be the classic “brain vs. brawn” rivalry. Both are flashy, loud (in their own ways), and both definitely want you to notice them. But which one is the better pick when you’re standing at the dealership, keys jingling in your hand like you’re about to take home a tiger?

Let’s start with the 2025 Ford Mustang EcoBoost. Under the hood, you’ve got a 2.3L turbocharged four-cylinder — a downsized powerhouse that’s all about efficiency and fun. It punches out around 315 horsepower, which isn’t bad at all for something that could technically be called “eco-friendly” without anyone laughing too hard. Plus, it’s lighter up front, so it handles with a little more grace. More like a gymnast than linebacker.

The EcoBoost is the smart kid

who shows up to the party with a clever joke and an energy drink instead of a 12-pack. It’s a Mustang for people who appreciate a good twisty road and aren’t trying to wake up the neighbors every time they leave for work. Also, with rising gas prices, it doesn’t hurt that it can sip fuel instead of guzzling it like a pirate drinking rum.

Then there’s the 2024 Ford Mustang GT 5.0—the loud, rowdy big brother who still thinks pro wrestling is real. This beast comes with a naturally aspirated 5.0L V8 that belts out 480 horsepower (or more, depending on the trim). Revving this engine isn’t just a sound — it’s an event. Small children cover their ears. Grown adults look around in envy. Car alarms down the street may spontaneously go off.

The GT is all about raw power, tire smoke, and “because I can” energy. It’s heavier than the EcoBoost, sure, but who cares when you’re blasting from 0 to 60 in under 4 seconds and grinning like a fool? Handling is still solid—especially with the optional Performance Pack — but make no mistake: this car

is built for straight-line speed and showing off at stoplights.

Inside, both Mustangs share the new digital cockpit that looks like Ford borrowed a fighter jet’s dashboard. Big screens, better materials and seats that hug you tighter than your grandma at Christmas.

So which one should you buy?

If you want a Mustang that’s a little more “I went to college”, the EcoBoost is a seriously excellent choice. It’s quick, nimble, and it won’t destroy your wallet at the gas station.

But if you think the best soundtrack ever made is a 5.0 V8 at full roar, and you don’t mind paying extra for fuel (and maybe tires), then the GT 5.0 is the clear winner.

Either way, you’re getting a Mustang and that means one thing: you’re automatically cooler than you were before you bought that powerful pony.

Keith Turner is an auto journalist based in Northern California. You can check out his automotive video reviews at Carguy Drives on YouTube.

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