



AUTO NEWS

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Toyota's "Best Selling" RAV4 Hybrid AWD LTD. Performs Well On Annual Fishing Trip to Winthrop, WA



Toyota RAV4 Hybrid AWD LTD. parked in front of First Known SUV (covered wagon) crossing U.S. with 4 horse power. (photo Auto News)

by Bill McCallum

When I started planning our annual "road-trip" to Winthrop, WA. this Spring, I reached out to an automaker (OEM) that could schedule a "test drive" vehicle, that would offer ECONOMY, POWER, COMFORT, and enough ROOM for golf clubs and fishing gear. The 500 mile road trip was scheduled for our annual fishing & golf trip

to our mountain cabin in Eastern, Washington. The "Top Selling" Toyota RAV4 HYBRID LTD AWD met the challenge and delivered the "best trip ever."

The 2026 Toyota RAV4 Hybrid Ltd AWD (as tested) was priced at \$43,300 and gave us 41 mpg (combined city/highway fuel economy. With lots of room for gear, the 2.5L, 4-cylinder Engine

produced more than enough power for mountain highway driving. The Toyota Safety Sense 4.0/w Pre-Collision package includes 10 different safety features.

*Thank you Toyota !!
(We understand the Toyota family wasn't making SUV's when the first SUV, a covered wagon with 2 to 4 "horse power", crossed the U.S. - see PHOTO on same page)*

AUTO NEWS

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"20 Year Reunion of Legends of Auto" Returns to Embassy Suite Hotel in Seaside/Monterey on 8/13/26 During "Car Week"

by Bill McCallum

You are invited to attend the 20 year Reunion of Legends of Auto and "Dealer of the Decade" awards as we honor 30 living legends and 4 new car dealers on Thursday

August 13, 2026 at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Monterey, CA. during Pebble Beach "Car Week." (FOR ADVANCED TICKET INFORMATION SEE - www.autonewsonline.com



Embassy Suite Hotel - Monterey/ Seaside



Both Jim Farley, Ford C.E.O. and Beau Boeckmann (Rgt.) Galpin Ford to be featured at Legends Event (photo Auto News)

2026 Jeep Grand Cherokee Summit Review "Luxury Without the Six Figure Price"



2026 Jeep Grand Cherokee Summit (photo Chris Chung) (see story on page 2)

SEE 12 SHOWCASE TEST DRIVE REVIEWS ON PAGES 14 & 15

New Car Dealers Support Their Communities



Bill McCallum
publisher

I have spent the last 45 years supporting new car manufactures (OEM's), and new car dealers across the U.S., Canada, and Worldwide.

Sometimes we tend to forget that the OEM's customer is the DEALER and the dealer's customer is YOU. While you may have had an issue with a new car dealer in the past they are one of the largest employers across the U.S. and they support your local economy with taxes for schools, and philanthropic projects in your community.

As technology invades the auto industry both OEM's and new car dealers are changing!

A FEW EXAMPLES ARE:

- 1- Is technology impeding the "fun of driving" ?
- 2- Is technology causing an increase in driver distraction ?
- 3- Are technology add-ons making vehicles less affordable ?
- 4- Is technology making the buying process easier ?
- 5- With more vehicles purchased by women., are more women entering the auto industry. ?
- 6- Are dealer service departments doing a good job of servicing customers ?
- 7- Are dealers adopting the "One person selling strategy ? i.e. ONE dealer sales person guides you through the buying process.

AND FINALLY ... is direct selling a good idea for the OEM, New Car Dealer, the CUSTOMER, and your local community ?

Time will tell and stay tuned as the Auto News Pod Cast is coming soon !!

2026 Jeep Grand Cherokee Summit Review: Luxury Without the Six Figure Price



Chris Chung
Digital editor

The 2026 Jeep Grand Cherokee Summit occupies a very interesting space in today's SUV market. On one hand, it still carries Jeep's rugged DNA with real four-wheel-drive capability and off-road hardware. On the other, it delivers a luxury experience that genuinely feels comparable to vehicles costing far more.

After spending time behind the wheel, one thought kept coming back to me: this thing feels remarkably close to a Range Rover — without the six-figure price tag.

At around \$66,000 as tested, the Summit trim packs an impressive amount of premium equipment. Step inside and you're greeted by a beautifully finished cabin trimmed in Palermo leather with massaging front seats, heated and ventilated seating in both rows, ambient lighting, and one of the quietest interiors in the segment. Road noise is almost nonexistent, giving the SUV a calm, isolated feeling that makes long drives incredibly relaxing.

The tech package is equally impressive. A massive 12.3-inch Uconnect 5 infotainment display sits front and center, paired with a passenger-side interactive screen and a 19-speaker McIntosh audio system with a 950-watt amplifier. It feels modern, upscale, and thoughtfully laid out.

One surprise was the engine. Under the hood is Jeep's turbo-

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Luxury and Utility in the Lexus LX700 Overtrail 4WD



Sally Hanson
editor

The evolution of Sport Utility Vehicles (SUVs) has come a long way since my recollection of outdoor adventures in my 1967 Land Rover 88 Series IIA. Who would have figured a luxury SUV built to adeptly handle off-road conditions like rocky paths, dirt roads and deep snow could come all dressed up in a package Lexus has created in their LX700h Overtrail 4WD with a twin turbo V6 hybrid engine?

Powered by a nickel-metal hydride battery, the LX700h offers a highly capable 3.4-liter engine paired with a 10-speed direct shift automatic transmission. The hybrid system produces 457 horsepower and an EPA estimated combined fuel economy rating of 20 mpg. Towing capacity is 8,000 pounds.

When the vehicle arrived for my test drive, I immediately noticed the amazingly large 33 inch tires with tread extending almost halfway down the sidewalls. These tires are often referred to as "sidebiters" and are designed for extra traction in mud, sand and rocky off-road conditions while also strengthening the sidewall against punctures. I thought "surely no one would drive a Lexus off-road needing that kind of traction." Mounted on 18 inch alloy wheels, these tires certainly gave the Overtrail model an aggressive, rugged look that cried out to go hill climbing off road.

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Mercedes-Benz CLA 250 EV "test drive review"



Dave Kunz
LA feature writer

Mercedes-Benz made some big headlines recently, introducing a flashy new flagship EV, the AMG GT 4-Door Coupe. But I was recently quite smitten with the other end of their electric lineup, the new CLA 250+ Electric.

You may know the name CLA as Mercedes' entry-level sedan over the years, but now it's gotten the brand's EQ treatment, the moniker all their EVs wear. Two things that immediately impressed: First, an EPA estimated battery range of 374 miles. Secondly, a starting price of just under \$50,000. If you've shopped for an electric vehicle recently, you know that those things are pretty much never found in the same model.

The new CLA is sleek, in that 4-door coupe shape. Compact in footprint, but rather cavernous inside. I found it to be a very airy place to spend time, with the standard panoramic glass roof helping in that regard. If you like large infotainment screens, the optional MBUX Superscreen spans the entire width of the dashboard and is rather stunning and crisp. The front passenger has a separate screen (not visible to the driver) where streaming services like Disney+ can provide road trip entertainment.

Speaking of road trips, Mercedes-Benz has built this new EV around a new 800-volt battery system. With the right DC

continued on page 16

Polestar 4 EV No rear window No problem



Keith Turner
SF feature writer

The 2026 Polestar 4 Dual Motor doesn't just look different — it feels like a deliberate attempt to rethink what a premium electric SUV can be.

Somewhere between a sleek coupe, a Scandinavian lounge and a stealth fighter, the Polestar 4 lands in that increasingly crowded EV luxury space occupied by the Tesla Model Y, Porsche Macan EV and Audi Q6 e-tron. But unlike many newcomers, the Polestar has an actual personality.

The Dual Motor Pilot version tested delivers 544 horsepower and 506 lb-ft of torque through an all-wheel-drive setup, enough to launch this surprisingly large EV to 60 mph in roughly 3.5 seconds. That is serious performance, but what's impressive is how composed the car feels doing it. The acceleration is immediate and violent in classic EV fashion, yet the chassis never feels chaotic or overly digital.

This is a heavy vehicle — more than 5,000 pounds — but Polestar's suspension tuning keeps it controlled and refined. The available continuously controlled dampers help smooth out rough pavement without turning the car into a floaty luxury barge. It feels European in the best possible way: planted, precise and quietly confident.

Visually, the Polestar 4 may be one of the cleanest-looking EVs on sale today. Flush glass, hidden handles and minimal body surface-

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Owning and operating an EV in Northern Michigan



Jim Trainor
feature writer

It's been more than one year since I reported on my experience living with an electric vehicle in northern Michigan. Many wondered if it made sense at all, much less if it was a wise decision. The hue and cry for an update has been overwhelming, which I am happy to provide.

I've now been through two winters in Traverse City with my Kia EV and the experience has been overwhelmingly positive. Big time. I can report only minor issues.

One not so minor issue involved a deer, a fairly large one, that decided to jump in front of my EV6 GT Line while I was traveling at about 55 one February evening. While there were no injuries to me or my passengers, the car (and the deer) didn't fare so well. Both were deemed a total loss.

I loved the EV6 GT Line AWD, with its more than 330 range and 320 hp. I hated to see it go and I needed to replace it right away. Even though empty nesters, my wife and I often are out sepa-

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Shelby F-250, 2026 Super Baja Announced



Harold Allen
Texas feature writer

A New Line of Redesigned High Performance Shelby Trucks

The redesigned Shelby F-250 Baja Truck will feature a new design, advanced performance, new suspension, and available custom styling. The vehicle will be built at Shelby Performances new state-of-the-art facility in Bristol, Indiana.

Shelby's team developed their version of the four-wheel drive vehicle with high quality suppliers in the industry. This version will have a Ford 6.7-liter turbo diesel with advanced technology and superior handling with best-in-class towing.

With the new King Shocks suspension system that increases the ride height, more travel and transforms how the truck will perform on and off the road. The Shelby F-250 Super Baja has two-tone 20-inch alloy wheels and BFG 37-inch tires. Also, a new functional air induction hood with painted extraction vents.

OE style fender flares with marker lights, powder coated bumpers and LED lighting enhance the truck styling. The F-250 Shelby Super Baja has full leather seat covers, digital gauges, embroidered floor mats,

continued on page 10

2026 Light-Duty Pickup Trucks for Supply Pro



Howard Elmer
truck writer

For 2026 we are seeing a profound shift in the electric vehicle market. Governments that supported EVs, with legislation and generous rebates are changing their tune. The full speed ahead rush to complete electrification is paused—and in some cases backing up. We are seeing official support for traditional ICE trucks again and rebates for all-electrics are suspended. Still electric is now integrated into the market in the form of hybrids. This mix of gas and electric is doing well—while all-electric is not. This market shift is best exemplified by the product direction Ram has adopted this year.

Ram – till last year- was promoting the coming of the REV, an all-electric pickup while at the same time killing its gas 5.7L Hemi engine. This was their future. Not anymore, the REV is permanently cancelled and the 5.7L gas Hemi V8 is back. This has been followed by a host of other "Back to the Future" model changes from all the manufacturers. Electrics are still out there, but for now they are taking a backseat.

Despite this seismic shift in the pickup market—there is not much on offer for 2026. Tariffs, politics

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



Jordan Williams
millennial writer

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

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

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

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

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Slot Car racing in Europe compared to the USA



Allen Smith
motorsports writer

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

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

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

The by 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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Larry See's Slow Growth for EVs



Larry Weitzman
EV specialist

About three weeks ago at the direction of President Donald Trump, Lee Zeldin, the EPA Administrator abolished the fictitious MPGe posted on EVs. These numbers, created by some convoluted formula, were suppose to show the efficiency of EVs in miles per gallon. The MPG numbers that were posted on EVs were outlandish, exaggerated by a factor of 3, 4 or even 5. In the case of electric pickups, the lie was even greater.

Let me give you some examples: An Audi Q4 45 e-tron EV MPGe number was 115 mpg (combined). A Ford Mustang Mach-E EV MPGe number was 107 mpg (comb.) A Tesla Model 3 (2WD) EV MPGe number was 137 mpg. In other words the EPA was telling you that an EV Mustang Mach-E would achieve 107 miles on a single gallon of gas. Why even at \$5 a gallon gasoline I'll be driving this Mach-E for about five cents a mile. That's a hor-

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Land Rover Defender 110 X-Dynamic SE



Arv Voss
feature writer

1947 marked the vision of Land Rover when chief Designer Maurice Wilks sketched a silhouette in the sand of a Welsh beach - a vehicle influenced heavily by the Willys Jeep. Initially intended for farm and industrial use, it was destined to become an accomplished and revered off-road transporter that would serve equally for leisure and rugged adventures.

From that beginning, there have been a dozen series or variations, in many forms with the first generation Land Rover Defender bowing in 1990. Range Rover models became part of the company's offerings in 1970 and the second generation Defender appeared in 2020.

There are now 13 different Defender models representing various levels of trim and equipment ranging in price from \$58,750 to \$169,650. The least expensive is the S model and the priciest is the Octa Edition1. My test Defender was a four door model seating five and came with a base price of \$73,725 and a final sticker of \$96,625. It's a blend of functional utility and creature comfort, loaded with a host of off-road enhancing features such as Terrain Response2 with Dynamic

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Pre-Owned Reality Check: When Scarcity Meets Surplus on the Same Lot



Tony Rehn
feature writer

by Tony Rehn Sr., President, TLR Automotive | COO, Bidacar.com

The automotive market is setting up for a shift that will impact both everyday drivers and the dealers who serve them. It's not a subtle change—it's a fundamental supply imbalance that's been building for years.

To understand where we're going, you have to look back at what didn't happen.

During the COVID-era disruption, new vehicle production slowed dramatically. As supply chains broke down, manufacturers simply didn't build enough vehicles—especially internal combustion engine (ICE) models. At the same time, demand didn't disappear. Consumers still needed transportation, so they turned to the used market in record numbers.

That surge masked a deeper issue: for roughly two to three years, far fewer vehicles were sold new. And if they weren't sold new, they don't exist today as late-model pre-owned inventory.

That's the root of today's tightening supply of used gas-powered vehicles.

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"How The No Tax on Car Loan Interest Policy Could Impact Borrowers In 2026"



Julia King
writer

The Treasury Department announced they planned to enforce The No Tax on Car Loan Interest policy in January, as part of President Donald Trump's One Big Beautiful Bill Act (OBBBA) passed in July. The policy aims to help taxpayers deduct up to \$10,000 a year in car loan interest on new cars assembled in the U.S. and purchased between 2025 and 2028. Amidst widespread concerns over affordability and the upcoming tax deadline, the initiative's gradual rollout is pertinent to American car loan borrowers.

To claim the tax deduction ahead of the April 15 deadline, individuals can file through a new form with the IRS: the Schedule 1-A, a new attachment to the Form 1040. Taxpayers are required to provide the Vehicle Identification Number (VIN) to help verify they're eligible.

While the policy has garnered attention for its potential to reduce costs associated with purchasing a new vehicle, there are key qualifications borrowers must keep in mind. The car in question must be new, and the final place of assembly must be in the U.S. This potentially excludes common models from foreign

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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!

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EV (Electric Vehicles) News and Strategies



AUTO NEWS

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Lindsey Jesch Joins "TeamAuto News"

Lindsey Jesch is the co-creator and host of That Car Show, a weekly cartalk podcast exploring car culture, the automotive industry, and the hosts’ automotive adventures. A lifelong car enthusiast, she’s also a writer, editor, and communications consultant who has collaborated with brands including Hagerty, GuntherWerks, and leading automotive technology companies. She has been active in high-performance driving since 2007, with home tracks at Pacific Raceways and Willow Springs International Raceway, and is deeply engaged in the automotive media and enthusiast communities in Southern California and the Pacific Northwest.



Lindsey Jesch
feature writer



Larry Sees Slow Growth for EVs...!

continued from page 4
reudous, intentional lie committed by the Feds that President Donald Trump and Lee Zeldin has just abolished. Just think how many people bought EV’s thinking they were going to drive for a nickel a mile. Sounds like 1960 again when gas was 35 cents a gallon. But also remember the dollar was worth about 10 times as much, new cars were about \$3,000 and a 1,500 sq. ft. house in California cost about \$15,000-\$20,000.

About eight years ago I wrote Motor Trend to tell them that these MPGe numbers were fictitious, as much as made up. In that letter I wrote there is only one actual way to compare energy operating costs of EVs to gasoline/diesel vehicles and that is energy per mile cost. It’s all pretty simple. The average EV gets a return of about 3-3.5 miles per kilo Watt hour of energy consumed. Pickup trucks are about 2 miles/kWh. I am not going to discuss battery range and refueling times for EVs. Those are separate issues of EVs.

While electricity costs vary across the United States gasoline is much more uniform excepting California, which also has some

of the highest electrical rates in the country (it’s the 49th highest, Hawaii is 50th). But in many jurisdictions rates are tiered. In California, in El Dorado County, where PG&E is the vendor, they are tiered as to the time of day and usage per month. There are even special plans for EV charging with rates based on summer and winter seasons as well as time of day. One plan during summer if you charge between 2 pm and 9 pm, the rate is 62 cents/kWh. But overall, it costs on average 30-35 cents a kWh for electricity (energy) to charge your EV. On the road, if you charge at public charging, energy could cost you 50-80 cents a kWh. But here’s the rub, that cost is for a Level 2 charger, which adds about 20 miles of range per hour. Level 3 chargers which can charge your battery in an hour are much more expensive.

At an average kWh of 35 cents/kWh, EVs cost 10-12 cents a mile for energy. Before the “Iranian turkey shoot” gasoline averaged less than \$3.00/gallon. Most cars sold today and for the last several years averaged 30-35 mpg, continued on page 8

Auto Nation Invests in South Florida Through Community Leadership and Civic Engagement

From affordable housing with Habitat for Humanity to the grand reopening of Huizenga Park, AutoNation supports initiatives that strengthen the region it calls home

AutoNation, Inc. (NYSE: AN), one of the largest automotive retailers in the United States and a long-time South Florida continued on page 10



AutoNation Chief Executive Officer Mike Manley joined Habitat for Humanity of Broward’s CEO Build, working alongside fellow executives to support affordable workforce housing for local families. (Courtesy of AutoNation)

Jim Trainor Reports on Owning & Driving a Kia EV in Northern Michigan

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rately and need two vehicles and we make regular trips to Detroit, a 720-mile round trip. Having an EV for local and moderate-distance trips, and a hybrid SUV for long trips, makes perfect sense for us, especially with an in-garage charger. It’s just so darn convenient and inexpensive that I can’t imagine having vehicles with gas engines. Just think, no more visits to gas stations in the middle of winter nor in spring and summer rainstorms.

To replace the EV6, we decided on a brand-new Kia EV9. While not as sporty nor fast as the EV6, it’s a very cool-looking vehicle and has a range of more than 350 miles. It looks different than most cars on the road but not in a way that makes the driver look silly. (I’m looking at you, Cybertruck owners.) And, the price was super attractive -- \$489 per month for a two year lease – with no money down. Heck, a Mustang Mach E will run you at least \$500 per month

with a \$3,000 down payment and it’s a lot smaller and not nearly the vehicle the EV9 is.

So, speaking of the cost of operation, the EV is brilliant. I barely notice the cost of the electricity on my monthly electric bill – about \$14 – 17 for a full charge. I receive a \$10 rebate every month for charging only between the hours of 11 p.m. – 6 a.m., easily achieved by setting these charging hours in the car. That is on top of the \$500 one-time credit I receive from my local utility company for having installed a charger in my garage. One real-life example of on-road savings is this: twice a week I make a 52-mile, round-trip visit to my physical therapist as I rehab a new knee. In my hybrid SUV, this would mean two gallons of gas, or about \$10 per trip. That’s \$20 per week and \$80 a month. With the EV9, the cost is only about \$4 per month. That’s real savings in a blast-to drive vehicle.

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AUTO NEWS® BYTES

Words Matter

“hoax”
"afford"
“affordability”

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

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

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

“AFFORDABILITY”

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

WORDS MATTER AND THEY ARE THE KEY TO INTELLIGENCE

by BILL McCALLUM, Publisher

Land Rover Defender 110 "test drive" report

continued from page 4

Program, Configurable Terrain Response, Rear Electronic Active Differential, All Terrain Progress Control, Hill Descent Control, Air Suspension, Adaptive Dynamics and 20" wheels.

Over the Defender line, there are 4 available powertrains and three body styles to challenge truck-like competitors while

delivering an incredible range of luxurious features comparable to loaded Range Rover models. The 2-door Defender 90 leans to a more retro purist design, while the 130's extended wheelbase and third row seating is clearly more suited to carrying people and gear.

My Defender's power was delivered by a 5.0 liter V-8 gas engine that cranked out 493 horsepower and 450 pound feet of torque through an 8 speed automatic transmission to all four wheels

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Land Rover Defender 110 (photo by Arv Voss)

Howard Elmer Reports on Light-Duty Trucks for Supply Pro

continued from page 3

and production issues have created a pause for many previously announced new models. In fact, most auto news is now concerned with 2027. Don't expect much new in this calendar year.

RAM

Ram 1500 features a refreshed design and the return of the HEMI V8 engine, alongside a trio of engine options including the Pentastar V6 and the Hurricane inline-six. The 2026 Ram 1500 trucks equipped with the 5.7-liter Hemi V-8 eTorque engine are being built at the Sterling Heights (Michigan) Assembly Plant and are available now. When the return of the Hemi was first announced Ram also added a new 10 year/100,000-mile powertrain warranty to the deal.

FORD

For 2026 Ford is adding trim packages to its Maverick – like the Lobo. Inspired by the lowered truck era that lasted from the mid-1980s to the early 2000s. The Maverick Lobo is a new canvas for modern street truck builds. It joins the lineup that includes the off-road capable Maverick Tremor and the efficient Maverick Hybrid. The F-150 is also getting the Lobo treatment.

HONDA



Ford Truck (photo Howard Elmer)

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the first-generation Ridgeline launch. New for 2026 is the Ridgeline TrailSport which also gets an exclusive Ash Green Metallic paint. Ridgeline is available in three all-wheel drive trim levels, starting with the well-equipped Ridgeline Sport. Honda says, "Throughout its history, Ridgeline has offered features pickup buyers look for, including payload and towing capacity without compromising the superior ride quality its unique unibody construction offers, setting the standard for overall comfort and capability."

ELECTRIC PICKUP NEWS

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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

Soul, electrified.

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

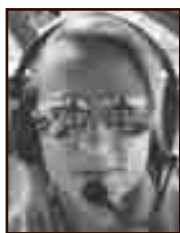
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PORSCHE

A Flying Car Was Introduced at the Northwest Electric Expo



Heather Chirtea
Flying Cars

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

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

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

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

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

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 para rescue man and smoke jumper. "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

Land Rover Defender "test drive"

continued from page 6

with a twin speed transfer box.

It's off-road credentials are stellar and claimed by the company to rank as the best Defender yet. The design is elegant and modern and visually extremely appealing.

Connectivity, infotainment and comfort features abound and seem almost limitless. Apple CarPlay and Android Auto are standard fare along with an in-dash navigation

system, a six-speaker stereo and an onboard WI-FI hotspot.

Driver-Assistance and Safety features include several specialized systems geared for off-roading and towing. Automated emergency braking with pedestrian detection and Lane Departure Warning with lane keeping assist are standard and adaptive cruise control is available.

Bottom line, this mid-line Defender is a classy, capable and desirable machine for attending the opera or for attacking backwoods trails with confidence. It's come a long way from lines in the sand.

Jim Trainor, Former OEM Communication Director, Reports on Buying a Kia EV6 and Driving it in Northern Michigan.....!

continued from page 5

On the minus side, I did have a problem finding a charger one time on a 225-mile trip. I used more electricity than anticipated on the trip, traveling at 85 mph on the highway much of the way, and had to find a charging station on the way home. It shouldn't have been a problem, even in Michigan, as the EV9 has the NACS charging plug — the same style Tesla's use. However, not all Tesla super chargers have con-

verted over to allow non-Tesla vehicles to charge and I had to hunt around to find a working charger. This will change as more Tesla chargers convert over, but it was a hassle for me. Once, after a 30-inch snowstorm, I got stuck going up my hilly driveway, even in the EV9's snow mode. But a snowfall that big is rare, even in northern Michigan, so not a major concern. Heck, even the guy who plows our development got stuck in his

F-250. Typically, the EV9, and the EV6 before it, operates very well in snow, thanks to snow mode and a heavy vehicle with its weight mostly centered on the vehicle.

In conclusion, an EV is an excellent choice for families like mine where a second vehicle is available for long trips. Even in northern Michigan. And, my road bike and mountain bike fit easily in the cargo space. I can't imagine living without one.

The Rugged 2026 Ram 1500 Warlock Crew Cab 4x4 Was Top Truck Pick at "Mudfest"

After two days of pavement, dirt, mud, acceleration testing, and off-road trails in the Pacific Northwest, the results from NWAPA Mudfest 2026 are officially in — and this year's competition may have been the strongest yet.

Taking home the top honor of NW Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year was the all-new 2026 Subaru Trailseeker Limited. Subaru's newest EV also captured wins for Best Two-Row Family SUV and Best Electrified Activity Vehicle, impressing journalists with its blend of strong acceleration, quiet

comfort, and genuine off-road capability.

Other category winners included the luxurious and shockingly fast 2026 Lucid Gravity Grand Touring, which earned Luxury SUV honors, while the V8-powered 2026 Jeep Wrangler Moab 392 dominated the off-road course to win Extreme Capability Vehicle.

The rugged 2026 Ram 1500 Warlock Crew Cab 4x4 earned top Pickup Truck honors thanks to its off-road capability and classic HEMI rumble. Kia's refined and adventure-ready 2026 Telluride

X-Pro SX-Prestige AWD won Three-Row Family SUV, while the efficient and capable 2026 Toyota RAV4 Hybrid Woodland took home Best Value NW Outdoor Activity Vehicle.

After driving all 19 vehicles ourselves at Mudfest, one thing became clear: the future of adventure vehicles is evolving rapidly — and electrified SUVs are becoming serious contenders both on-road and off. But at the same time there is a market that years for traditional V8-powered performance and capability.



20 Northwest Automotive Journalists Attend Annual 3 Day "Mudfest" Event to Test Drive Manufacturers Vehicles (photo Auto News)

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Sam Pack, Texas Ford Dealer, To Be Honored as "Dealer of the Decade" (See page 12)

Dr. Sam Pack is a native Texan, visionary dealer, and community-minded leader whose five-decade career in the automotive industry has helped shape North Texas business and civic life. His journey began in 1956 at Tarleton State University, where his early ties to the region and a genuine passion for people laid the groundwork for a lifetime of entrepreneurial achievement and service. In 1962, he entered the automotive industry with Ford Credit in Albuquerque, New Mexico, gaining deep experience in automotive finance and learning the value of long-term relationships that would guide his future as a dealer.[1]

In February 1980, Dr. Pack took a bold leap of faith by purchasing Lee Jarmon Ford in Carrollton, Texas, laying the foundation for what would become the Sam Pack Automotive Group. Over the next 45 years, that single dealership grew into one of North

Texas' most respected automotive organizations, today comprised of six Five Star dealerships in the DFW market and co-ownership of six additional dealerships in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Through industry cycles, economic change, and technological transformation, he remained steadfast in a simple philosophy: do what is right, care for people, and deliver an exceptional five-star experience.[1]

Under his leadership, the group has become known not only for sales performance but for a culture where employees are treated like family, customers are welcomed with sincerity, and communities see the organization as a trusted partner. The company's Five-Star Core Values—Integrity, Caring, Self-Discipline, Continuous Improvement, and Fun—guide every aspect of operations, from employee development to customer care. Long-standing partnerships with Brookhaven

and Dallas Community Colleges, along with other local schools and universities, bring college courses and continuing education directly into the dealerships, reinforcing his belief in lifelong learning and professional growth.[1]

Dr. Pack's commitment to community is equally defining. Through the Sam Pack Cares charitable organization, Pack Auto Group, the Pack family, and their employees support hundreds of local nonprofit organizations each year. This spirit of giving helped the group earn a Global Marketing Award from Ad Age and Automotive News in 2025 for its Little Wishes community program, in addition to multiple Better Business Bureau Torch Awards for Ethics and numerous "Business of the Year" and dealer-of-the-year honors at the local, state, and national level. These accolades reflect his conviction that true success is measured not only in business results but in the strength and well-being of the communities served.[1]

His leadership and character have been widely recognized. Tarleton State University awarded him an honorary Doctorate of Humane Letters in 2023 and, in 2024, named its College of Business the Dr. Sam Pack College of Business. Brookhaven College honored him with its inaugural "Pillar of the Community" award, and Stephenville High School recognized him as a Distinguished Alumnus. Ford Motor Company has presented him with its Salute to Dealers Award for community involvement, inducted him into the Top Volume Dealers Hall of

Fame, and in 2025 selected him as the first recipient of its Lifetime Achievement Award. Fairlane, home of the Clara and Henry Ford Estate, has also named its Welcome Center in his honor.[1]

Beyond industry recognition, Dr. Pack has received the Texas Automobile Dealers Association "Legend" Award, TIME Magazine's National Quality Dealer of the Year, and numerous local honors including Citizen of the Year and Entrepreneur of the Year from the City of Carrollton, as well as the United States Congressional Patriot Award. A lifelong student of the automotive industry and its history, he remains actively involved in daily business and community leadership and continues to serve on many industry and civic committees. Surrounded by his wife, Carol, and their family—Todd, Tony, Louisa, Carly, and Macy—Dr. Pack is most proud of the relationships formed, the careers built, and the communities strengthened through the dealerships that bear his name. Today, as the organization moves confidently into the future with more than 1,000 employees and a strong next generation of leadership, his legacy of faith, family, integrity, and service continues to inspire.[1]



Dr Sam Pack pictured at Five Star Ford in Carrollton, Texas (photo Harold Allen)



Larry See's Slow Growth for EVs

continued from page 5

making their energy cost slightly less than an EV at about 8-10 cents a mile. The cost of gasoline will be back to below \$3.00/gallon in a few weeks. This entire exercise is to demonstrate that EVs are not the equivalent of a 100 mpg car when it comes to fuel economy. The energy cost per mile of an EV is at best comparable to a conventional vehicle. However the most economical car to drive is a non plug in hybrid which can achieve 50 mpg or a bit more.

History is again repeating itself. EVs are not ready for prime time. They have range and refueling anxiety. They are just as expensive to operate on an energy cost per mile as a gasoline car and they are more expensive to acquire.

Of course there are exceptions to these "rules." If you live in Utah, energy is less than 13 cents a kWh meaning you can drive an EV for 4-5 cents a mile. Gasoline in Utah averaged about \$2.60 a gallon, meaning an EV is slightly less expensive to operate. Teslas are very popular in Utah as long as you don't have to commute from Salt Lake City to St. George or St. George to Las Vegas. There are a few other low population density states like the Dakotas that have cheap electricity, however it gets cold in those states reducing battery efficiency. But the Southern gulf coast states have rates averaging less than 15 cents a kWh and they don't get very cold. A good bet for an EV.

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 2026 scheduled for December 2, 3, 4, & 5, 2026"

Automechanika Shanghai 2026 aligns its exhibition and event platform with global shifts in innovation and sustainability Shanghai, May 2026. The 21st edition of Automechanika Shanghai will continue to champion the transformation of the automotive industry. Held at the National Exhibition and Convention Center (Shanghai) from 2 to 5 December 2026, the show will occupy the entire venue, including 390,000 sqm across 16 halls and mezzanine floor to host an anticipated 7,600 exhibitors. In line with the latest global and domestic automotive trends, the show will comprehensively highlight three core themes: technological innovation, product evolution, and service enhancement. By integrating the extensive exhibition platform with a highly impactful conference programme, Automechanika Shanghai 2026 offers comprehensive resources for the automotive industry and its ever-growing ecosystem.

With approximately 100 conferences, workshops and forums running across the four-day show, the programme bridges themes across the show floor through a mix of interactive demonstrations and global industry dialogues. These sessions will feature insights from market leaders, experts, and legislators on the trends shaping the future automotive industry.

Some highlights include the International Automotive Industry Conference – CEO Summit, a series of technical seminars focusing on autonomous driving, intelligent cockpits, battery technologies, and semiconductors, as well as the Global Collective, a conference designed to promote global investment, facilitate international cooperation, and advance business globalisation.

Automechanika Shanghai also offers a range of matchmaking sessions within the likes of the Automotive Supply-Demand Matching Series fostering strategic partnerships among OEMs, parts suppliers, and automotive technology companies. In fact, the fair offers opportunities to connect year-round in China maintaining consistent momentum across the entire supply chain.

Technologies and innovations take centre stage The fair will offer participants a preview of next-generation automotive technologies and innovations shaping the sector. Reflecting this, nearly half of exhibitors at Automechanika Shanghai will present new energy-related products and services. The New Energy & Connectivity sector is set to expand by 20 percent to accommodate displays of electric powertrains, autonomous driving, embodied AI, charging and battery swapping infrastructures, intelligent chassis, and thermal management systems. Hybrid, fuel cell, and hydrogen solutions to elevate vehicle performance, safety, and user experiences will also be on display.

Moreover, upgrades across parts and components, electrical and electronic systems, accessories and customising, diagnostics and repair, body and paint, as well as tyres and wheels will be prominently showcased. Advanced components, smart tyres, lightweight wheels, advanced maintenance and inspection for new energy vehicles, infotainment electronics, and high-performance upgrades reflect significant advancements in automotive technology for both passenger cars and commercial vehicles.

Responding to the expanding scope of the automotive sector, "Automotive +" launches as a defining theme for 2026, woven through both the exhibition and fringe events. The principal centres around how vehicles can collaborate with emerging technologies and more to create an intelligent mobility infrastructure. With Innovation4Mobility serving as the key platform for this concept, focus will be placed on how fields such as AI, new energy solutions, hardware-software integration, and robotics are coming together, exploring what this means for the next generation of vehicles.

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

by Jordan Williams

continued from page 3

range. An additional battery can be purchased to boost the car to a 250 mile range.

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

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

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

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

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

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



International Auto News



Polestar 4 EV Test Drive Review

continued from page 2

ing give it a futuristic simplicity that stands out in traffic without screaming for attention. The lack of a rear window – yes, there is no rear glass at all – sounds gimmicky until you live with it for a few days. Instead, a roof-mounted HD camera feeds a digital rearview mirror.

It may seem strange at first, but after a few days it's virtually unnoticeable. In fact, the missing rear window allows for more rear-seat headroom and a dramatic coupe

profile without sacrificing passenger comfort.

Inside, the cabin is classic Scandinavian minimalism: airy, modern and almost aggressively uncluttered. Sustainable materials, soft ambient lighting and a massive 15.4-inch Google-based infotainment screen create an upscale environment that feels more boutique hotel than automobile. The seats are excellent, particularly for long distance driving.

That said, Polestar occasionally mistakes minimalism for usability. **continued on page 24**



Polestar 4 EV (photo by Keith Turner)

Bardahl Returns to Pikes Peak in 2026: Chasing Glory at America's Most Demanding Race

Few races in the world test both machine and driver quite like the legendary Pikes Peak International Hill Climb. Known as "The Race to the Clouds," this iconic race pushes competitors up 12.42 miles of twisting mountain roads, climbing to a breathtaking 14,115 feet through 156 turns – a brutal test of power, precision, and endurance.

For 2026, Bardahl is once again stepping onto that stage, partnering with elite driver Simone Faggioli and the Faggioli Racing Team in pursuit of victory.

A Proven Champion Returns

Simone Faggioli isn't just another competitor – he's one of the most accomplished hill climb drivers in the world. After making history in 2025 as the first Italian to win Pikes Peak, Faggioli returns in 2026 with one goal: defend his title.

His resume speaks for itself:

- 11-time European Hill Climb Champion
- Multiple-time winner of Trento-Bondone and other iconic climbs
- A driver known for extracting every ounce of performance from both car and course

This year, he'll once again pilot a machine engineered for one purpose – dominating Pikes Peak.

Built for the Mountain: The Bardahl-Powered NP01

At the heart of Bardahl's 2026 effort is the purpose-built Nova Proto NP01, a lightweight, high-**continued on page 15**

“How The No Tax on Car Loan Interest Policy Could Impact Borrowers In 2026”

continued from page 4

manufactures, such as Hyundai and Toyota. Cars weighing less than 14,000 pounds qualify, while ATVs, trailers, campers, and similar models exceed the weight limit. Additionally, the deduction is capped at \$10,000 per year, and phases out for individuals earning more than \$100,000, or couples earning more than \$200,000.

So how beneficial will borrow-

ers find this policy? For many, this initiative will likely only save them hundreds of dollars in tax savings instead of thousands, according to research firm Cox Automotive. In the same analysis, they estimated a 72-month new-car loan with an interest rate of 9.5% on a \$48,000 vehicle and a 12.5% down payment would generate roughly \$3,800 in interest in the first year, and would

lower each following year. These findings infer that only a significantly large loan would ultimately produce near \$10,000 in tax savings.

Amidst ongoing research around the OBBBA, the full impact of the newly-enforced tax policy has yet to be seen. Borrowers across the nation are sure to encounter the full breadth of its impact as the season unfolds.



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Around the Track – Racing News



Auto Nation Invests in South Florida Through Community Leadership and Civic Engagement

continued from page 5

corporate leader, demonstrated its ongoing commitment to the community through a week of hands-on engagement supporting affordable housing and investing in shared public spaces in downtown Fort Lauderdale.

Headquartered in Fort Lauderdale, AutoNation continually strives to invest in the community it calls home. Recently, AutoNation's Chief Executive Officer, Mike Manley, joined Habitat for Humanity of Broward's CEO Build, working alongside fellow executives to support affordable workforce housing for local families.

AutoNation has partnered with Habitat for Humanity of Broward for more than 25 years, sponsoring six home builds and volunteering on many more. In the past year alone, AutoNation associates contributed more than 450 volunteer hours to help future homeowners and families transition from housing insecurity to homeownership.

Jennifer Biggs Honored as a N.W. Legend of Auto at a recent event.

(see page 23 for additional photo)



Abbie Biggs (right) attends Washington State University and helps her mother during school breaks

Shelby 2026 F-250 Super Baja To Be Introduced At B/J Auction

continued from page 3

and billet racing pedals.

This exciting new truck has an MSRP of \$159,795, included is a fully loaded Lariat Ultimate 4x4, F-250 Super Crew chassis with a 6.7L Hi Output Power Stroke® engine, which has an estimated MSRP of \$97,000. The truck comes with a three-year, 36,000-mile warranty. The powertrain warranty from Ford Motor Company remains intact.

Manufacturing starting this month with distribution through-

out North America; the public debut will take place at the Barrett-Jackson Collector Car Auction in Palm Beach, April 16-18 at the South Florida Fairgrounds.

There will be only 250 of this limited production offered through select Shelby Performance dealers across the United States. Each truck will be documented in the official Shelby Registry and owners will become members of Team Shelby, the official enthusiast club.



Shelby Lariat F-250 Super Crew Baja to be introduced at Barrett-Jackson

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From Around the U.S.



"One More Look Back to 2025 Pebble Beach Automotive Week"

An Unmatched Tradition of Automotive Excellence

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

Great Cars, Special Gatherings & Magic Car Moments
 THE PEBBLE BEACH TOUR d'ELEGANCE CELEBRATED 27 YEARS THIS AUGUST

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

Pebble Beach Tour d'Elegance presented by Rolex.
 SHELBY COBRAS SHINE AT THE PEBBLE BEACH CONOURS d'ELEGANCE

To mark the 60th anniversary of one of the most intimidating cars of its era, the Shelby Cobra 427, the 2025 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance featured a historic class
continued on page 25

"20 Year Reunion of Legends of Auto" Returns to Embassy Suites Hotel in Seaside/Monterey on 8/13/26

by Bill McCallum

We are happy to announce we will be returning to the Embassy Suites Hotel by Hilton (Seaside/Monterey) for our "20 year Reunion of Legends of Auto" and "Dealer-of-the-Decade" event.

The event is on Thursday night August 13, 2026 during Monterey Car Week from 6 pm to 8 pm. SAVE THE DATE and ticketing information to be announced in our Summer Issue (June/July) See page 26 for additional information.



Embassy Suite Hotel - Monterey/ Seaside

Lexus LX700 AWD Overtrail Review

continued from page 2

With one willing passenger and one not-so-adventurous passenger, I took the Lexus with those great tires off-road to check out the capabilities of the luxury SUV on McBee Road out of Benton City in South Central Washington. Climbing 1,200 feet on a gravel road that turned into a hardpan washboard trail and then a very rocky surface, the Lexus faced the challenge without fault and the tires navigated the rocks and deep ruts perfectly. At the end of the 2-mile trek up McBee Hill, we were treated to a gorgeous view of the wine country, Yakima Valley, the Tri-Cities, and a panoramic look at Horse Heaven Hills.

After descending the hill and entering the freeway, the not-so-adventurous passenger admitted that the ride was fun. I was definitely impressed with the excellent handling off-road and astounded by the quiet ride those large tires offered on the highway and city streets.

The exterior design on the LX700h features an aggressive grille with a three-dimensional shape comprised of seven sets of floating bars creating a seamless and frame-free structure. The thickness of each bar is fine tuned to provide the high-level cooling performance required for the twin turbo engine. The side radiator grills also have large openings to

ensure cooling performance. Running boards under the doors and two handles located inside the vehicle for each door made entry and exit feel secure.

The luxurious interior of the LX700h is so welcoming that you may want to sit and take it in for a while before enjoying the drive. The driver-focused cockpit design allows easy access to the controls without veering from the forward sight line. The LX lineup offers five massage options for the driver and front passenger seats equipped with semi-aniline leather trim. Lumbar support is excellent and makes even a long drive tireless. In the center console is a cool box that is perfect to keep chocolates from melting and keep a soda drinkable. The standard audio system is a 10-speaker premium surround sound. My test vehicle included a 25-speaker surround sound which provided full-bodied and balanced tones to all passengers.

Available in two and three row seating configurations, a 60/40 split folding second-row seat is standard with a third row available with power-folding rear seats that are split 50/50.

Lexus did an excellent job blending utility with luxury in their LX700h Overtrail 4WD. The combination of style, comfort, and performance on and off-road definitely redefines SUV.



Sally takes the Lexus LX700h Overtrail 4WD Luxury off-road to enjoy the view of Washington's wine country, Yakima Valley and the Tri-Cities area from McBee Hill

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From Around the U.S.



Pat Armstrong Ford – Serving the Greater Wenatchee Valley

For decades, Pat Armstrong Ford has been a trusted name for drivers throughout the Wenatchee Valley and across Eastern Washington. Built on a reputation of straightforward pricing, customer care, and community commitment, the dealership continues to serve generations of families who return year after year.

Founder Pat Armstrong believed that a dealership should operate with the same values that define the Wenatchee community itself—hard work, integrity, and treating people fairly. That philosophy still guides the store today. Customers know when they visit Pat Armstrong Ford they will find a team focused on making the buying and ownership experience simple and transparent.

Located in the heart of the Greater Wenatchee Valley, the dealership proudly offers one of the region’s strongest selections of new Ford trucks, SUVs, and adventure vehicles, including the legendary Ford F-150 and the iconic Ford Bronco lineup. Whether customers need a capable truck for work, an SUV for family travel, or a vehicle ready for Northwest adventure, Pat Armstrong Ford delivers.

One of the dealership’s most unique advantages is its Lifetime Limited Warranty, offered on qualifying vehicles. From big repairs to small ones, customers enjoy added peace of mind long after they drive off the lot.

Pat Armstrong Ford also proudly reminds buyers that they beat Westside prices every day, giving Eastern Washington values to customers through out the northwest.

"Pre-Owned Reality Check: When Scarcity Meets Surplus on the Same Lot"

by Tony Rehn

continued from page 4

As a result, pricing for desirable pre-owned ICE vehicles has remained stronger than many expected. Even as interest rates have risen and affordability has become a concern, the simple reality is this—there just aren't enough quality used gas vehicles to meet demand.

But while one side of the market tightens, the other is about to expand—quickly.

Over the past several years, aggressive government incentives and manufacturer-backed programs accelerated electric vehicle adoption. Leasing became a primary driver of that growth.

Now, those leases are beginning to mature.

A significant volume of electric vehicles—many just two to three years old—is starting to return to dealer inventory.

Economics 101 will take over.

As more pre-owned EVs hit the market, pricing pressure is inevitable. For many consumers, this won't just be about access—it will be about affordability.

For dealers, this creates a balancing act unlike anything we've seen in recent years.

We are no longer in a single pre-owned market.

We are operating in two—and they're moving in very different directions.

In today's pre-owned market, the question isn't whether it's a buyer's market or a seller's market—it's which side of the lot you're standing on.

Tony Rehn Sr. is President of TLR Automotive, a consulting firm focused on improving used vehicle performance in franchise dealerships, and COO of Bidacar.com, a dealer-to-dealer marketplace connecting inventory across the country. He brings decades of hands-on dealership leadership experience to operators looking to improve inventory velocity and profitability.

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SHOWCASE REVIEWS

2026 Lucid Air Touring



The 2026 Lucid Air Touring blends futuristic luxury, astonishing efficiency, and effortless performance into one sleek EV sedan. Its ultra-quiet cabin, 396-mile range, advanced technology, and dual-motor AWD system make it feel like the future of premium electric motoring today.

BASE PRICE: \$55,395 *
TYPE: Compact Luxury SUV
ENGINE: 2.0L Turbo I4
HORSEPOWER: 280 hp
TRANS: 8-Speed Auto AWD
MPG: 22 City/28 Highway/24 Combined

Land Rover Defender 110 X-Dynamic SE



The Land Rover Defender 110 X-Dynamic SE blends iconic styling with real off-road capability and upscale luxury. Its turbocharged inline-six delivers smooth power, while the refined cabin, advanced tech, and rugged 4WD system make it equally comfortable downtown or deep into the wilderness.

BASE PRICE: \$75,200*
TYPE: Luxury Off-Road SUV
ENGINE: 3.0L Turbocharged Inline-6
HORSEPOWER: 395 hp
TRANS: 8-Speed Automatic
MPG: 18 City / 22 Highway / 20 Combined

Mazda CX-5



The Mazda CX-5 has been redesigned for 2026 and is priced right with above average MPG offering a "Value Based" Mazda. The Premium Plus model is packed with extra options.

BASE PRICE: \$38,990 *
TYPE: Compact SUV
ENGINE: SKYACTIVE-G 2.5 L
HORSEPOWER: 187 hp
TRANS: SKYACTIVE Sport Mode AT
MPG: 30 highway

Toyota bZ XLE FWD Plus



The Toyota bZ Electric SUV is "priced right" in a very competitive electric market. Available in both FWD and AWD. AWD model offers 338 hp. Tech improvements on both models offer improved dashboard viewing.

BASE PRICE: \$37,900 *
TYPE: Electric SUV
ENGINE: Single Electric
HORSEPOWER: 221 hp
TRANS: AWD
MPG: 131 combined

Toyota RAV4 LTD Hybrid AWD



The Toyota RAV4 was a "test-drive" vehicle on our recent Road Trip (see page 1 story) The 2026 RAV4 performed well as to PRICE, POWER & PERFORMANCE. We suggest a "test drive: at your local Toyota dealer.

BASE PRICE : \$43,300 *
TYPE: SUV
ENGINE: 2.4L 4-Cylinder
HORSEPOWER: 236 HP
TRANS: ECVT
MPG: 41 combined

VW Tiguan SEL R-Line Turbo



We tested the VW Tiguan at the NWAPA "Mudfest" event in May of this year. Northwest Auto Writers commented on how the VW Tiguan Compact SUV was A "value based" SUV loaded with EXTRA OPTIONS

BASE PRICE: \$43,085 *
TYPE: SUV
ENGINE: R-Line TURBO
HORSEPOWER: 268 hp
TRANS: ECVT
MPG: 29 highway

* All information listed "AS TESTED"

autonewsonline.com/showcase reviews

SHOWCASE REVIEWS

2025 Range Rover SE P530



The 2025 Range Rover SE SWB P530 delivers private-jet comfort with commanding presence and surprising athleticism. Its twin-turbo V8, luxurious cabin, and advanced four-wheel steering create an ultra premium SUV experience equally suited for city streets, mountain roads, or snowy ski trips.

BASE PRICE: \$134,100*
 TYPE: Full-Size Luxury SUV
 ENGINE: 4.4L Twin-Turbo V8
 HORSEPOWER: 523 hp
 TRANS: 8-Speed Automatic
 MPG: 16 City / 23 Highway / 19 Combined

Lexus IS 350 F Sport



The Lexus IS Sports Sedan is a "top-seller" for the brand. Packed with the things you like in a FUN-TO-DRIVE sports sedan. The Lexus Safety System 3.0 offers the driver confidence behind the wheel.

BASE PRICE: \$56,363*
 TYPE: Sports Sedan
 ENGINE: 3.5I V6
 HORSEPOWER: 311 hp
 TRANS: All Wheel Drive
 MPG: 26 highway

Bardahl Returns to Pikes Peak in 2026: Chasing Glory at America's Most Demanding Race

continued from page 9

performance hill climb weapon designed specifically for extreme conditions.

Key specs include:

Engine: 3.0L twin-turbocharged inline-6
 Power: 750 horsepower
 Chassis: Carbon fiber mono-coque
 Weight: Just 1,477 lbs (670 kg)
 Transmission: Sadev sequential gearbox
 Tires: Pirelli P Zero

This combination of high power and ultra-low weight makes the NP01 perfectly suited for the high-altitude challenges of Pikes Peak, where thin air robs naturally aspirated engines of performance and every pound matters.

Why Bardahl Belongs at Pikes Peak

Pikes Peak isn't just a race — it's a proving ground. And that's exactly why Bardahl continues to show up.

For decades, Bardahl has built its reputation on high-performance lubrication and additive technology, including its signature polar attraction formula, which helps oil cling to engine components even under extreme stress.

That matters here.

At Pikes Peak:

- Engines run harder due to reduced oxygen
- Temperatures and loads fluctuate rapidly
- Reliability can make or break a run

Bardahl's technology is designed to reduce friction, protect critical components, and maintain performance under the harshest conditions — making it a natural fit for one of the toughest races on earth.

More Than a Race—A Statement

Bardahl's return to Pikes Peak is about more than defending a title. It's dominance continues to prove a legacy of performance, durability, and innovation by the Bardahl team and their products.

From grassroots racers to world-class hill climb champions, the same philosophy applies:

- Build products that perform when it matters most.

And there's no better place to prove that than 14,115 feet above sea level.

Follow the Climb

As the 2026 Pikes Peak International Hill Climb approaches, all eyes will be on Faggioli and the Bardahl-backed team as they attempt to make history once again.

- Learn more and follow the journey here:

<https://qr.codes/qtY5EM>

Final Thoughts

In a world increasingly focused on electrification and new technologies, Pikes Peak remains one of the last pure tests of mechanical performance—and Bardahl continues to rise to the challenge.

With a proven driver, a purpose-built machine, and decades of engineering expertise behind it, Bardahl's 2026 Pikes Peak effort is one to watch.

Toyota C-HR XSE AWD



As Electric EV sales "Bounce Back" with the elevated price of gas, Toyota's timing is right for the all-new 2026 C-HR. It fits well in Toyota's lineup of Hybrids & electric EV vehicles.

BASE PRICE : \$39,000*
 TYPE: EV
 ENGINE: Dual Electric Motors
 HORSEPOWER: 338 hp
 TRANS: All Wheel Drive
 MPGe: 112 combined

Toyota Land Cruiser Hybrid Wagon



The Toyota Land Cruiser has been an ALL-TIME best seller for the brand and a favorite of the off-road crowd. The Hybrid model offers buyers a savings at the pump. A "test-drive" is suggested.

BASE PRICE: \$ 62,645*
 TYPE: SUV
 ENGINE: I-FORCE MAX 2.4L 4 cyl
 HORSEPOWER: 326 hp
 TRANS: 8 speed AT
 MPG: 25 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

* All information listed "AS TESTED"

**WOMEN in the
AUTO WORLD**

Women in the Auto World

**WOMEN in the
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 Rita Case – Rick Case Auto Group
 Connie Peters – Automotive Writer

Thurgood Marshall Elementary School Students Step Out in Style in New Athletic Sneakers Provided by Rita Case and Soles4Souls

The 4EveryKid initiative helps Broward County youth get paired with properly fitted shoes to improve focus, grades and fitness.

Every student at Thurgood Marshall Elementary School in Fort Lauderdale has an extra spring in their step after receiving a new pair of name-brand athletic shoes, socks and books through the 4EveryKid initiative led by Rita Case, president and CEO of Rick Case Automotive Group, and Soles4Souls.

Volunteers from Rick Case Cares, Children's Services Council of Broward County, Bealls, United Way of Broward County, UKG and Broward County Property Appraiser's Office helped almost 300 students find the perfect fit.

"Kids grow so fast and that sometimes puts a financial strain on families to keep up. Sixty-nine percent of students expressed difficulty focusing in the classroom due to improper footwear. Shoes should never interfere with their learning and concentration," said Case, who founded the 4EveryKid program in Broward County with Soles4Souls. "We not only encourage all children to get a proper education, but to also remain physically fit. New sneakers that fit properly can help achieve both."

Rita and her husband Rick got involved with Soles4Souls in 2013. They began by providing coats and shoes for children at Boys & Girls Clubs in Broward County. Since becoming the founding sponsor

and chief fundraiser for 4EveryKid Broward in Spring 2022, Rita has raised more than \$575,000, which is enough to ensure all kids who face housing insecurity in Broward County Public Schools (BCPS) receive one new pair of shoes and socks every year for five years. At events like this one, the generosity goes beyond those specific students to include the entire mschool population.

Soles4Souls is a global non-profit that has distributed more than 550,000 mpairs of shoes nationwide through the 4EveryKid program. Since Fall 2022, the organization has provided 15,849 pairs of shoes through the m4EveryKid program in Broward County in partnership with organizations such as BCPS Homeless Education Assistance Resource Team (HEART) and the Boys & Girls Clubs.

After receiving new shoes, more than 95% of kids increased their physical activity, felt more equal to their peers and were more excited to participate in school. The free footwear helps parents and guardians allocate their in school. The free footwear helps parents and guardians allocate their budgets towards other essential expenses.

The 4EveryKid sneaker giveaway was made possible thanks to generous partners including Rita Case, Rick Case Automotive Group, Children's Services Council of Broward County, UKG, United Way of Broward County, Channel 7 Foundation, The Cathy and James Donnelly Fund, and Rotary Club of Weston.



Rita Case (holding shoe) with students at Broward County Event

Rick Case Kia Sunrise Honored as Exclusive Member of Kia America's President's Club

President and CEO Rita Case recognized for exceptional customer service and sales success

Kia America has named Rita Case, president and CEO of Rick Case Automotive Group, as one of only 50 dealers in the United States to earn a spot in the brand's

prestigious President's Club. Selected from a network of nearly 800 retailers, the Kia President's Club recognizes dealers who have achieved the highest sales performance and delivered exceptional customer satisfaction. This is the seventh year in a row that Rick Case Kia Sunrise has received President's Club honors.

"I am very proud to represent the Kia brand. Rick Case Automotive Group not only has a Kia dealership in Sunrise, Florida, but we also have one in Atlanta, Georgia," said Case. "It's always an honor to receive recognition

for the hard work my team and I put in every day. We take pride in our customer satisfaction, which leads to our sales success. We treat customers as our friends. This builds a longstanding relationship of trust and loyalty."

Kia America continues its remarkable momentum as the brand achieved its eighth consecutive year of retail sales growth in the U.S. in 2025. "Last year marked significant milestones in the continued growth of the Kia brand in the United States, and on behalf of the Kia family, I would

continued on page 22



Rita Case with Kia executives and Jimy Contreras, general manager Photo courtesy: Rick Case Automotive Group

Mercedes-Benz CLA 250 EV "test drive review"

continued from page 2

quick charger, the company says you can get an amazing 202 miles of charge in about 10 minutes. Public charging is eased by twin ports: NACS (Tesla-style) and J1772/CCS located behind a single charging door. No adaptors needed, no matter where you charge.

Like the brand's other EVs, the CLA is quick and quiet. Need more performance, and

all-wheel drive? You can step up to the CLA 350 4MATIC with 349 horsepower (versus 268 on the CLA 250+), though you'll be stepping up to a steeper base price by about \$2500. The 350 4MATIC also gets by with less range, 312 miles estimated.

Of course that \$50,000 base price range is just the starting point. My test CLA 250+ was piled with options like an AMG appearance package and Pin-

nacle trim, so it was more like a \$60,000 EV. Still, considering what else is out there in the electric space, that's right in line these days.

And if you're not ready for a full EV but want a Mercedes-Benz in this entry class, a hybrid version will be coming along. The CLA line is built on flexible architecture allowing for internal combustion assisted by a 48-volt hybrid system.



Mercedes-Benz CLA 250 EV (photo Dave Kunz)



Car Collections



2026 "MUDFEST" WINNERS ARE HERE...!

The official Mudfest 2026 results are in and Subaru takes the gold.

After several days of real-world testing with the Northwest

Automotive Press Association, 19 SUVs, EVs, trucks, and off-road vehicles were put through pavement, dirt, off-road obstacles, acceleration testing, and more.

And this year's grand prize winner is: **2026 Subaru Trailseeker Limited**

The all-new Subaru Trailseeker Limited was named NW Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year, while also winning:

- **Best Two-Row Family SUV**
- **Best Electrified Activity Vehicle**

With quick EV acceleration, a quiet cabin, strong comfort, and real outdoor capability, the Trailseeker stood out as one of the most balanced vehicles at Mudfest 2026.

Other Big Winners

Luxury SUV: 2026 Lucid Gravity Grand Touring

Extreme Capability Vehicle: 2026 Jeep Wrangler Moab 392

Pickup Truck: 2026 Ram 1500 Warlock Crew Cab 4x4

Three-Row Family SUV: 2026 Kia Telluride X-Pro SX-Prestige AWD

Best Value: 2026 Toyota RAV4 Hybrid Woodland

This year's results show how quickly electrified adventure vehicles are gaining ground — while V8-powered machines like the Wrangler 392 and Ram Warlock prove there is still plenty of passion left for traditional power.

Read the Full Mudfest 2026 Winners Article

More Mudfest 2026 coverage is still coming soon, including full galleries, video vlogs, individual reviews, and off-road highlights.



20 Northwest Automotive Journalists Attend Annual 3 Day "Mudfest" Event to Test Drive Manufacturers Vehicles (photo Auto News)

2026 Light-Duty Pickup Trucks for Supply Pro by Howard Elmer

continued from page 6

GM
For 2026 Chevy introduces a "Custom" package, a "Plus" package and added features like the Multi-Flex tailgate, and a "Premium" package that includes Super Cruise, head-up display, and a mid gate. Chevrolet will also offer its popular off-road Trail Boss trim as part of the 2026 Silverado EV lineup. With a 2-inch lift, the Trail Boss has 24% higher ground clearance compared to the base Silverado EV. The coil suspension system is uniquely tuned with a hydraulic rebound control system.

RAM
Ram 1500 Ram charger: This extended-range electric vehicle (EREV) uses electric motors for propulsion and features an engine that acts as a generator. It's still supposed to arrive in 2026 — however they have dropped the Ram charger name along with the death of the all electric REV.

FORD
Ford's Lightning — the all EV truck — is dead. However, in the next 12 months, Ford Motor Company will build the next generation of the F-150 Lightning which (like the RAM) will be an extended range electric truck — utilizing a gas engine to charge the battery.

This EREV will offer the best of both worlds: the seamless, instant power of an electric powertrain and the freedom of a generator-backed estimated range of more than 700 miles.

Unlike a traditional hybrid, the F-150 Lightning EREV is propelled 100 percent by electric motors. This provides rapid acceleration and quiet operation — while eliminating the need to stop and charge during long-distance towing. Like the current F-150 Lightning, the nextgen version will also offer exportable electricity that can power everything from work sites to camp sites to homes during a power outage.

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The "McCallum Family" Has a Long History in the Tacoma, WA Auto Industry



(Left to Right) Marnce, Kathy, Jonathan & Billy McCallum with Toyota Land Cruiser in Tacoma (see page 15 Review)

2026 VW Tiguan SEL R-Line Turbo "Test Drive Review" by Bill McCallum

(See page 14 for Recap)



2026 VW Tiguan SEL R-Line Turbo (photo Auto News)

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44TH ANNUAL



REGISTRATION VISIT: MUSTANGSNORTHWEST.ORG

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

Order A Custom Made 18 foot by 8 foot Table Top Track with Cars, Controls, etc. for \$3999 or A PoliCar Slot Car Starter Kit. Including Track, Two Cars & Controls for only \$599 including shipping - ORDER TODAY - While Supplies Last!

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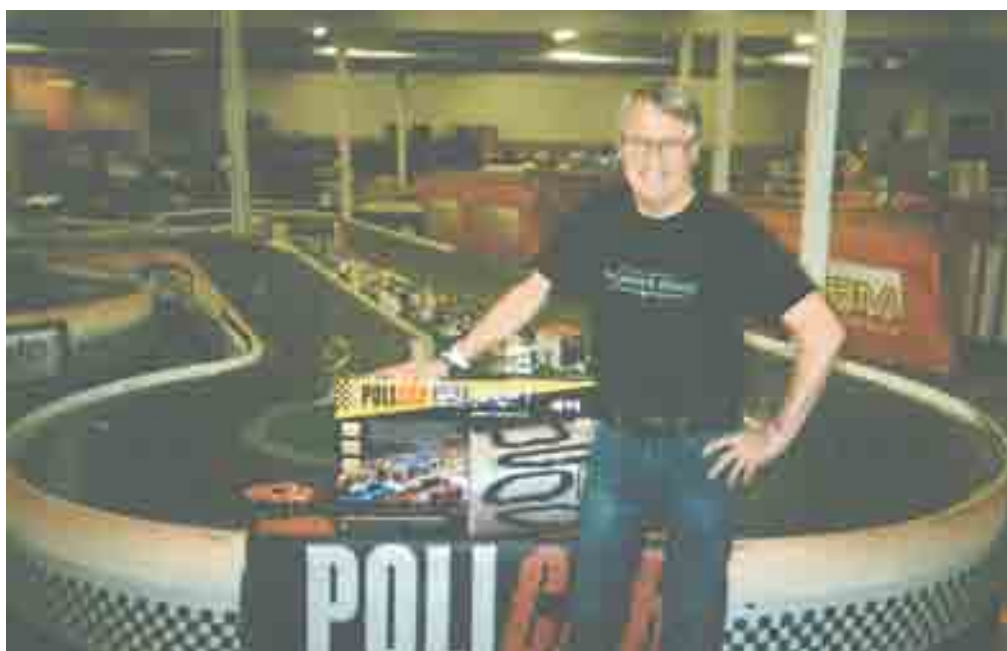
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Alan Smith, Scale Racing Center Owner, Demonstrates PoliCar Slot Car Starter Kit at his Center in Tacoma



Book Reviews



Aston Martin The V8 Legacy

"A Detailed History by Matthew Vale"

ASTON MARTIN



THE V8 LEGACY



A Detailed History of the DBS, V8, Zagato and Lagonda Models, 1967-1990



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2026 Jeep Grand Cherokee Summit Review: Luxury Without the Six Figure Price

continued from page 2

charged 2.0-liter Hurricane four-cylinder paired with an 8-speed automatic transmission. On paper, a four-cylinder in a luxury SUV of this size might sound underwhelming, but in practice it moves the Grand Cherokee surprisingly well. Acceleration feels smooth and responsive, the drivetrain never struggled during daily driving, and it got 23 mpg combined (21 city/26 hwy)

The Summit also backs up its luxury credentials with genuine capability. Quadra-Lift air suspension, Quadra-Trac II four-wheel drive, Selec-Terrain traction management, and an electronic limited-slip differential mean this SUV can still confidently handle snow, dirt, and rough terrain.

What makes the Grand Cherokee Summit compelling is its

balance. It delivers upscale comfort, advanced technology, real off-road capability, and strong road manners at a price point that undercuts many European luxury competitors.

For buyers who want Range Rover vibes without Range Rover pricing, the 2026 Jeep Grand Cherokee Summit might be one of the best luxury SUV choices on the market today.

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

(see page 24 & 25)

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

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

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

All the tires in the P Zero range but the novelties introduced recently can boast a lap record around the Ring in the last five years: 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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Rick Case Kia Sunrise Honored as Exclusive Member of Kia America’s President’s Club

continued from page 16

like to express my sincere appreciation to Rita Case and the staff at Rick Case Kia for their unwavering dedication to exemplary sales performance and outstanding customer satisfaction,” said Seungkyu (Sean) Yoon, President and CEO, Kia North America and Kia America.

This milestone also represents the brand’s highest-ever U.S. market share, underscoring the continued consumer demand for Kia’s diverse model lineup. Adding to this momentum is the all-new 2027 Kia Telluride, featuring its first-ever available hybrid powertrain and expanded X-Pro capability, marking the next chapter for Kia’s flagship three-row SUV.

As part of Kia’s commitment to helping those in need and supporting local communities, the brand’s “Accelerate the Good” Dealer Match program contributed more than \$4.7 million to non-profits nationwide in 2025. Together, Kia America and its dealers provided assistance to those affected by a wide variety of issues from childhood cancers to homelessness and hunger, to natural disaster relief and environmental causes.

Locally, South Florida Kia Dealers donated \$150,000 last December to Feeding South Florida, the leading hunger-relief organization serving Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe Counties. This donation supports Feeding South Florida’s mission to end hunger in the community by providing immediate access

to nutritious food, innovative programming and advocacy efforts. The organization serves food-insecure individuals across its quad-county region, including children, seniors, veterans and single parents. For every \$1 donated, four nutritious meals are provided to those in need.

Located at 14500 West Sunrise Blvd. in Sunrise, Rick Case Kia Sunrise is open seven days per week. Visit rickcasekiasunrise.com or call (954) 715-7581 to reach the sales department.

About The Rick Case Automotive Group

Founded in 1962, the Rick Case Automotive Group has been honored by Automotive News as the National All-Star Dealer and President and CEO Rita Case was named the 2024 TIME Dealer of the Year. Rick Case Automotive Group is the nation’s largest female owned and operated automotive dealer group in America, offering Honda, Hyundai, Genesis, Ioniq, Volkswagen, Kia, Acura, Audi, Mazda, Maserati, Fiat, Alfa Romeo, Honda Motorcycles and E-Z-Go golf carts. Celebrating more than 60 years in business, the Rick Case Automotive Group has 12 dealerships in South Florida and Georgia. The South Florida dealerships are known for holding national sales records, consistently ranking among the top performers in markets they serve. Rick Case Automotive Group is headquartered at 14500 W. Sunrise Blvd. in Sunrise, Florida. For more information, visit www.RickCase.com.

United Way Broward’s Women United Volunteers Inspired 500 Young Readers During Read Across America Week-Long Celebration

United Way Broward’s Women United volunteers, alongside Kathleen Cannon, President & CEO of United Way Broward, and Rita Case, President & CEO of Rick Case Automotive Group, celebrated and supported the National Education Association’s Read Across America initiative by reading “All Are Welcome” at Sunland Park Academy in Fort Lauderdale. More than 50 volunteers from Women United and generous community partners, including Rick Case Automotive Group, read to 500 elementary school children.

“Reading opens doors to opportunity, imagination, and lifelong learning. By instilling a love of reading and fostering the curiosity and excitement that every book brings, we’re helping equip students with skills that matter in every aspect of life,” said Kathleen Cannon, President & CEO of United Way Broward. “Together with our community partners, we are not just encouraging literacy, we are helping change the trajectory of students’ lives.”

During the celebration, Stanley C. Panther, the official mascot of the Florida Panthers, paid a visit to the children and each child received a brand-new copy of “All Are Welcome” to add to their home libraries and reinforce positive learning environments. In addition, WSVN Reporter Brandon

Beyer read to the children with Cannon and Case.

“We’re proud to celebrate reading and support at-home libraries for students through the Read Across America program,” said Case. “Too many children in our community don’t have access to age appropriate books at home, and we know that literacy is one of the most powerful ways to help children build confidence and create brighter futures.”

To date, United Way Broward has distributed more than 100,000 books to elementary school children Pre-K through second grade through its Reading Pals initiative. To get involved, visit <https://www.unitedwaybroward.org/readingpals>.

Women United is a network of strong and influential women dedicated to making a meaningful and lifechanging impact in our community by correcting social and racial disparities, expanding educational opportunities for elementary school children, promoting maternal health, advancing women’s equality, and inspiring and engaging new generations of women.

About United Way Broward

United Way Broward mobilizes communities to action so all can thrive. True to our founding spirit, whenever there is a need in our community, United Way is there. For more than 85 years, United Way

Broward has brought a comprehensive approach to every challenge, actively listening and responding to local needs. Our reach across the communities in Broward County means we can share innovations and scale impact to improve lives in collaboration with our donors, volunteers, corporate and agency partners. From strengthening local resilience to advancing health, youth opportunity, and financial security, we’re working towards a future where every person in every community can reach their full potential. To learn more, visit UnitedWayBroward.org.

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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



Matt Kennedy, (center) with Tech School Students at Olympus Rally (photo Auto News)

Methow Valley, WA Tech Students Experience Olympus Rally Up Close

Students from the Methow Valley School District Auto Program recently stepped out of the classroom and into the world of professional rally racing during a multi-day field trip to the Olympus Rally in Western Washington.

Led by Automotive Instructor Matt Kennedy, the trip included a visit to the LeMay Museum, tours of South Puget Sound CC's automotive, machining, and welding programs, and multiple Olympus Rally events. Students met rally legends including Travis Pastrana, Lia Block, and former WRC driver Jari-Matti Latvala while exploring race cars, service areas, and speaking with drivers and mechanics.

We caught up with Matt Kennedy after the trip and he stated: "Overall we had a great trip. The goal was to get students out of town to get exposure to a part of the automotive industry that most of us do not see on a regular basis. The students learned a ton about rally racing, how to get involved and how to access this sport as a driver/co-driver or a mechanic. I heard so many thoughtful questions from the students during our trip. There is a ton of excitement about the trip and we are hoping to go again next year."

The experience continues the momentum of Methow Valley's growing automotive program as many students recently earned ASE certifications and are continuing their education through automotive technical programs and apprenticeships across Washington.



"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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			Collector Museum Tour

***Denotes Added Benefits**

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.

2026 Polestar 4 "Test Drive Review"

continued from page 9

Too many functions live inside the touchscreen, including some basic climate and vehicle controls. Like many modern EVs, there's a learning curve that may frustrate less tech-savvy buyers and navigating the touchscreen menus while driving can be tedious.

Range is respectable rather than class leading. The EPA rates the Dual Motor at 280 miles, with charging speeds up to 200 kW on DC fast chargers. In real-world driving, expect something closer to the mid-200s if you fully enjoy all head-snapping 544 horsepower – and you will.

Pricing for this Pilot-equipped tester lands around \$67,400 including destination. Considering the performance, design and premium feel, it stands for decent value in today's luxury EV market.

The Polestar 4 isn't perfect. The camera mirror won't be for everyone. The interface can occasionally overcomplicate simple tasks. And some rivals charge faster or travel farther.

But very few EVs feel this cohesive.

The 2026 Polestar 4 Dual Motor succeeds because it doesn't merely chase Tesla. It dares to be something else entirely: stylish without being flashy, fast without being juvenile and futuristic without losing its humanity.

Keith Turner is an auto writer based in Northern California. Check out his video reviews at Carguy Drives on YouTube. Keith Turner

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Auto News Foundation



~2026~

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**Auctions • Museums • Tours • Cars & Coffee
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59th Annual Edition!

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

by Bill McCallum, Publisher/Founder

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

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

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

3- Passing on 70 % of the funds

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

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

"One More Look Back to 2025 Pebble Beach Automotive Week"

continued from page 12

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

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

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

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

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

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

THE BMW ART CAR MARKS ITS 50th ANNIVERSARY

To celebrate the 50th anniversary of its iconic series of Art Cars, now 20 in number, BMW brought two stellar examples to the 2025 Pebble Beach Concours show field: the latest BMW Art Car No. 20 by Julie Mehretu was paired with the BMW Art Car No. 4 by Andy Warhol.

EIGHT ICONIC ROLLS-ROYCE PHANTOMS GATHER AT PEBBLE BEACH

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

Purchase Tickets to the 2026 Pebble Beach Concours d'Elegance

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

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 continued

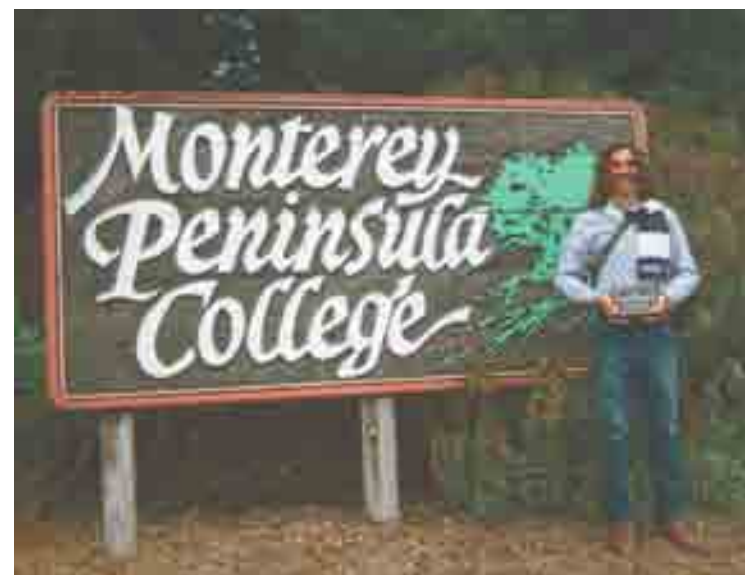
13. Skyline College
 14. Universal Technical Institute (UTI)
 15. WyoTech
- ### 3. Ohio
1. Cincinnati State Technical Community College
 2. Clark State Community College
 3. Columbus State Community College
 4. Cuyahoga Community College
 5. Lorain County Community College
 6. Northwest State Community 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)



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



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





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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.

Honored Members of Legends of Auto

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

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

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

SEE - www.LegendsofAuto.com

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

*Departed Legends

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



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

Lyn Hiner, Artist, Honored



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

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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.

The Ford Expedition Tremor is for Buyers Who Need Full-Size SUV Practicality, but want Real Off-Road Capability

The 2025 Ford Expedition Tremor takes everything people love about Ford's full-size SUV and injects it with genuine off-road capability. If the standard Expedition is built for family road trips and towing duty, the Tremor is built for families who don't stop when the pavement ends.

Off-Road Muscle Meets Full-Size Comfort

Under the hood, the Expedition Tremor packs Ford's 3.5-liter EcoBoost twin-turbo V6, producing a healthy 440 horsepower and 510 lb-ft of torque. That's serious power for an SUV this size, and it

shows. Acceleration is strong and confident, especially when merging or passing, and the 10-speed automatic transmission keeps things smooth and responsive.

This isn't just a cosmetic package. The Tremor gets real off-road hardware:

- Unique suspension tuning
- Increased ground clearance
- 33-inch all-terrain tires
- Trail Control (low-speed off-road cruise control)
- Rock Crawl mode
- Steel skid plates protecting critical components

The front end features bold

orange Tremor accents and tow hooks that make it clear this isn't your typical suburban hauler.

Big on Space, Bigger on Capability

Inside, the Expedition Tremor remains every bit the full-size SUV. There's generous seating for up to eight passengers, with ample legroom in all three rows. Cargo space is massive — perfect for road trips, camping gear, or hauling sports equipment.

Technology is modern and intuitive, highlighted by a large center touchscreen with Ford's SYNC system, wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto, and a

fully digital gauge cluster. It feels high-tech without being overwhelming.

Towing remains a major strength, with capacity that can exceed 9,000 pounds when properly equipped. Boats, trailers, or toy haulers are well within its comfort zone.

How It Drives

Despite its size, the Expedition Tremor drives with surprising composure. Steering is light enough for daily use, yet stable at highway speeds. On rough terrain, the suspension soaks up bumps impressively well for such

a large SUV.

It's big — there's no hiding that — but Ford has done an excellent job making it manageable.

Final Thoughts

The 2025 Ford Expedition Tremor is for buyers who need full-size SUV practicality but want real off-road credibility. It blends power, technology, towing strength, and trail capability into one commanding package.

If you want an SUV that can haul your family in comfort during the week and tackle mountain trails on the weekend, the Expedition Tremor is hard to ignore.

10 Years in the Making: Evergreen Ford's New Issaquah Facility Set to Open March 2027

After more than a decade of planning, development, and overcoming challenges, Evergreen Ford is finally set to open its brand-new Issaquah location in March 2027.

The project has been years in the making, with development efforts and permitting discussions dating back well over 10 years. Now, the long-awaited state-of-the-art Ford and Lincoln facility is nearing reality and promises to dramatically expand Evergreen Ford's ability to serve customers throughout the Eastside and greater Seattle region.

We recently caught up with Sean Bell, COO of Cam Clark Automotive Group and General Manager at Evergreen Ford, who shared his excitement about finally bringing the project to completion.

"We are so excited to be bringing this to completion in Issaquah with over 10 years in development," Bell said. "Big thank you to Dan Rowe, the previous owner, for all the challenges he overcame with the new location. We wouldn't have been able to do it without him."

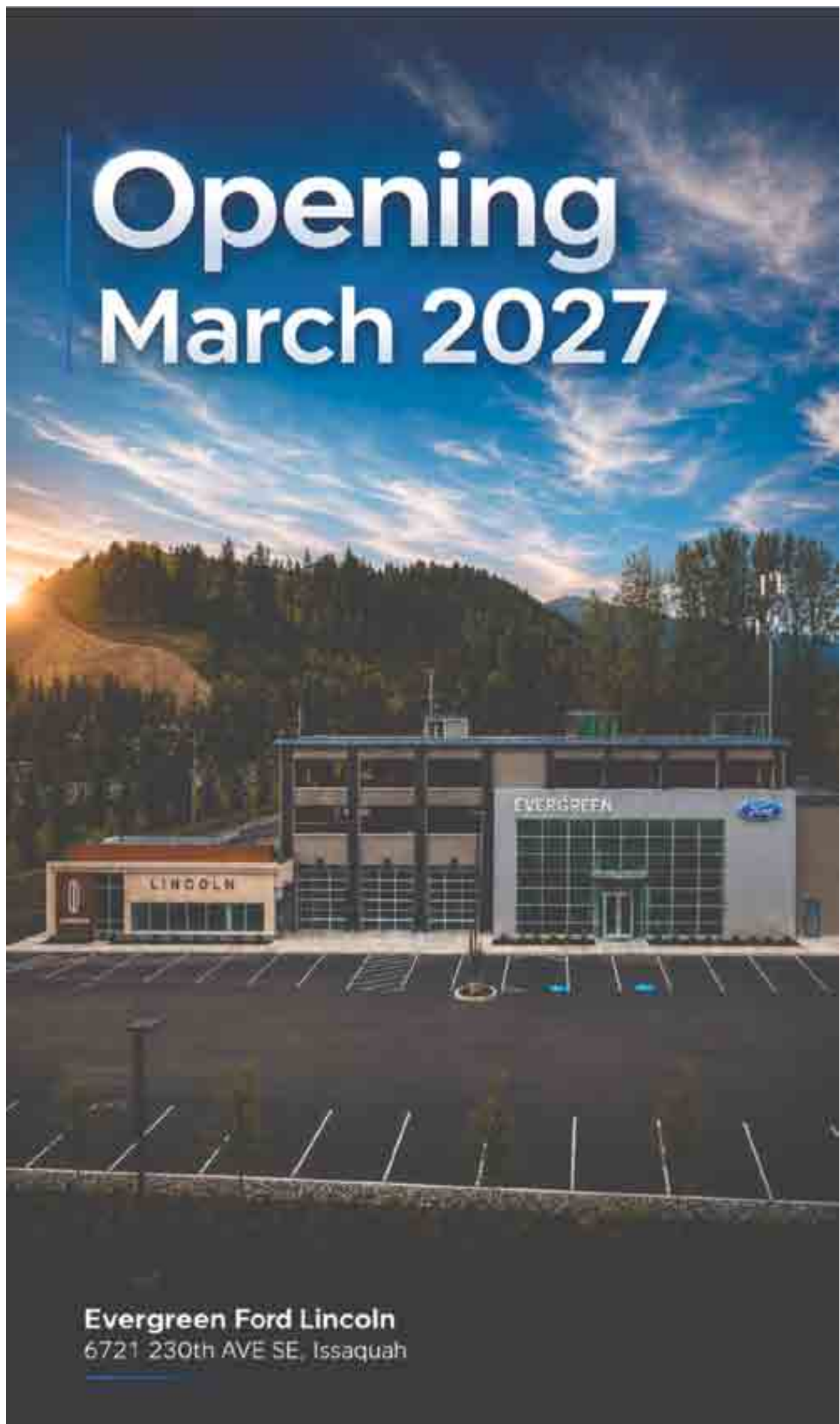
The new facility will feature over 50 service bays, significantly expanding service capacity for Ford and Lincoln customers.

"We will finally have the facility to allow us to best take care of our guests, including the most amazing Lincoln location," Bell added.

Evergreen Ford says preparation for the move has already been underway for over a year, and the dealership is actively hiring both technicians and sales staff ahead of the opening.

"We have bays for technicians NOW — we need salespeople now!"

The opening marks one of the most significant dealership developments in the Pacific Northwest in recent years and represents a major investment in the future of automotive retail and service in Issaquah.

**Opening
March 2027**

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