

ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

VOLUME 5 NUMBER 4
JULY-AUGUST 2006



AUDI Q7:
OFF-ROAD AND HIGHWAY
TEST EVENT ON MT. PALOMAR



Monterey

AUGUST 18-19

CONSIGNMENTS INVITED

- 2 FULL NIGHTS
- OVER 150 CARS

AUGUST 18-19



1937 CHIP FOOSE
CUSTOM BOATTAIL
ROADSTER

1956
MERCEDES-BENZ
300 SL GULLWING



1969 LAMBORGHINI MURIA
UNRESTORED ORIGINAL



1954 BUICK SKYLARK
CONVERTIBLE



1922 DEUSENBERG
RACE CAR



1939 LINCOLN ZEPHYR
STREET ROD



1936 AUBURN BOATTAIL
SPEEDSTER CUSTOM



1966 PONTIAC GTO CONVERTIBLE
4-SPEED TRI-POWER



1968 OLDSMOBILE 442 CONVERTIBLE
OLDEST IN EXISTENCE



1948 CHRYSLER TOWN & COUNTRY
CONVERTIBLE



1939 MG WA DROPHEAD
TICKFORD



1961 CORVETTE TOP FLIGHT
DUNTOV SIGNATURE



1950 FORD WOODY
CUSTOM



1961 MG A
ROADSTER

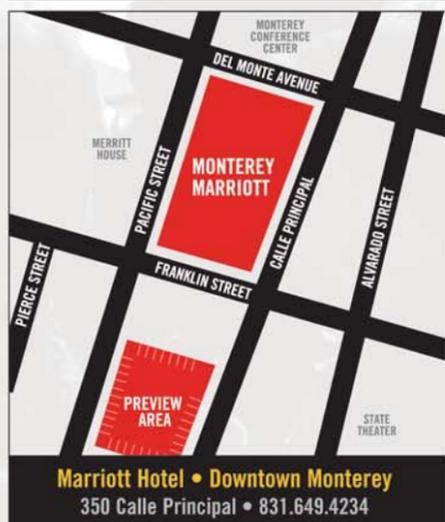
SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

THURSDAY AUGUST 17TH

10:00am to 6:00pm
General preview on Calle Principal
6:00pm to 9:00pm
Charity Cocktail Reception and Silent Auction
at the Preview Area

FRIDAY & SATURDAY AUGUST 18TH - 19TH

10:00am to 5:00pm
General preview on Calle Principal
3:00pm to 5:00pm
VIP Registration Reception,
2nd floor of the Marriott Hotel
5:00pm to 11:00pm
Russo and Steele Collector Automobile Auction
2nd floor of the Marriott Hotel



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ARIZONA DRIVER

THE ENTHUSIAST'S GUIDE TO LIFE BEHIND THE WHEEL

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Audi resisted the entire SUV scene for quite some time, and pointedly so (unless you count the allroad). Now they have come to market with a tour de force entry, heavy on style, technology and innovation... and pointedly so. We fly to San Diego to test drive this vehicle at launch, on streets and freeways, but all in the course of ending up at lofty Mt. Palomar, where we drive up one side on rough forestry roads and down the other on the greatest curving mountain 2-lane highways we could find.
By Joe Sage, Barbara and Bill Schaffer

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The Porsche Boxster has been a major hit since it hit the streets in 1997, with its midengine balance, moderate price, great handling and variety of options and fitments. Ten years later comes the coupe equivalent. Since half of the Boxster name comes from its being a roadster, Porsche has come up with a new name... Cayman. Porsche brought us the car for a presentation and hands-on look, and we spent some time behind the wheel. It doesn't take long to realize this new name will stick.
By Barbara and Bill Schaffer

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Information on a helpful new program from OnStar, inconveniently presented here entirely in English. Please pass the information along to those who can benefit.

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COVER: The Audi Q7 in Monument Valley. Photo courtesy Audi.



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Audi long since mastered its own approach to go-anywhere engineering, with its famous quattro all-wheel-drive system, refined over almost 30 years now, and as stunning on pavement as off. As such, they resisted the SUV craze longer than most, but with their cousins VW and Porsche both actively in the game, they have come to the party late, but equally stunningly. We flew to San Diego for a press introduction with the Audi Q7 planning and engineering teams from Germany and the US, learning all the ins and outs of how they've applied their skills to this new machine. We also test drove the new Q7 up forestry roads on one side of Mt. Palomar and down smooth, curvy mountain highways on the other, as well as on the streets and highways of North County San Diego and beyond, with plenty of opportunities to try out the many creature-comfort and safety/convenience features built into this beast. Did we like it? Our report covers things in detail.

Then Porsche brought its engineering team to Phoenix for a presentation and parking lot shakedown of the new Cayman S, the so-called Boxster coupe, and we have details on a test drive here also. As popular as the Boxster has been, not to mention the 911, this machine is going to hit its new niche running, providing the midengine handling characteristics like the Boxster, but in a lighter-weight and basically stronger coupe body.

We round out the issue with the usual rumors and forecasts, as well as with a couple of equipment items of special interest.

Enjoy the ride!



Joe Sage
Publisher/Executive Editor

ARIZONA DRIVER

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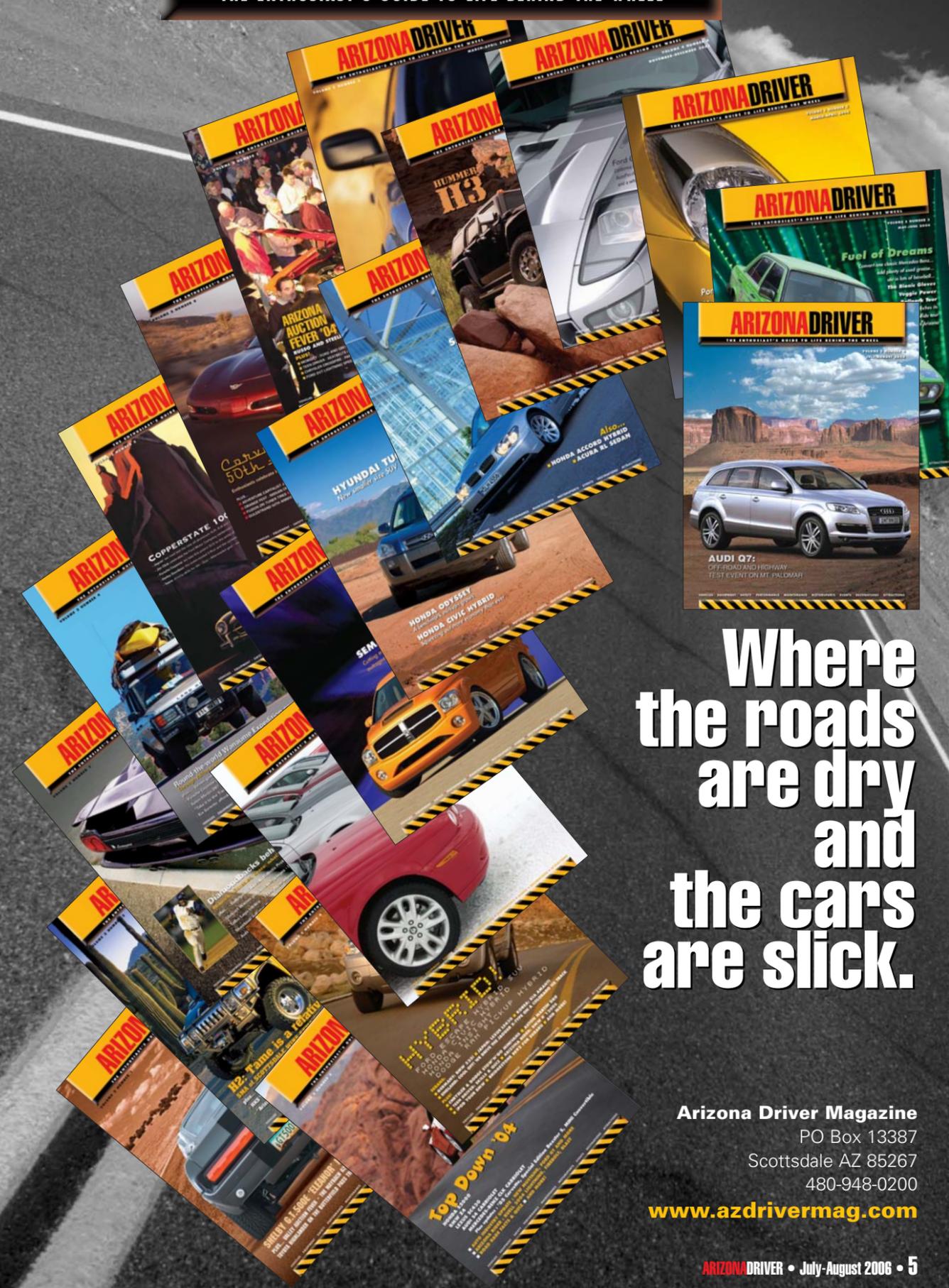
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and
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are slick.**

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QUIZ : CAR SMARTS



1. What percentage of Jeep Wrangler owners are women?
a. 8 percent b. 17 percent
c. 25 percent d. 33 percent
2. What percentage of Ferrari owners in North America are male?
a. 47 percent b. 62 percent
c. 81 percent d. 99 percent
3. How far does the average driver drive per day?
a. 29 miles/day b. 39 miles/day
c. 49 miles/day d. 59 miles/day
4. What percentage of the population has purchased a new car in the last five years?
a. 20 percent b. 31 percent
c. 42 percent d. 53 percent
5. How many Chevrolet SSR roadster/pickups were built in the three years before it was discontinued in March 2006?
a. 12,465 b. 25,150
c. 33,777 d. 48,194
6. When did Honda launch its Acura division?
a. 1984 b. 1986
c. 1988 d. 1990
7. How many Hummers have been sold since GM acquired the rights to Hummer?
a. 100,000 b. 150,000
c. 200,000 d. 250,000
8. What is the average daily cost for tires, gas, insurance and everything else that goes into owning and driving a car?
a. \$10.59/day b. \$17.10/day
c. \$21.36/day d. \$27.63/day
9. How many Porsche Cayenne SUVs have been sold worldwide since production started late in 2002?
a. 75,000 b. 100,000
c. 125,000 d. 175,000

10. What is the asking price for the Duesenberg name trademark?
a. \$4 million b. \$8 million
c. \$16 million d. \$32 million
11. What year did Ford produce America's first hardtop convertible?
a. 1955 b. 1957
c. 1959 d. 1962
12. What percentage of Ferrari buyers are repeat buyers?
a. 23 percent b. 44 percent
c. 65 percent d. 84 percent
13. If you are dialing a phone, eating or talking while driving, how much more likely are you to be involved in an accident?
a. 3 times more b. 5 times more
c. 7 times more d. 9 times more
14. General Motors spends how much per vehicle on employee health care?
a. \$500 /vehicle b. \$1,000 /vehicle
c. \$1,500 /vehicle d. \$2,000 /vehicle
15. What foreign car did the French highway patrol (Gendarmerie Nationale) just add to their fleet of patrol cars?
a. Audi A3 3.2 b. VW Passat 3.2
c. Subaru WRX d. Ford Mustang
16. How many hybrid vehicles were sold in 2005?
a. 83,217 b. 121,445
c. 176,507 d. 215,680
17. What percentage of new vehicle buyers in 2005 were "upside down" (owing more than their vehicle was worth) in trade-ins?
a. 9.7 percent b. 21.9 percent
c. 33.6 percent d. 41.1 percent
18. When was South Korea's Hyundai Motor Company established?
a. 1957 b. 1967
c. 1977 d. 1987
19. How many pounds of carbon dioxide does the average car emit each year?
a. 500 pounds b. 2,900 pounds
c. 8,000 pounds d. 11,000 pounds
20. What percentage of drivers, at any given daylight moment, are talking on a handheld cell phone?
a. 6 percent b. 9 percent
c. 12 percent d. 16 percent
21. On which day of the week do the most vehicle accidents occur?
a. Monday b. Wednesday
c. Friday d. Saturday

22. A British couple made a Guinness World Record by going around the world on less than 25 tanks of gasoline in a 1.6-liter Volkswagen Golf. What was their average fuel economy for the 18,467-mile trip?
a. 43.7 mpg b. 52.1 mpg
c. 60.6 mpg d. 68.8 mpg
23. Under normal conditions, how many pounds per square inch of pressure could a tire lose in six months?
a. 1 lb pressure b. 2 lb pressure
c. 4 lb pressure d. 6 lb pressure
24. How many vehicles were repossessed in 2005?
a. 524,000 b. 978,000
c. 1.34 million d. 1.67 million
25. Which manufacturer was able to build its vehicles in the US in the fewest number of hours per vehicle during 2005?
a. Nissan b. Toyota
c. Honda d. General Motors
26. What percentage of the total US auto market is made up of entry-level small cars?
a. 0.8 percent b. 2.1 percent
c. 5.4 percent d. 7.3 percent
27. Over its lifetime, what is the average cost per mile of owning a Rolls Royce?
a. \$1.74 /mile b. \$3.88 /mile
c. \$6.12 /mile d. \$10.66 /mile
28. Which 2005 vehicle is estimated as most energy efficient over its lifetime?
a. Scion xB b. Ford Escort
c. Jeep Wrangler d. Chevy Tracker
29. What percentage of vehicle occupants used seatbelts in 2005?
a. 69 percent b. 76 percent
c. 82 percent d. 91 percent
30. How many Chevrolet Impalas were sold in the US in 2005?
a. 129,492 b. 186,501
c. 246,481 d. 307,222
31. Of the ten cars that get the best fuel economy in the US (including hybrids), how many are Volkswagen?
a. 2 of 10 are VW b. 3 of 10 are VW
c. 4 of 10 are VW d. 5 of 10 are VW
32. Motorists living near which of the following locations are more likely to have a traffic accident than other drivers?
a. church b. restaurant
c. school d. liquor store

>> ANSWERS (quiz on page 7) >>

1. Answer: c. According to Chrysler group, 25 percent of Jeep Wrangler owners are women.
2. Answer: d. According to Ferrari, 99 percent of the Ferrari owners in North America are men.
3. Answer: a. The average driver drives 29 miles per day according to the Allstate Insurance Company.
4. Answer: b. According to the results of a survey conducted by Directions Research, Inc. with data gathered by Greenfield Online, 31 percent of Americans have purchased a new car during the last five years.
5. Answer: b. After three years of production, the unique Chevrolet SSR pickup/roadster has been discontinued with an estimated 25,150 units produced.
6. Answer: b. Honda launched the Acura Division on March 27, 1986 with the introduction of the Legend and Integra models.
7. Answer: b. GM says they have sold 150,000 Hummers since the new H2 went on sale in mid-2002.
8. Answer: c. The American Automobile Association's (AAA) annual study says the average American spends \$7,800 (or \$21.36 per day) for tires, gas, insurance and everything else that goes into owning and driving a car. The range runs from \$6,253 annually for compact car owners to \$9,805 for an SUV 4WD.
9. Answer: c. The Porsche Cayenne is the best-selling Porsche every made with more than 125,000 sold worldwide since production started late in 2002.
10. Answer: d. According to *Automotive News*, the famous Duesenberg trademark is currently for sale for \$32 million. A Duesenberg car was last produced in 1937.

11. Answer: b. Ford produced America's first retractable hardtop, the Skyliner, in 1957.
12. Answer: c. According to Ferrari records, 65 percent of Ferrari buyers are repeat buyers and 20 percent of the buyers own more than one Ferrari.
13. Answer: a. According to a new study from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, drivers who are dialing a phone, eating or talking while driving are three times more likely to be in an accident than an attentive driver.
14. Answer: c. According to the *Detroit News*, General Motors spends about \$5.6 billion each year on health care costs for employees. That works out to about \$1,500 per vehicle.
15. Answer: c. The French highway patrol (Gendarmerie Nationale) just purchased 63 blue Subaru Impreza WRXs to use as patrol cars. Subaru beat out Peugeot and Renault models. The WRX has a top speed of 150 mph, while the competitors will only go 120 mph.
16. Answer: c. According to *Automotive News* there were 176,507 hybrid vehicles sold in 2005. That's up from about 80,000 in 2004.
17. Answer: c. According to J.D. Power and Associates 33.6 percent of the trade-ins last year carried a negative equity or the buyers were upside down in their previous loans.
18. Answer: b. The Hyundai Motor Company was founded in South Korea in 1967. They produced their first car, a Cortina built as a joint venture with Ford, in 1968.
19. Answer: d. According to TerraPass, Inc., of Menlo Park, California, the average car produces about 11,000 pounds of carbon dioxide gas annually or about three times the weight of an average vehicle.

20. Answer: a. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 6 percent of the drivers, at anytime during daylight hours, are talking on a handheld cell phone.
21. Answer: c. According to Allstate Insurance, car crashes are more likely to occur on Friday than on any other day. More than one million of the six million annual accidents occur on Friday.
22. Answer: b. John and Helen Taylor went around the world on less than 25 tanks of gas averaging a record 52.1 mpg. Their trip was sponsored by Shell. To see more information on the fuel stretching techniques they used go to www.shell.com/us/fuelstretch.
23. Answer: d. According to Bridgestone/Firestone, Inc., under normal conditions a tire can lose one pound of pressure each month, so in six months a tire could lose six pounds. In addition, a tire can lose one pound of pressure for each 10 degrees F drop in temperature. Therefore, it's important to check your tire pressures monthly.
24. Answer: c. According to Manheim, the world's largest used vehicle auction company, there were 1.34 million vehicles repossessed in 2005. The peak year for repossessions was 2003 when there were 1.6 million.
25. Answer: a. According to the results of the 2005 Harbour Consulting study of assembly plant efficiency, Nissan builds vehicles in an average 28.46 labor hours. That includes assembly, stamping and powertrain. (Toyota 29.4 hours. Honda 32.51 hours. General Motors 33.19 hours.) According to Harbour Consulting President Ron Harbour, that gives Nissan a \$300 to \$450 per vehicle cost advantage over less productive competitors.
26. Answer: a. According to Automotive News just 0.8 percent of the nearly 17 million cars and trucks sold in the US last year were entry-level small cars.
27. Answer: d. According to the results of a long term study of the "dust to dust" energy costs of a vehicle over its lifetime, the Rolls-Royce costs \$10.66 per mile (full line average). The study was done on all 2005 model vehicles by CNW Marketing Research, Inc. of Bandon, Oregon. The highest vehicle energy cost was for the Mercedes-Benz owned Maybach, which was \$11.58 price per mile.
28. Answer: a. According to the long-term study done by CNW Marketing Research the energy cost from initial concept to the projected time it is scrapped, the Scion xB is the most energy efficient model sold in the US. The Scion xB is listed with a cost of \$0.48 per mile. (Ford Escort \$0.57. Jeep Wrangler \$0.60. Chevrolet Tracker \$0.69.)
29. Answer: c. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, seatbelt use reached an all time high of 82 percent in 2005.
30. Answer: c. The Chevrolet Impala was the best selling American-branded car in 2005 with total sales of 246,481. As a contrast, in 1965, there were 1,038,460 Impalas sold.
31. Answer: c. According to EPA figures, 4 out of the 10 most economical cars in the US are Volkswagens.
32. Answer: b. According to *Road & Track* magazine, a report done by the Quality Planning Corp. (a risk assessment firm,) says motorists living within a mile of a restaurant are 30 percent more likely to be involved in an accident. Those living near a school were 26 percent more likely to be in an accident. People living near a liquor store are 18 percent more likely. Motorists living near a church are 10 percent less likely to have an accident. ■

The Car Smarts quiz includes news and trivia from industry sources, trade journals and consumer magazines compiled for *Arizona Driver* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.

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HONDA'S NEW FIT

As the Honda Civic grows up, the new Fit subcompact moves into the entry-level position with a base price starting at \$14,400 including destination charge. Powered by a 109-hp 1.5-liter four-cylinder VTEC engine with a 5-speed manual or optional automatic with paddle shifters, the Fit has a long list of standard features. With a spacious 111 cubic feet of interior volume and the new Magic Seat™, the five-door hatchback can be reconfigured to carry a large volume of cargo as well as four adults. The Sport model includes features like aero body kit, keyless entry, cruise control, upper level audio and 15-inch aluminum wheels for \$16,520. The EPA has rated the Fit at 33/38 mpg with the manual transmission. ▼



Honda Fit Sport

Pontiac GTO



Unlike Ford's retro-rejuvenated Mustang, the Pontiac GTO has fallen short in sales. Hood scoops haven't been enough to invoke the original passion.

REPORTS OF GTO DEMISE PREMATURE

▲ Pontiac GTO production is due to end in September, but it has now been revealed that it will be back in 2008. *AutoWeek* magazine reported after an interview with Bob Lutz, General Motors Vice President of Global Production Development, that future development of the high performance Pontiac coupe was only placed on hold, while company officials make sure profitability targets could be met. The new GTO will be built on the new Zeta rear-wheel drive platform being developed by GM's Australian division, Holden. The same platform is also used under the Camaro concept vehicle.

LATEST NSX SPECULATION

The long overdue replacement for the Acura NSX is tentatively scheduled for 2008. What it will be is still speculative, but the picture is starting to come into focus. The exotic two-seater may come in two levels. An entry level model will likely be a 350- to 400-hp V-8 with buyers having to fork out about \$70,000. Shoppers who want go all the way will spend about \$100,000 for a version powered by a 5.0-liter V-10 rated at 450- to 500-hp. The logic runs that the V-8 could compete with

the upcoming Nissan GT-R, and the V-10 could take on the proposed Lexus GT 450. Both models will likely use the impressive SH-AWD all-wheel drive system currently driving the RL sedan.

GM'S FIRST "AUTOTAINMENT" CENTER

Located just steps from the Las Vegas strip is General Motors' latest marketing and entertainment endeavor, "The Drive." For a \$10 entry fee, participants get a chance to drive cars like the Corvette, Pontiac GTO, Cadillac CTS-V, Pontiac Solstice, Cadillac STS-V, Saab 9-3 convertible and Chevy SSR on a half-mile paved road course built on an 11-acre site near the Sahara Hotel & Casino. Off-roader intenders can get the keys to a Hummer H2, Hummer H2 SUT and mid-size Hummer H3 on one of the two off-road courses. The other features the 2007 Cadillac Escalade, Chevy Silverado Diesel and 2007 Chevy Tahoe. This first-of-its-kind "autotainment" experience gives participants a chance to sample these special vehicles in conditions not normally available on a typical dealership test drive. There is no pressure to buy the car, but a professional driver will sit in the passenger seat to insure the optimum and safest experience. Drivers must have

a valid license, be at least 18 years of age and pass a breathalyzer test (zero tolerance). "The Drive" is open seven days a week from 10a. to 6pm, including holidays. Tickets are available exclusively on Vegas.com. For more information go to www.thedrivevegas.com.

HURRICANE BLOWS BACK AT FORD

A year ago, Ford canceled plans to build a big V-8 engine to compete with the Chrysler Hemi and GM's new 6.2-liter. Now inside sources say executive vice president Mark Field has put the big engine, called the Hurricane, back on the production schedule. The program was dumped as fuel prices started to soar and demand for big engines dropped. Recently sales of the big V-8s have started to strengthen, and it appears Ford trucks will need a bigger engine to maintain their first place position. The new engine is expected to be about 6.2 liters, but without a cylinder deactivation system like the competitors' engines. Ford insiders say the engine will have fuel saving technology that should yield similar ratings. The Hurricane name will likely be dropped on the production model.

KEEP RIGHT >>

VOLVO FINE TUNES THE XC90

Volvo designers have refined and upgraded the XC90 SUV for 2007. Building on the award-winning and highly successful first effort, the new XC90 gets extensive changes. The standard inline 6-cylinder engine is a new 3.2-liter version and the compact Yamaha designed V-8 that was introduced partway through the 2006 model year will be unchanged. New features include Active Bi-Xenon lights that follow the curvature of the roads and a Blind Spot Information System (BLIS), which has cameras mounted near the rear view mirrors to detect cars in the blind spot. They are also adding a Park Assist Camera, which displays a rear view on the car's navigation system screen. The new XC90 goes into production this spring. ▼



Volvo XC90



Volkswagen Concept R

Awesome fun at a VW price (and helmets not required), the well-received Concept R show car should easily find its niche in the roadster segment.

>> AUTO NEWS UPDATE - cont'd

NEW FUN AND UPSCALE CARS FOR VW

▲ Volkswagen Chairman Wolfgang Bernhard announced plans for two new upscale cars. One is a rear-drive, mid-engine roadster based on the Concept R, first shown at the 2003 Frankfurt auto show. VW is looking for a partner to help develop the car because they don't have an existing mid-engine platform. The roadster is to be similar in concept to the Porsche Boxster but less technologically complex and cheaper to build. It should be ready by 2009. The second car is a four-door coupe slotted to fit between the Phaeton and Passat. Code-named C-1, the coupe is based on the Golf platform. It should be at dealerships by 2008.

GET READY FOR HD RADIO BLITZ

High-definition digital radio is about ready to start a major advertising push with their so-called "terrestrial radio." Digital radio operates like regular radio, but AM broadcasts sound more like FM quality and FM sounds like CD. The technology also enables radio stations to divide existing frequencies so they can carry multiple, simultaneous broadcast streams and wireless data. Of the 13,000 radio stations

in the US, about 700 are currently offering HD signals and 2,300 are in the process of upgrading their systems. The change to HD costs the station about \$100,000. BMW is the first company to offer an HD radio option (\$500), in the 7 Series. After-market HD radios are expected to drop to under \$200 by the end of 2006. The HD radio signal is free and will supplement satellite radio systems, which offer more than a 100 channels of mostly commercial-free content for \$12.95 per month. iBiquity Digital Corp. invented and is the sole licensee of the HD radio technology.

LEXUS: WORLDS FIRST HYBRID V-8

When it goes on sale in April 2007, the Lexus 600h L hybrid luxury sedan promises to be one of quietest, most fuel-efficient and pollution free cars on the road. With its 5.0-liter V-8 engine and electric motor, the Lexus Hybrid Drive System will produce the equivalent of more than 430 horsepower to drive all four wheels at a level on par with a V-12 engine, but with fuel economy (low 20 mpg) more consistent with a V-6. It will use a newly developed two-stage electronic continuously variable transmission.

Other new technology includes a system designed to help detect pedes-

trians in the vehicle's path, variable gear ratio electronic steering and air suspension. It will be the first vehicle to use LED headlights for low beams and it will have an automatic parallel-park assist function. The right rear seat will recline to 45 degrees, and passengers will have a footrest and multifunction massager. The price is expected to be over \$100,000.

BMW PUTS A LID ON ENGINE SIZE

"The time to boost horsepower by increasing displacement is over," according to Klaus Borgmann, senior vice president of powertrain development for BMW. "I am very convinced," he continued, "that the time to increase displacement will never come back because increasing displacement automatically increases fuel consumption." Rather, BMW will start to boost performance and increase fuel economy by using turbochargers, advanced electronics and more efficient valvetrains. The plan will also spread to the company's MINI division, where the current supercharged engine will be changed to a turbocharged engine with direct injection and the BMW Valvetronic variable valve system. He said

KEEP RIGHT >>

AUDI REINVENTS THE TT

Redesigning the TT was one of those impossible tasks, after all, who wants to mess with such a beautiful car. Audi designers and engineers have done it with the new generation that debuted in Berlin recently. The new TT is a little larger, filled with lightweight aluminum – the four-cylinder is down 44 pounds and the V-6 is a svelte 3,102 pounds, down 176. Handling is more responsive, the engines are bigger and the performance is better: 0 to 62 mph in 6.4 seconds for the four-cylinder and 5.7 seconds for the V-6. Top speeds are 149 mph and 155 mph respectively. Audi is going to skip the 2007 model year and launch this as a 2008, so look for it after the key January 1, 2007, date has passed. ▼



2008 Audi TT



Honda Element SC

There's little question that the Honda Element feels the vibe, or creates the vibe, within its designated demographic. The Element SC ups the ante.

>> AUTO NEWS UPDATE - cont'd

European BMW models will be equipped with a stop-start feature that turns off the fuel when the car comes to a stop, and starts again when the driver lifts a foot from the brake. The program is also being evaluated for North America. Also in the works is a new alternator management system called Brake Energy Recuperation. By 2009 BMW will be employing GM's Two-Mode heavy-duty rear-wheel drive transmission to increase fuel economy by up to 25 percent.

PONTIAC ADDS GXP COUPE

Pontiac is introducing a GXP high performance version of the G6 2+2 coupe. It will be powered by a modified 3.9-liter V-6 engine (around 270-hp) with six-speed manual transmission. The engine gets a ram air intake with low restriction air filter and free-flowing exhaust system. With a redesigned front fascia including lower air dam, chrome twin-port grille and twin air scoop hood, the GTP will look and act like a performance car. It is also equipped with spoiler, 19-inch wheels, vented cross-drilled brake rotors and upgraded suspension with a lowered ride height.

HONDA'S URBAN ELEMENT SC

▲ Honda will add an all-new urban-oriented counterpart to the Element. Developed from the utilitarian original, the Element SC will have a sport suspension, 21-inch cast aluminum alloy wheels with 245/35R21 tires, unique styling and special features like a carpeted interior and center console. Debuting at the New York Auto Show, the SC rides three inches lower and has sports-car-like handling. Power is a little higher than the Element, now 166-hp from the 2.4-liter DOHC i-VTEC four-cylinder. Other new features include drive-by-wire throttle control, with a standard five-speed manual transmission and optional five-speed automatic. The SC will go on sale as a 2007 model this fall.

FORD PROGRAM FOR EMISSION SINS

Ford and TerraPass have created an industry first "Greener Miles™" program that offers Ford vehicle owners the opportunity to offset the climate impact of their driving. By going online to www.terrapass.com/ford, owners of Ford vehicles can get a report that calculates their CO₂ (carbon) emissions per year and then gives them a chance to offset the harmful emissions they generate by

purchasing a carbon offset to support the production of renewable clean energy from wind or dairy farm methane. The voluntary program not only raises awareness of climate change, but also offers drivers a tool to get themselves actively involved. Depending on the type of vehicle and annual miles driven, the carbon offset amounts range from \$29.95 to \$79.95. The "Greener Miles" program is the consumer part of a Ford program that also includes a corporate pilot program to offset greenhouse gases emitted in the manufacture of Ford hybrid electric vehicles. Ford will also launch an Eco-driving training program through their site at www.ford.com.

MALLET MAKES SOLSTICE & SKY FLY

So, you're interested in the new Pontiac Solstice, but it doesn't have quite enough zip. Then drop your new Solstice (or Saturn Sky) off at Mallett cars in Berea, Ohio along with \$20,000 or more and they'll turn it into a real screamer by wedging a 400 hp LS2 V-8 engine under the hood and making some other modifications. The result is a 4.4-second 0-to-60 mph time and 1.02g skid pad perfor-

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VW EOS COUPE-SUNROOF-CONVERTIBLE

Just in time to catch the fall colored foliage, Volkswagen's new Eos will debut featuring the unique CSC (Coupe-Sunroof-Convertible) roof. Standard features will include Electronic Stability Program, safety-optimized front headrests, specially developed front side head-thorax airbags, alloy wheels, air conditioning, fog lights, panoramic sunroof and all the normal power equipment. The standard Eos has the award-winning 2.0-liter turbocharged four-cylinder engine (200-hp) with a base price of \$27,990. The upper-level model gets Volkswagen's narrow angle V-6 (250 hp) and more features for the \$36,850 price tag. The Eos is available with the double clutch (DSG™) 6-speed automatic transmission with Tiptronic®. Other options include Dynaudio premium sound system with ten-channel amplifier, ten loudspeakers and 600-watt output power, bi-Xenon headlights with dynamic and static cornering lights, DVD navigation system, park distance control and 18-inch alloy wheels.

NISSAN ALTIMA HYBRID IN 2007

Nissan announced plans to build its first hybrid, the Altima in the United States starting with the 2007 model year. It will be powered by the Nissan 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine and Xtronic CVT (continuously variable transmission) coupled with a motor and battery technology licensed from Toyota. At launch, the hybrid will only be sold in California and seven other states that have adopted tough California style emission standards: New York, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, Rhode Island, Maine and New Jersey. The hybrid will look just like the new Altima, which will be released later this year, prior to the hybrid. Prices have not been announced.

ACURA KILLS RSX COUPE

Acura's entry-level model, the RSX coupe, will be eliminated at the end of the 2006 model year. John Mendel, Senior Vice President of Automobile Operations at American Honda Motor Co., says the

company is considering replacements for its cheapest vehicle but would not elaborate. They said some dealers have indicated Acura will add a coupe version of the TSX. Dropping the RSX appears to be a part of Acura's long-term plan to move the company further upscale from the Honda brand. Currently the RSX is competing with the new Honda Civic Si, which has 42 more horsepower at nearly the same price.

WILD TAXI RIDES SAFER THAN DRIVING

According to a recent study of motor vehicle accidents in New York City, conducted by Bruce Schaller of Schaller Consulting of New York, taxi drivers have crash rates about one-third lower than drivers of other vehicles. The perception is that taxis are in more accidents than private vehicles, but according to actual figures, the opposite is true. However, passengers in taxis are twice as likely to suffer serious injury than passengers in private cars, because taxi passengers are not required by law to wear a safety belt, as they are in private vehicles. Actual tabulated figures show 6.7 crashes per million miles on the city streets for all vehicles, while taxis have 4.6 crashes per million and livery cars (town cars and limousines) have 3.7 crashes per million.

LINCOLN NAVIGATOR FIGHTS BACK

With the significantly new and improved Cadillac Escalade rolling into dealerships, Lincoln is about to make a counter attack with its popular Navigator. Watch for a 12-inch longer extended "L" version with an extra 24 cubic feet of cargo space behind the third row seat. Exterior styling changes include a new grille and front end along with a grille and power bulge hood. The independent rear suspension gets a makeover to a new five-link design. The standard 5.4-liter Triton V-8 is rated at 300-hp and it's attached to a new six-speed automatic transmission. The interior is all new, too with a new "flow-through" or flying bridge center console and retro-looking gauges inspired by fashion eyewear.

CADILLAC CTS COUPE LIKELY BY 2008

Cadillac appears to be ready to get back into the coupe market by 2008 with a dramatically styled version of the next generation CTS sedan. Inside sources say

BMW 3 Series coupe



The new BMW 3 Series coupe may not be quite as dreamy as this sketch, but it is finally starting to come out of the era of overdone Chris Bangle angles.

Robert Lutz, GM vice chairman, "really wants it", but it has been pushed to the back burner due to more pressing issues at GM. The CTS coupe will be a little larger than competitors like the Mercedes-Benz CLK, BMW 3 Series and Infiniti G35, which could put it more in the league of cars like the BMW 6 Series and upcoming Audi A5. Discussions about the car are including a convertible and possibly even a V-12 engine.

CROSS COUNTRY MINI RALLY

Mini owners are invited to join all or part of a 15-day, 3,123-mile cross-country rally. The road trip kicks off August 21 at the Monterey (California) Historic Automobile Races and ends on September 4 at the Lime Rock Vintage Festival in Lakeville, Connecticut. The event also marks the launch of the limited edition Mini Cooper S with the John Cooper Works Kit ("Mini GP") and the fact that Mini is the marquee at the Monterey weekend. Of the 415 Mini GPs, being sold in the US, 45 will be delivered in Monterey and 35 will be delivered when the event arrives in New Jersey. Mini owners and enthusiasts are invited to participate for a day, a week or the entire

drive. Along the way, they have planned regional Mini events. For more information go to www.minitakesthestates.com.

BMW 3 SERIES COUPE IN SEPTEMBER

▲ After an effort to keep it concealed, BMW finally announced the details of the new 3 Series coupe due in September. The newest version of the BMW 3 series coupe will arrive at dealerships nearly a year after the sedan, but the wait appears to be well worth it. The styling is low and sleek with a small C-pillar making a nice evolution from the sedan. It's based on the same chassis as the sedan. However, the biggest news is under the hood. The 328i coupe gets its power from a 230-hp inline six-cylinder engine capable of a 6.2-second 0 to 60 mph time. The top new 335i is powered by BMW's first twin turbo inline six rated at 300-hp and 300-lb.ft. of torque. The 3.0-liter engine uses a high precision direct fuel injection system, an all-aluminum crankcase and a turbocharger for each three cylinders. The turbo engine has eliminated any hint of turbo lag to produce a 5.3-second 0 to 60 mph time. BMW's six-speed manual is standard equipment with a six-speed automatic with Steptronic manual

shifting as an option. xDrive all-wheel drive is an option, too.

The sleek body tails off with a conventional trunk, rather than the raised boxy version seen on the sedans and 6 Series coupe. The interior is larger to fit four adults comfortably. Options include Active Steering, Xenon adaptive headlights and an automatic seatbelt feed.

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If you've ever had the desire to drive cars like the Ford GT, Ferrari F30, Lamborghini and Corvette Z06, now you can. World Class Driving (WCD) is bringing exotic cars to a city near you; and you can drive them! For \$795, WCD gives you the opportunity to drive the cars above, plus the Bentley GT and Aston Martin DB9 Volante over an approximate 30-mile scenic route to give you the full experience of these world-class cars. The company is on a 29-city tour; WCD also offers longer distance exotic driving programs. For more information go to <http://wcdDriving.com>. ■

Auto News Update includes a summary of auto news from industry sources, trade journals and consumer magazines compiled for *Arizona Driver* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.

Audi Q7

SIZE MATTERS...
STYLE MATTERS...
ENGINEERING MATTERS



by Joe Sage



The Audi Q7 test drive event was a chance not only to see the full lineup of Audi Q7 SUVs shown above, but at the first evening's press introduction, we had a chance to see the upcoming S8, as well as the 2005 24 Hours of Le Mans winning #3 Audi R8, and also saw and heard (!) the new RS4.

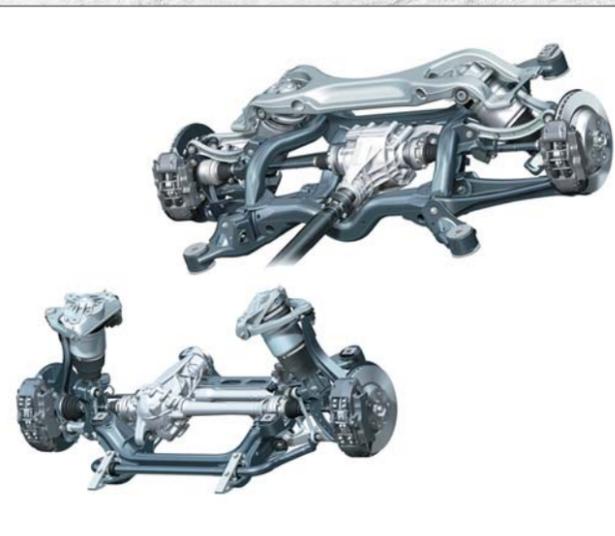
We're just back from the press launch of the new Audi Q7 SUV, which was performed outside San Diego, starting at the Four Seasons Resort Aviara in Carlsbad, heading out local roads and freeways into San Diego County's wine country, then up the bad side of Mt. Palomar on forestry roads, and back down the good side on smooth and spectacular mountain highways. The event began with a through engineering and marketing presentation, explaining how Audi has come to the SUV market at this juncture, later than most and with its street-level quattro heritage as its foundation, but with market position carefully calculated, and every technical and human-factor detail of the vehicle even more carefully calculated. But the drive itself should tell us even more. And we were fortunate enough to not only have a well-planned route that would expose us to an extremely wide range of terrain, angle and speeds, but also to encounter heavy rains, thick fog, and brilliantly clear sunshine, all in the course of one day. If this Audi is everything they say it is, this drive will provide every chance to prove it.

Heading up the indoor presentation were Frank van Meel, Audi Q7 Program Manager with Audi AG in Germany, Johan de Nysschen, Executive VP of Audi of America, Wolfgang Hoffman, Director of Product Planning, Filip Brabec, Product Planning Manager for the Q7, and Steven Berkov, Director of Marketing.

Audi has declared 2006 to be The Year of Performance, introducing by year's end a new A4 and A6, this all-new Q7, and finally the performance suite of RS4, S8 and a new S6. (2007 is slated to be The Year of Emotion, starting with an all-new Audi TT.) The fundamental style changes are there for everyone to see, most identifiably notable in the new grille treatment, which combines the traditional above-bumper grille with the fascia intakes, creating a face you can't miss. (And although some people may take a few months adjusting to this look, it's already being picked up by many others, from



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Chrysler to Mitsubishi and many more, as most leading-edge Audi design cues are.) Headlights have a more integrated sweep with front bodywork, and they take on a more aggressive angle and shape, varying with vehicle model. Taillights are also reshaped and are set more flush, almost seamlessly, into rear bodywork. Creases, curves, angles and beltlines are all modified, as always for Audi in ways that are subtle but distinctly new.

Audi has maintained a position for the past several years that with their impressive and capable fleet of quattro all-wheel-drive vehicles, they could withstand the SUV craze without participating. So why the change? Johan de Nysschen, Executive VP of Audi of America, points out that Audi's sales have been up every year since 1992 (and this accomplished without incentives), but that all in all, their lineup has remained quite Eurocentric. They seek to have a more global lineup, with reputation of power and stature in North America (and Asia) climbing to be on a par with that in Europe. Wolfgang Hoffman, Director of Product Planning, reminds us that the all-encompassing light truck (and SUV) market represents 50% of US sales. As such, Audi found they were unable to ignore the SUV trend in the United States. So they have taken the market head-on, with the thoroughly developed Q7.

Their benchmarks in developing the Q7 included referring to Audi's history and heritage, factoring in passion as represented through technology, and keeping a strong eye on both quality and style. The ultimate goal for the Q7 was to produce an SUV that is simultaneously sporty, progressive and sophisticated. The final product indicates that they did not forget any of these factors during Q7 development.

Audi readily recognizes their most obvious competition: Acura MDX, BMW X5, Infiniti FX45, Lexus RX330, Mercedes-Benz M-Class, Porsche Cayenne and Volvo XC90. However, they are equally aware that SUV growth is down, just as they bring the Q7 to market (but as gasoline prices climb wildly at the pump). Their stated goal was to not produce a "me too" SUV. They note that the SUV market has already evolved, starting with what they term the traditional (including the earliest phases of Bronco and Blazer, through the groundbreaking Jeep Cherokee, moving

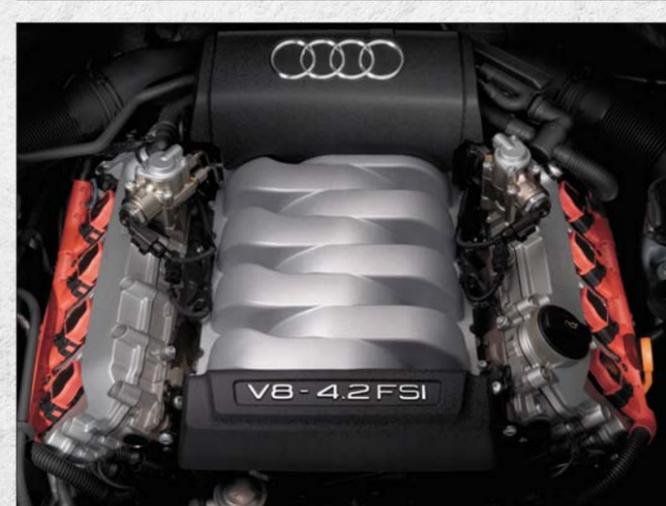
on through the familiar Ford Explorer/Expedition/Excursion and Chevy Tahoe/GMC Yukon and all their competitors. Next we have the crossover generation, which many might think is still just taking hold at this time, as car- and truck-based vehicles distinguish themselves by style, function and wagon-like handling, including everything from most of the aforementioned competitive list, to small and tall wagons from many manufacturers. They slot the Q7 into a new third generation, centered on performance, which Audi says will combine the best of both the prior generations, and then some.

With the Porsche Cayenne and the Volkswagen Touareg already in production from Audi's sister companies, it's easy to guess that the Q7 might be a reskinned Touareg. Hoffman makes a point that this is not the case; he states that they two share just 15% of parts, with the Q7 notably incorporating Audi's refined quattro all-wheel-drive system, as well as a uniquely developed interior.

The engineering and design matrix for the Q7 has four quadrants: Performance, Safety, Design and Versatility. Performance is centered on the quattro system; safety is achieved through 60% steel construction; design in the sense of style is intended to speak for itself; and versatility is met by a vehicle with, among other things, 28 seating configurations. Our test drive will check out another aspect of versatility, notably neglected in many SUVs, its ability to perform admirably on pavement and off. Interestingly, the new quattro system installed in the Q7 is the same as that for the upcoming ultra-high-performance RS4 sedan, with 60% rear-wheel split and an entirely mechanical Torsen differential, achieving its class-topping torque sensing abilities with no electronics. Frank van Meel, Q7 Program Manager with Audi AG, states that this is a key element in the Q7's (and RS4's) new level of high performance. The Q7 is also outfitted with a robust multi-link suspension including Adaptive Air Suspension, based on that developed for the newest A8 and A6 sedans, which produces a combination of comfort and dynamics on- and off-road, as well as additional ground-clearing lift when seriously off-road or in deep snow (at lower speeds). The Adaptive Air Suspension has five settings: Automatic, Dynamic, Comfort, Offroad and Lift. (We tried them all in the course of our drive, and each has its place, though with plenty of overlap so it's more an option than necessity.)

Audi has paid attention to details, too. European engineers have long been baffled by the utter and absolute need for cupholders in vehicles sold in the United States. However, van Meel says cupholders are catching on in Europe, making it much easier to design global vehicles that carry this feature to Americans' satisfaction. (The only downside to the Germans' study of cupholders, apparently, was that their use required more restroom stops than normal.) Aware that large vehicles and vehicles with extended cabins have blind-spot issues, the Audi Q7 introduces outside mirrors with "side assist" technology that lets you know if another vehicle is in your blind spot, visually, before you might try an unwise lane change. (As with all such technologies, this should never become your first point of information, but it's useful for that one time in dozens when a big problem lurks in a small blind zone.) One note on the Audi audio system: if you've ever spent time online with Audi's build-your-car tool, you've faced the usual XM/Sirius conundrum. To simplify this choice, Audi is dropping XM and going to an all-Sirius option for 2007.

So let's drive! With predetermined route map in hand, two of us per vehicle, taking turns driving, we headed out from the Four Seasons inland toward I-15 north, destination: Mt. Palomar, elevation 6126 feet above sea level. Leaving the coast might normally mean getting into better weather, but as we hit I-15, the sky grew ominous. Not to worry; we were ready for anything, with quattro all-wheel-drive on a sturdy SUV chassis. But for now, we had California freeway traffic on our hands. This gave us ample opportunity to try out many of the Q7's proudest gadgets, from Adaptive Speed Control (which now works below 20mph, all the way to zero, and resumes if you are at zero less than 3 seconds),



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to the side assist mirrors (a gadget anyone could learn to love, but again we'd remind readers that there is no substitute for turning your head, keeping always aware of your surroundings and any ways out of an unexpected crisis), to the Adaptive Air Suspension in its three highway settings: Automatic, Dynamic and Comfort (the best? there's no best; hence the choice!).

As the rain hit, the Audi was as unruffled as any quattro will be. Wet, dry, smooth, rough, pavement, gravel, whatever can be dished out can be soaked up by the quattro all-wheel-drive system; this we already know well. The Q7 was as solid as the sportiest sedan. As we exited the freeway and got onto 2-lane mountain highways, we knew we could open this machine up a bit, try the grip in the twisties. Alas, we spent the next several miles behind a large farm truck, with a double yellow line. When the yellow broke, though, we were gone... with power to spare, and quattro grip, the Zen approach to being there now will bring you to the front of the line with speed and confidence. The group gathered in the wine country, at the base of an old forestry road up the north-northeast side of Mt. Palomar.

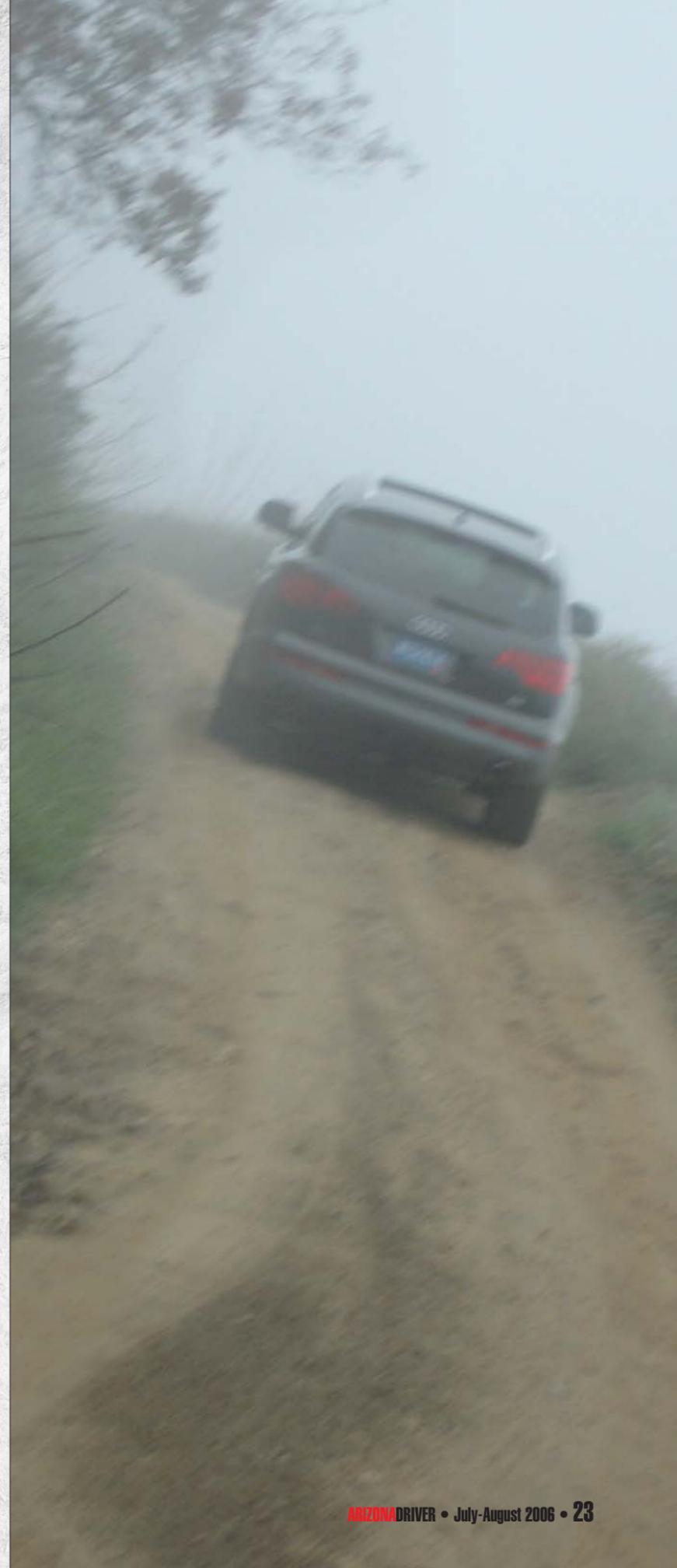
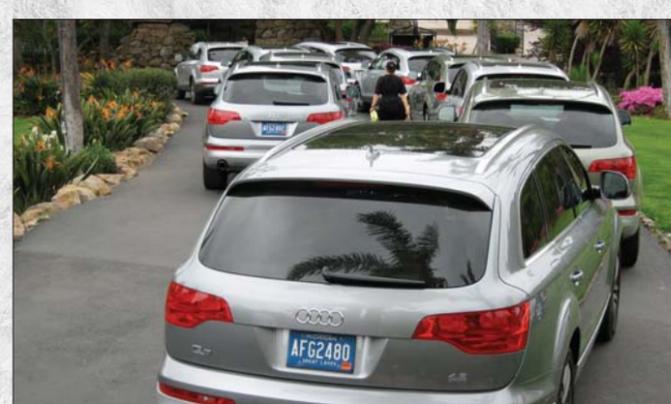
From there it was only a short distance until the pavement started breaking up and quickly ended completely. The dirt road presented simple challenges at first: loose gravel, for which the grip of the Audi was outstanding; relatively steep side angles, ditto; ruts and erosion of a relatively minor nature at first, easy to navigate through, over or around. Very quickly, we entered thick fog, the clouds above from the storm we'd passed through below. Visibility was very limited, and the sides of the road dropped off precipitously. On we went, as comfortable as we'd been on the paved roads, but becoming even more alert.

As the grade eased, we entered forest and the remains of heavily-logged former forest. These were rough roads, indeed, and no time for photos! The ruts and washouts in this sizable length of road were not the kind anybody would drive through; it required the finesse of a Rubicon rally to work the big Audi around the most menacing trenches, holes, pits and grooves, not to mention randomly felled logs and stumps, and the occasional tight switchback and altitude change. Quite a road, and quite a vehicle. For toughness, it compared with a big Ford F-Series on a Rocky Mountain backwoods trail. For agility, it compared with a far smaller off-road vehicle. And all the while, comfort and control remained tops.

After quite a few miles of this, as our map promised us, we eased onto more civilized mountain park roads, then met in an overlook parking area within the state park. Lots of water, a few sports bars, and a bit of a debate with a park ranger about whether we were allowed to be doing any of this, and we were peacefully on our way down the highway side. Perhaps with the park ranger fresh in mind, or maybe just through a normal healthy state of paranoia, we knew it was quite possible the Sheriff by now knew there were a couple of dozen enthusiasts on the roads. Nonetheless, we were able to give the vehicle quite an exercise on these highways, with rapid descent, tight curves, narrow lanes and little margin for forgiveness. (And lo and behold, the Sheriff did pass us, headed uphill, but apparently were intent on something farther up behind us.) Knowing we had more than two and a half tons of vehicle in motion, we paused to compare the experience and agreed that, all in all, this big Audi Q7 handled as well as an S4 sports sedan on such a road. Quite a feat.

We were served lunch at the handcrafted castle shown at right, where we had another chance to discuss the vehicle with the engineers and product planners. One question seemed obvious: is a Q5 on the horizon? With the skill of a government press conference, they responded that no such thing had crossed their mind, and if it had, it would take years and years to pull it together. So we expect to hear more about it within a year and see it on the road soon after.

So can Audi crack the SUV market? Interestingly, statistics show that the SUV segment is the most brand-*disloyal* segment there is. Audi recognizes that every purchase will represent a conquest. After our drive (and our exposure to a thorough education on the technologies underlying the vehicle), we are convinced that just about anyone who took a similar drive, regardless what they were shopping for, would likely go home knowing they needed a new Audi Q7. ■





By Barbara & Bill Schaffer

Audi choose the beautiful and exclusive Carlsbad, California area to introduce its stylish new sport utility vehicle. As the first Audi SUV, the Q7 exemplifies the upscale character, quality and styling of all the other cars in their lineup, while adding a new rugged off-road character.

The Q7 is bold and sporty looking with free-flowing surfaces creating broad curves and seams that add up to an elegant design, while the high shoulder line gives it an athletic look. The roofline starts to taper down just in front of the B-pillar and ends in a coupe-like curve at the D-pillar. The rear features a wrap-around tailgate and a spoiler houses the third brake light.

Inside you'll find the Q7 to be sporty looking but at the same time very functional, with all the amenities of a luxury sport utility vehicle. The new Audi offers high quality materials, the latest technologies and a high level of functionality and craftsmanship throughout. One of the unique new features is the side assist that warns the driver of vehicles in the blind spot to the rear and behind. Buyers have a choice of three inlay wood accents or the optional aluminum trim.

A 4.2-liter V-8 pumping out 350 horsepower powers the Q7 and it is paired with a six-speed Tiptronic transmission with the Dynamic Shift Program (DSP) and quattro all-wheel drive system. A 3.6-liter V-6 is due out this fall.

This Audi SUV is no lightweight, tipping the scales at 5,269 pounds, but the powerful engine moves it along with great enthusiasm. Zero to 60 mph acceleration comes in just 7.1 seconds, and the top speed is electronically limited to 130 mph.

The four-wheel independent suspension is enhanced with optional adaptive air suspension that can be set to Dynamic, Automatic and Comfort modes. This system constantly adapts to road conditions and nearly eliminates all body roll and the dip and dive of accelerating and braking. It also raises the Q7 one inch when in the Off-Road mode.

Since the Audi is more than five and a half inches longer than the Porsche Cayenne and the Volkswagen Touareg, and 11.5-inches longer than the popular Acura MDX, the Q7 offers a spacious cabin with comfortable legroom. The Q7 is designed as a five-seater, a six-seater (with a pair of seats in three rows) or a seven-seater (with a two, two and three

seating configuration). The seats in the Q7 have been designed to provide optimum comfort on long trips. The driver's seat is height-adjustable and the steering column can be adjusted for height and angle.

The 4.2 Q7 comes in a standard model that includes all the normal power features, plus memory for driver's seat, outside mirrors and steering wheel positions, plus a Bose audio system with in-dash six-disc changer and adaptive speed control. It also has a garage door opener, air conditioning, alarm system, roof rails, leather seat surfaces, keyless remote system, stability control, leather-wrapped power tilt and telescoping steering wheel, rain sensing wipers, Bluetooth wireless connect, brake assist and much more for \$50,620 including destination.

The Premium model adds power panorama moonroof, four-zone air conditioning, third row seat, DVD-based navigation system, heated front seats with Cricket leather and seven-spoke cast alloy wheels for \$60,620 delivered. There are many additional luxury options available on both models. The V-6 is expected to start in the low \$40,000s. ■



Young Leaders Learn Lessons of Leadership at Nissan Student Government Leadership Program



Last summer's Nissan Student Government Leadership Program provided three days of leadership training sessions rendered by a cadre of nationally-recognized speakers. Nissan North America launched the inaugural session of the program by inviting 60 student government presidents from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) from across the country to participate in an innovative leadership program on the historic campus of Tougaloo College in Tougaloo, Mississippi.

Jim Morton, Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance for Nissan North America states, "Nissan is committed to developing young leaders who will help take this nation to a higher level of excellence." He adds, "I was extremely impressed with the students' insight, inquisitiveness and enthusiasm. They are to be commended for their willingness to share themselves and to serve others in their role as student government presidents. It is my hope that they had fun, forged new relationships and honed new leadership skills."

Nissan provided these student partic-

ipants with intensive leadership development and training at a level generally reserved for Fortune 500 company executives. The leadership sessions, conducted by four of the nation's premier leadership training specialists, enhanced the students' self-awareness, self-management, socio-political awareness and interpersonal relationships. Nissan executives and managers, including Morton, were on-hand as "mentors" throughout.

Students began early morning sessions with speakers and ended with informal evening leadership rap sessions. Each day was filled with interactive sessions such as: "Understanding your Leadership Challenges," "Keys to Success for Leaders" and "The Mechanics of being a Student Government Leader." Participants also received a "Leadership Toolkit" to aid in their success during their upcoming tenure as SGA presidents, including: the book "TurnAround" by Carlos Ghosn, which chronicles his leadership principles as he moved the automotive manufacturer to profitable status; "The First 90 Days: Critical Success Strategies for New Leaders at All Levels" by Michael Watkins; and

GoalCentrix, a new goal-attainment software package designed to make goal-setting strategic, effective and more efficient.

According to Morehouse College SGA President Dewey Fowler, "The program was very enriching; it gave me an opportunity to network with other SGA presidents and brainstorm ideas on how to make my school better. The toolkit will be very useful for the upcoming years."

Internationally acclaimed leaders visited the program to offer advice and personal experiences on how to build a strong foundation for success on their respective campuses, in their communities, in government and in global corporations. These guests included Julius Erving, NBA Hall of Famer; Stedman Graham, author and motivational speaker; Major General Marcelite Harris, the first Air Force African American female general; Dr. Michael Lomax, President and CEO of the United Negro College Fund (UNCF); Tavis Smiley, author and media personality and Gwendolyn Sykes, Chief Financial Officer for NASA.

For more information on the program, visit www.NissanSGLP.com. ■

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THE "BOXSTER COUPE"

By Barbara & Bill Schaffer



BARBARA –

We seldom see a woman driving a Porsche, and one wouldn't be on the top of my shopping list. Nevertheless, I loved the new Cayman. It's been a couple of years since I drove a 911 or Boxster and I don't remember either one being as much fun or as user friendly as this new two-seat coupe.

BILL – For most people it's hard to justify buying a two-seat sports car, but on a drive to the airport recently, I may have come up with a good reason—fuel economy. Running with traffic between 70 and 80 mph, I averaged 27.9 mpg on my 90-mile drive to the airport. That's better than many economy cars and it is certainly a heck of a lot more fun. However, good fuel economy is just the icing on the cake. This new Porsche is great!

BARBARA – The Cayman is designed as a coupe version of the midengine Boxster roadster, and most of the body panels are identical. The roofline is similar to that on the 911, but from the side view it drops behind more bulbous rear fenders. A large stylish air intake for the engine is positioned just behind each door.

With its large front openings, the Cayman more closely resembles the 911 Turbo than the 911S, which has smaller openings. The Cayman rear lacks the air intake of the 911S and instead has a clean and slightly recessed surface that stretches from the rear window to the spoiler that deploys at speeds over 75 mph. The spoiler could be a telltale for knowledgeable highway patrol officers.

BILL – As on the highly regarded Boxster, the Cayman engine is mounted right behind the passenger compartment. This configuration produces excellent balance and handling, plus makes a significant 14.1 cubic feet of overall cargo space in the front and rear compartments. That's as much space as the trunk of a BMW 5 Series sedan.

The Cayman is built on the same platform as the Boxster, but with the rigid roof and other structural enhancements, it's nearly as solid as the 911.

BARBARA – Like all Porsches, the Cayman has a long list of options that allow buyers to customize the car to their individual needs, tastes and budget.

The only model currently available, the Cayman S, has a base price starting at \$59,695 including destination charge. Our test vehicle was loaded with nine options that totaled over \$13,000. Options included metallic paint, a preferred package of convenience features, power seat package, PCM (navigation and audio) and Bi-Xenon headlamp package. It also had 19-Inch alloy wheels, Porsche Active Suspension Management, Sport Chrono Package Plus, and a Porsche crest in the headrest. The total price with options was \$73,050. That's over \$20,000 less than the benchmark 911 Carrera S, and I like this just as much. Porsche believes this car will not cannibalize normal 911 buyers.

BILL – The Cayman power comes from a 3.4-liter horizontally opposed six-cylinder engine producing 295-hp. The engine is

Porsche Cayman S

STANDARD EQUIPMENT

18-Inch alloy wheels; Speed activated rear spoiler; Active Brake Differential; Porsche Stability Management; Traction control; Power windows; Anti-theft system and alarm; Partial leather seats; Climate control; Heated outside mirrors; Homelink system; Cruise; Keyless entry.

Base Price: \$58,900
Freight.....\$795

Options:

Metallic paint.....\$825
Preferred package.....\$2,190
Power seat package\$1,550
PCM (navigation & audio)\$2,970
Bi-Xenon headlight package.....\$1,090
19-Inch Carrera S wheels.....\$1,550
Porsche Active Suspension Management \$1,990
Sport Chrono Package Plus\$920.
Porsche crest in headrest.....\$270.
Total Options.....\$13,355
Price as Tested.....\$73,050

DIMENSIONS

EPA SizeTwo-seater
Weight.....2,954 lb.
Wheelbase95.1 in.
Length.....172.1 in.
Width.....70.9 in.
Height51.4 in.
Fuel Capacity19.6 gal.
Cargo Capacity.....14.1 cu. ft.

MECHANICAL

Engine3.4L DOHC Horiz. 6-Cyl.
Horsepower295@6250
Torque251@4400
Transmission.....6-Spd. man.
Drive.....Rear-wheel
Brakes.....Disc ABS
TiresFront P235/35ZR19
RearP295/30ZR19

PERFORMANCE

0 to 60 mph.....5.1 sec.
Top speed171 mph
EPA economy rating20/28 mpg
Our actual fuel econ24.1 mpg

COMPETITORS

Audi TT, Chevrolet Corvette, Lexus SC 430, Mercedes-Benz SLK

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Dan Gurney Alligator Motorcycles, Inc.

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Triumph

385 Walt Sanders Memorial Drive
Newna GA 30265
678-854-2010 • www.triumph.co.uk

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>> PORSCHE CAYMAN S - cont'd

water-cooled and has a Variocam Plus variable intake valve control. Our car had the precise six-speed manual transmission, but a five-speed Tiptronic S transmission, which can be shifted manually by control buttons on the wheel or the shifter, is an option.

The brakes are four-piston with vented and cross-drilled discs, anti lock and Active Brake Differential.

BARBARA - The Cayman is loaded with active and passive safety equipment including a stability control system, traction control, and six air bags (front, side and thorax on both sides of the cabin.

BILL - Porsche claims a 0 to 60 mph time of 5.1 seconds, and we have no reason to argue. I recorded 83 mph in my own acceleration test, where I pull onto the highway and accelerate full-throttle to the first mailbox, or about one-eighth mile. They also claim a top speed of 171 mph.

As I said earlier, the fuel economy was fantastic. We did record 27.9 mpg at highway speeds of 70 to 80 mph. In combined driving, we averaged 24.1 mpg. The EPA rates the Cayman at 20 mpg for city driving and 28 mpg on the highway.

BARBARA - It looks like Porsche has another hit on their hands with this new Cayman.

BILL - The Porsche Cayman S is an easy car to fall in love with. It's a car that allows a good driver to push the limits or for an average driver to be all that he or she can be.

On the downside, the rear visibility is poor, especially when trying to back up. It would be nice to have a rear-view camera displaying in the navigation system when backing up.

On other Porsches, I was frustrated by the complexity of the audio systems. The PCM system, combined with the navigation system in the Cayman, was very easy to use. I was able to get everything I wanted without resorting to the owner's manual.

If you find price of this Cayman S too high, watch for a more affordable 250-hp Cayman model in 2007. ■





Saab Aero X concept

■ **Saab** has captured the imagination of auto enthusiasts with its Aero X concept. The uniquely styled two-seater features an air-craft-style canopy that lifts for entry instead of using doors. The concept is powered by a twin-turbo 2.8-liter V-6 rated at 400-hp. There is no indication about production of the beauty.

■ **Ford** is expected to call on Volvo to supply an engine for use in Premier auto vehicles built by Jaguar and Land Rover. The new Volvo 3.2-liter inline

6-cylinder engine is rumored to develop more than 230 horsepower when naturally aspired and more than 350 hp when turbocharged. The engine is only one inch longer than the current Volvo 5-cylinder and weighs under 400 pounds. The engine will first be used in the next generation Volvo S80 that arrives by the end of this year.

■ Rumors persist of a **Cadillac** CTS Super V model in 2008. The Super V would swap out the current 400-hp Corvette engine for the 7.0-liter, 505-hp LS7 V-8 from the Corvette Z06. Other changes to the CTS will include custom bodywork, huge rear tires and massive exhaust pipes. Further rumors have the next generation CTS Super V equipped with the LS9 engine, a supercharged, 600-hp 6.2-liter V-8, but don't expect it until 2010 or 2011.

■ **Chrysler** will create a stretched version of the popular 300 sedan. The wheelbase will be 6 inches longer than the current 196.8-inch-long car and will be appropriately called the 300 Long Wheelbase. Modifications are being done after-market by Accubuilt Inc., a custom specialty vehicle

manufacturer in Lima, Ohio. Prices for the 2007 model will be announced later.

■ **Aston-Martin** is likely to beat Porsche to the four-door luxury sedan market. Debuting earlier this year at the Detroit show, the Rapide concept is a



Aston-Martin Rapide concept

long, low gorgeous piece of elegance powered by a slightly upgraded version of the Aston DB9 6.0-liter V-12 engine (480-hp) with a 6-speed ZF automatic transmission. If approved the Rapide could be at dealerships as early as summer of 2007 with a price near \$250,000. The Porsche Panamera luxury sedan debuts in Paris this fall.

■ **Lexus** may be ready to go up against BMW's legendary M3 in the next year or so. An IS coupe is in the works powered by a slightly detuned version of a 5.0-liter V-8 being developed for the upcoming Toyota Supra sports car. The IS 500 would probably use the same suspension as the new IS. We think the price will be in the \$50,000 to \$60,000 range.



Subaru WRX STI Limited

■ Although the **Volkswagen** Golf has traditionally operated on a seven-year product cycle, the new fifth generation will only last two years. The new Golf, which will finally come to the US this year, has been sold in Europe since 2003 and is scheduled to be replaced late in 2008 when a less expensive model is introduced. By pulling the introduction forward it will keep the Golf more competitive in the entry level market.

■ Korean automakers Kia and Hyundai have announced that they will be offering satellite radio as standard equipment on all their vehicles. **Hyundai**, the parent company for the two, is phasing in XM Satellite Radio systems into its cars, while the Kia brand will install Sirius Satellite Radio on all vehicles starting with the 2009 model year. This will likely force other manufacturers to offer the satellite systems as standard equipment, rather than as a several hundred-dollar option.

■ Interested in a **Subaru** WRX STi, but want something with a little more stealth? Check out the STi Limited. It has the same 293-hp engine and 6-speed manual, but with a smaller rear spoiler and gray wheels instead of gold. Inside are heated leather bucket seats and enhanced sound-deadening materials. This looks just like something we would have wanted. Hurry though, Subaru only plans to make 400 in Satin White and 400 in Urban Gray.



Ford Shelby GT500

■ **Ford** plans to reinvent the Mustang Shelby GT350H. The original GT350H was designed to be rented at Hertz car rental agencies in the 1960s. Plans call for Ford to produce 500 black and gold 2006 Shelby GT-H models for the Hertz fleet to go into service this spring. The special editions, which will only be available at Hertz, will get 20 more horsepower (up to 325-hp from the stock GT).

■ The next **Audi** S6 could have a 420-hp version of the Lamborghini Gallardo's V-10 engine. (The Audi S8 is using a 450-hp version of the same engine.) It will have a 6-speed Tiptronic automatic transmission and quattro all-wheel drive. Brakes will be massive 15.2-inch discs in the front and 13.2-inches in the rear. Like the current model, it will be filled with luxury extras when it arrives late this year.

■ The high performance **Nissan** GT-R will be a Nissan, not Infiniti, as was previously projected. The legendary Nissan performance coupe from Japan will have more than 400 horsepower at an estimated \$65,000 price tag, pushing it far above the rest of the Nissan lineup. The concept will be shown at the Tokyo Motor Show in October; the final production version will be shown one year later at the same show.

■ GM said the **Hummer** H1 was officially discontinued for civilian use as of June 30, 2006. AM General, the company that builds the Hummer for GM, will continue to produce the military Humvee. The Hummer H1, which had been renamed the H1 Alpha in 2006, was powered by a 6.6-liter diesel V-8 engine and had a price tag of nearly \$129,000.

■ The upcoming **Ford** Shelby GT500 will be powered by a 5.4-liter V-8 engine rated at 500-hp and 480-lb.ft. of torque making it one of the most powerful cars in the marketplace. Although prices have not yet been announced, Mark Fields, Executive Vice President, Ford Motor Company said at the Detroit auto

show in January that the sticker price would be in the low \$40,000s.

■ **Dodge** will bring a Hemi Hybrid to market in 2008 in the Durango SUV. Power will come from a 5.7-liter Hemi V-8 with Multi-Displacement technology and an electric motor. Chrysler says it should yield a fuel savings of up to 25 percent. The current two-wheel drive Hemi model gets an EPA fuel economy rating of 15 mpg for city driving and 20 mpg on the highway and the 4WD gets one mpg less.

■ This fall **Jeep** will bring out the Unlimited Wrangler, a 20.6-inch stretched version of the regular Wrangler. The big difference is that the Unlimited has four doors, instead of the normal two. With its five-passenger capacity, the Unlimited will be sold in X, Sahara and Rubicon versions. The standard engine is a 205-hp 3.8-liter



Nissan GT-R concept

V-6 with a six-speed manual transmission. A diesel engine will be available outside North America. The Unlimited will be sold in about 100 countries.

■ Executive director of GM design in Europe, Bryan Nesbitt, has stated that many future **Saturns** will be rebadged versions of Opels. Next in line for badging is the Outlook SUV, which is too large for Europe. Saab will also pickup some of the under skin features of some Opels for future products.

■ The smallest of the **Land Rover** stable, the Freelander, gets renamed LR2 when the new version arrives in the US next year. The all-new model, which is being built on a stretched version of the same platform that underpins the Mazda3 and Ford Focus, goes on sale in Europe this summer as the Freelander 2.



Land Rover Freelander 2

■ Do you have a high mileage **Chevy** Silverado? Then you can join the Silverado 200k Mile Club. Chevrolet has created this club to celebrate the truck's "quality and endurance by capturing stories that show the integral role these trucks have played in American life." To join, or for more information visit www.chevy.com/200k or call 1-800-950-CHEV.

■ **Maserati** North America is offering a "Master Maserati" driving school to owners of the Italian exotic cars, or those who would like to. The program is as pricey as the cars with one day costing \$1,800 and the two-day program running \$3,400, but that it also includes a dinner. The school takes place at an "exhilarating" Atlanta track. Classes are limited to 18 students per session. ■

Briefs & Rumors is a summary of auto news from industry sources, trade journals and consumer magazines compiled for *Arizona Driver Magazine* by **BILL & BARBARA SCHAFFER** of *Auto Digest*.

Arizona

ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

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Lake Havasu State Park
699 London Bridge Dr. • Lake Havasu AZ 86403
928-855-2784

Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument
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520-387-6849 Visitor Information

Petrified Forest National Park
PO Box 2217
Petrified Forest National Park AZ 86028
928-524-66228 Visitor Information

Saguaro National Park
3693 South Old Spanish Trail
520-733-5153 Visitor Info Rincon Mtn District

Sport Compact Drag Racing
Every thursday at Firebird Raceway
www.dragracing.com/phx

Wupatki National Monument
Flagstaff Area National Monuments
6400 N. Hwy 89 • Flagstaff AZ 86004
928-679-2365 Visitor Information
928-526-1157 Visitor Information, HQ

California

ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

Palm Desert Visitor Information Center
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800-873-2428 • www.palm-desert.org

MOTOR MUSEUMS

Petersen Automotive Museum
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323-930-CARS • www.petersen.org

Colorado

ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

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800-777-8642 - www.coloradoinfo.com

MOTOR MUSEUMS

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www.shelbyamericancollection.org
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ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

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New Mexico

ATTRACTIONS & EVENTS

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Imperial Palace Auto Collections
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Motorcycle Hall of Fame Museum
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National Automobile Museum
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National Corvette Museum
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www.corvettemuseum.com • 800-53VETTE

Petersen Automotive Museum
(see California listings)

Shelby American Collection
(see Colorado listings)

EQUIPMENT : OnSTAR EN ESPAÑOL



OnStar Safety and Security Benefits Available in Spanish

With the Hispanic population approaching 45 million in the United States, GM and OnStar are strengthening their commitment to provide subscribers the best in-vehicle communications and assistance service available by launching an industry-first service enhancement—OnStar en Español.

OnStar, the leading provider of in-vehicle safety, security and communication services, first introduced Spanish-speaking advisors in 2003. The new system enhancement, available on most OnStar-equipped Model Year 2006 vehicles at no additional cost, provides subscribers a more holistic Spanish experience including voice-recognition capabilities and hands-free calling. Supplying a simple, convenient user experience in Spanish to this fast-growing market segment alleviates uncertainty for subscribers who prefer Spanish, and offers additional peace of mind especially in emergency situations.



differentiator for GM vehicles.”

In addition to Spanish-speaking advisors and voice-recognition capabilities, OnStar's Spanish services include:

- **OnStar Hands-Free Calling**—Access to voice-activated, hands-free calling that is fully integrated into the vehicle offering a safe, more convenient alternative to a hand-held cell phone while driving. Our shared minutes plan, the America's Choice Plan with OnStar, lets subscribers share their Verizon Wireless plan minutes between their cell phone and their OnStar in-vehicle calling.

- **OnStar Vehicle Diagnostics**—OnStar sends a monthly e-mail to your computer providing diagnostic reports on key operating systems in your vehicle, maintenance and other relevant vehicle ownership information.

- **OnStar Turn-by-Turn Navigation**—Gives drivers with vehicles equipped with ABS and OnStar 7.0 hardware simple and affordable turn-by-turn voice-guided directions letting them keep their eyes on the road and hands on the wheel. This service, announced in early February 2006, will be available in approximately 1-million GM cars and trucks in Model Year 2007.

OnStar currently has more than 4-million subscribers along with more than 900,000 participants receiving an e-mail from their vehicle as part of the OnStar Vehicle Diagnostics program launched in September 2005. Over 75 percent of OnStar subscribers say they would prefer to have OnStar in their next vehicle.

For information on receiving OnStar en Español or signing up for OnStar Vehicle Diagnostics, just press the blue OnStar button and ask for a Spanish-speaking advisor, or visit www.onstar.com/espanol. ■



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Nissan Pathfinder photo: courtesy Nissan Motor Co., Ltd.

Bosch has launched a new wiper blade program—Hindsight™—designed to ensure rear visibility in vehicles with rear windshield wiper systems. Hindsight rear wiper blades provide motorists with perfect rear window visibility in any weather condition—heavy snow, blowing dust or pelting rain. Any of these conditions “can easily obstruct the driver’s view through the rear view window,” said Otto Stefaner, Senior Product Manager, Consumer Products, Robert Bosch Corporation.

“Wiper blade research indicates that the replacement of rear wiper blades lags considerably behind front wiper replacement,” Stefaner said. “Sixteen percent of consumers who buy two blades for a three-blade vehicle do not purchase the third blade.” Furthermore, compared to the normal replacement of front wiper blades every 3 years, the rear wiper is replaced once only every 6 years. Yet, vehicle population statistics show that 35 percent of all registered vehicles on the road—75 million in the US—are equipped with a rear wiper blade.

Features of the Bosch “Hindsight” rear wiper blade include,

- An all steel frame that provides consist-

ent, superior wiping performance during snow, rain, mist or drizzle, while enhancing durability and prolonging service life

- A precision-cut natural rubber wiping edge that removes the smallest droplets to provide crystal clear visibility and enhance safety
- Bosch’s exclusive pre-mounted Direct-Connect™ system for easy installation. Similar to Bosch wiper systems for the front windshield, the “Hindsight” rear windshield wiper is a one-step installation procedure that requires no adapters and covers 95 percent of vehicle applications
- A fully enclosed metal tension spring which, in addition to providing more direct pressure to the wiping edge for improved moisture removal, offers better protection against water, snow or ice buildup for consistent all-season wiping performance.

“All-around visibility is critical to safe driving, and it is imperative to keep every item that plays a role in it, in optimal operating condition,” Stefaner said. “A worn out wiper blade can cause severe

streaking, impairing a driver’s vision and posing a safety risk. In this scenario, it’s important to remember that the rear wiper blade, though used less frequently than the front wipers, is no less vital. It is subject to the same wear and tear as the front wipers. In fact, infrequent use can actually decrease its service life by diminishing the flexibility of the wiping element,” said Stefaner. “Available for virtually all rear window wiper system applications from 11 to 22 inches, rear window wipers represent more than 12 million wiper blades potentially needing replacement.”

Hindsight is yet another milestone in Bosch engineers’ continued quest for performance, value and extended life, while promoting improved driving safety. In 1926, Bosch pioneered the first electric windshield wiper system; in 1971, the first intermittent wiper and in 1994, the two-component wiper blade component for consistent all weather superior wiping performance. Today, Bosch operates the world’s largest windshield wiper factory in Tienen, Belgium, which manufactures 700 different types of blades and 350,000 windshield wipers daily. ■

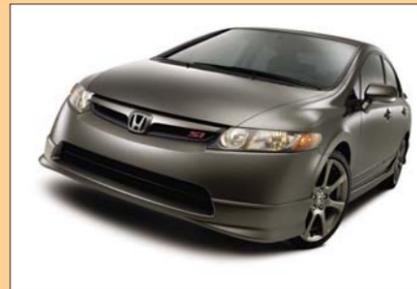
UPCOMING FEATURES

Honda Fit Sport



The Honda Fit Sport is making its mark in this high-priced fuel market. We will test-drive it and report on whether it is breaking new ground or a compromise. We have high expectations.

Honda Civic Si and Honda Element 4x4



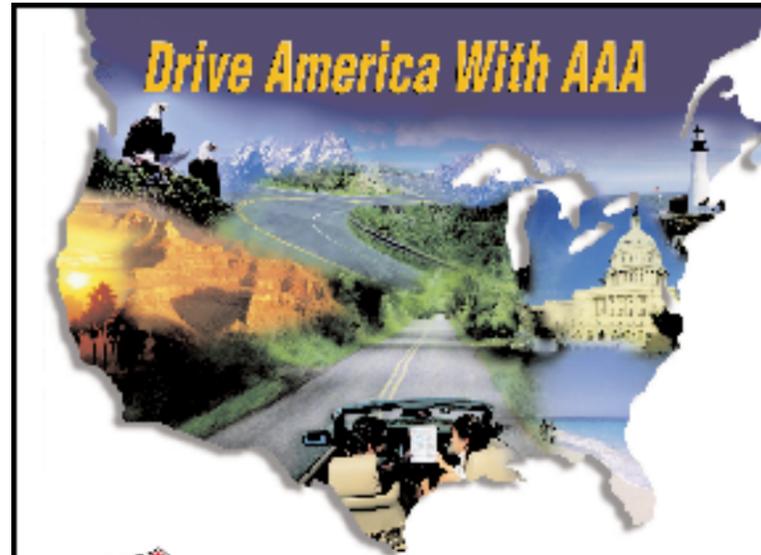
We will be test-driving these higher-end (Si and 4x4) versions of these two stalwarts as you read this magazine, and we'll let you know if they still pass muster, as they likely will.

Russo and Steele in Monterey



Summer in Monterey, California, means the Monterey Historic Races, Pebble Beach Concours d'Élegance, and Arizona's own Russo and Steele Auctions in Monterey. Results to follow.

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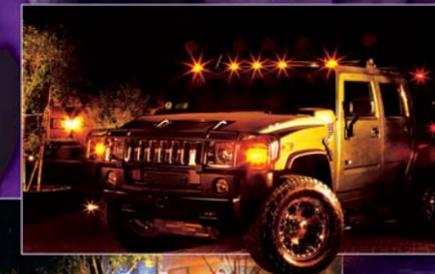
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