

U.S. Auto Scene

— First Published in 1993 —

P.O. Box 2040
Dearborn, Michigan 48123
313-565-5500
Info@USAutoScene.net

Gerald Scott, Editorial Dept.
News@USAutoScene.net

AD DEADLINE: Thursday 5:00 p.m. for the next edition
Ads@SpringerPublishing.com 586-939-5850 Fax - SPC Warren

William L. Springer II, Publisher
Hal Watts, Local News Editor
Debra Joswick, Ad Design
Chris Zawislinski, Circulation

Springer Publishing Co., Inc. © 2011
31201 Chicago Road South
Warren, Michigan 48093
586-939-6800

U.S. Auto Scene and Detroit Auto Scene are registered trademarks
of Springer Publishing Co., Inc., a Michigan corporation.

Brinkley to Head GM Human Resources

DETROIT — Cynthia (Cindy) J. Brinkley has been appointed GM vice president, Global Human Resources, effective July 1.

Brinkley joins GM from AT&T Inc., where she was senior vice president, talent development/chief diversity officer responsible for identifying and developing future leaders, companywide training, employee engagement and diversity management.

"Cindy has a strong track record for driving business results and leading talent management," said GM Chairman and Chief Executive Officer Dan Akerson.

"She is a well-rounded executive who brings strong hu-

man resources experience to our company. We are happy to have her join GM at this time."

Brinkley, 51, will report to Akerson and serve on the company's Executive Operations Committee. She succeeds Mary Barra, who earlier was named senior vice president of Global Product Development, but has continued to lead human resources while a global search for her successor was conducted.

At AT&T, Brinkley helped achieve significant recognition on Diversity Inc's Top Companies for Diversity list in 2010 and 2011. Under her leadership, AT&T was recognized as the No. 1 company

for learning and development by *Chief Learning Officer Magazine*.

Brinkley is chairman of the National Oasis Institute and is a member of the Board of Trustees of Washington University in St. Louis.

She also co-chairs the University of Missouri's Billion Dollar Fundraising Campaign and is a member of the Trulaske School of Business Strategic Development Board.

Brinkley was recognized as Webster University's School of Business & Technology, Woman of Influence in 2010.

Brinkley is expected to have an office in the GM Renaissance Center with global responsibilities.

to Edmunds, spending an average of \$2,094 per vehicle. That's flat from April and nearly 20 percent lower than in May 2010. Prices on Japanese cars have risen an average of \$610 per vehicle since the quake, Edmunds said.

Shortages are the biggest reason. IHS Automotive estimates that the U.S. has around 400,000 fewer cars in inventory than it should have. Toyota began May with only enough Prius hybrids for 10 days of sales.

A 60-day supply is considered healthy. As a result, the Prius, made in Japan, is now selling at a \$5,000 premium, according to the Kelley Blue Book.

Rising prices prompted Bradd Levin of Stamford, Conn., to go ahead and buy a 2011 Honda Pilot in May. Levin and his wife are expecting their third child in December, so he was planning to buy a larger vehicle early this fall. He figured demand for the small SUV would be low because it's not as efficient as some smaller cars.

But Levin, a salesman at a plumbing supply business, was startled when Honda raised its interest rate offer and took away a \$750 cash incentive in May.

Then, he heard that Pilots with navigation systems could be in short supply because the chips used for them are made in Japan. He decided to buy the Pilot while he could still get a 2.9 percent rate and pay less than the suggested retail price.

Alec Gutierrez, manager of vehicle valuation for Kelley Blue Book, expects prices to be high into the fall. Then a likely drop in gas prices and increases in Japanese production should bring them back to more normal levels.

Honda said last week that its North American production will return to near-normal levels in August, while Toyota

Fall Inventory Clearance Should Draw Car Buyers

By TOM KRISHER
and DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP Auto Writers

DETROIT (AP) — New car buyers looking for a bargain this summer may have to wait.

Dealers usually offer discounts during the warmer months to clear out older models, but cars are in short supply this year because of the Japan earthquake and other factors.

The lack of vehicles, especially some popular fuel-efficient models, contributed to a steep sales decline in May, the first monthly decrease this year.

The trend is likely to persist for the next several months. And although Toyota announced a new round of incentives last week, most analysts don't expect many good deals until the end of the summer. Some are advising people to delay their purchases.

"If you don't have to buy, wait until fall. If you lease a car, extend it," said Edmunds.com chief Jeremy Anwyll.

Consumers heard that message in May. There were just over 1 million cars and trucks sold in the month, down 8 percent from April and 4 percent from last May.

Automakers say they are not worried about a reversal in the industry's recovery, despite a raft of bad economic data in the last few days. Once inventories are back to pre-earthquake levels and the deals come back, buyers will return, they say.

Even with the latest decline, auto sales are up 14 percent so far in 2011.

Ford Motor Co. and General Motors Co. are sticking with annual forecasts of around 13 million vehicles in U.S. sales. That's far short of the 2000 peak of 17.3 million, but better than the 10.4 million trough in 2009.

Ford is so bullish on the recovery that it increased third-quarter production by 8 percent over last year. Its chief economist, Ellen Hughes-Cromwick, said there was good economic news with the bad, including moderating gas prices, consistently low interest rates and better availability of loans.

But in May, the bad news prevailed. Toyota, Honda Motor Co. and Nissan Motor Co., all of which ran short of models due to parts shortages caused by the earthquake, had the biggest sales declines. Toyota was down 33 percent, Honda 23 percent and Nissan 9 percent from last May.

GM's sales dropped 1.2 percent, as falling pickup truck sales offset strong sales of more fuel-efficient cars and crossovers.

It was the same story at Ford, which saw sales fall 2.4 percent for the month. Pickup sales dropped more than 10 percent at both companies, the victim of high gas prices and a weak construction industry.

Fuel economy was clearly driving sales, with small car sales showing particular strength. For the first time in decades, Ford sold more F-150s with V6 engines than it did with larger, less efficient V8s.

Automakers usually use the warmer months to cut deals and make way for new models in the fall. But this year, they don't have many vehicles left. At the same time, automakers are raising prices to make up for the higher price of steel and other commodities.

As a result, buyers paid \$29,817 per vehicle last month, the highest average price ever recorded, according to auto pricing website Truecar.com.

The car companies offered their lowest incentives in six years last month, according

JBT Corp. Announces Ford Contract

CHICAGO — JBT Corp. last week announced it received a \$5.9 million order from Ford Motor Co. for automated material handling equipment.

The equipment includes nearly 100 new and upgraded automatic guided vehicles (AGVs) to provide safe, efficient, and cost-effective movement of materials at a major Ford stamping plant.

"We have a long history as an outstanding AGV supplier to Ford," said John Lee, vice president of JBT AeroTech.

"We are happy to continue this strong relationship. This order includes some recent technology advances and we are pleased that Ford recog-

nizes our continued investment in AGV technology."

The system will be commissioned in several phases with completion schedule for the second quarter of 2012.

JBT Corp. is a leading global solutions provider to the food processing and air transportation industries.

JBT designs, manufactures, tests and services technologically sophisticated systems and products for regional and multi-national industrial food processing customers through its JBT FoodTech segment and for domestic and international air transportation customers through its JBT AeroTech segment.

Buick Powered Exclusively by Direct-Injected Engines

PONTIAC, Mich. — Anyone who has ever played the game "telephone" knows that the more times a message gets passed along, the less accurate it will be when it gets to its destination.

The same thing applies to feeding fuel to an engine, auto experts say.

Across-the-board use of direct injection in the Buick lineup is helping to take translation layers out of the delivery process to reduce both fuel consumption and emissions. Buick is the only domestic brand powered exclusively by direct-injected engines.

Direct injection has enabled fuel economy improvements of up to 3 percent on the

Buick Enclave, LaCrosse, Regal and the upcoming Verano — without sacrificing performance and still meeting the world's most-stringent emissions requirements.

Over the past three decades, fuel delivery systems have evolved from the relatively primitive carburetor that relied on the Bernoulli effect to draw fuel through a tiny jet as air accelerated by, to the more-precise throttle body injection that gave way to port and finally direct injection.

Today's high-pressure direct injectors deliver fuel to the point of combustion in the cylinder so fuel doesn't get left behind on manifold walls or evaporate up out of a carburetor.

The demise of the carburetor ended problems like flooding and vapor lock and direct injection brings several bene-

fits over the more recent sequential port fuel injection systems.

"The 2,200 pounds per square inch of pressure that feeds the injectors provides a more atomized and precisely metered fuel spray to each cylinder before every combustion event," said Ecotec chief engineer Mike Anderson.

When used on boosted engines like the 2.0-liter Ecotec Turbo in the Regal and the upcoming Regal GS, direct injection also provides a charge cooling effect.

"Spraying fuel directly into the combustion chamber reduces the temperature of the compressed mixture as the fuel evaporates, which enables a higher compression ratio, allows for more spark advance, and reduces fuel consumption," said Anderson. "The beefier low-end

torque and improved drivability of the direct-injected 2.0L turbo makes it a no-compromise high-efficiency substitute for a bigger and heavier V6."

Engines with direct injection also warm up faster thanks to the ability to add a second injection pulse right before the spark plug ignites the fuel following a cold start. This faster warm-up can cut emissions of unburned hydrocarbons by up to 25 percent.

With direct injection, the 220 horsepower Regal Turbo beat the Acura TSX by 19 hp and 88 pound-feet of torque from just 2,000 rpm while still achieving up to 32 mpg on the highway, an advantage of 4 mpg.

The Enclave is the most fuel-efficient eight-passenger crossover on the market with an EPA estimated 17 mpg city and 24 mpg highway.

Chrysler Staffing Changes Promotes Diaz to President and CEO of Mexico

AUBURN HILLS — Chrysler Group LLC today announced the following management team changes:

• Fred Diaz is appointed President and CEO of Chrysler de Mexico, which includes responsibility for Latin America. Diaz continues in his current role as the President and CEO of the Ram Truck Brand.

• Reid Bigland is named President and CEO of the Dodge Car Brand and head of U.S. Sales.

Bigland continues as President and CEO of Chrysler Canada. In addition, the Company appointed David Buckingham to the newly created role of Chief Operating Officer of Chrysler Canada, reporting to Bigland. Previously, Buckingham was Vice President - Sales, Chrysler Canada.

• Ralph Gilles is appointed President and CEO of the newly formed Street and Racing Technology (SRT) Brand, Chrysler Group's cross-brand performance unit, and the Company's Motorsports activities. He continues with design responsibility for all exterior and interior design activities for all Dodge, Ram, Chrysler and Jeep Brand vehicles.

Joe ChamaSrouer is reassigned to International Operations reporting to Mike Manley, President and CEO of the Jeep® Brand and head of International Operations, Chrysler Group.

Chrysler Group LLC, formed in 2009 from a global strategic alliance with Fiat S.p.A., produces Chrysler, Jeep, Dodge, Ram, Mopar and Fiat vehicles and products.

With the resources, technology and worldwide distribution network required to compete on a global scale, the alliance builds on Chrysler Group's culture of innovation, first established by Walter P. Chrysler in 1925, and Fiat's complementary technology that dates back to its founding in 1899.

Headquartered in Auburn Hills, Chrysler Group's product lineup features some of the world's most recognizable vehicles, including the Chrysler 300, Jeep Wrangler, Dodge Challenger and Ram 1500.



Fred Diaz

Fiat contributes world-class technology, platforms and powertrains for small- and medium-size cars, allowing Chrysler Group to offer an expanded product line including environmentally friendly vehicles.

Chrysler officials are proud of where the company stands today just a few years following its corporate bankruptcy.

CEO Sergio Marchionne led a big ceremony last month saluting the payback of U.S. and Canadian government loans to Chrysler while the automaker also reported positive earnings for the most recent month and quarter.

Best of all, it seems that Chrysler products are finding a resonance with consumers in the marketplace. Not only is the Jeep Grand Cherokee a hit, but the Jeep Compass and Jeep Patriot have become strong sellers for the Auburn Hills automaker as well. The staffing changes are seen as the carmaker keeping up with growing demand for its cars and trucks.



2012 Chevrolet Impala Police car.

GM Designs New Impala 'Police' Model To Boost Power and Reduce Fuel Costs

DETROIT — Law enforcement officers are just as affected by higher gas prices as the citizens they are sworn to protect and serve. The 2012 Chevrolet Impala Police helps address this by adding more MPG and a more powerful engine.

A new 3.6L V6 engine and a six-speed automatic transmission achieves 302 hp and an estimated fuel economy of 17 mpg city and 27 mpg highway — a 3 mpg advantage over previous Impala models and 28 percent better than the Ford Crown Victoria. The 2012 Impala can accelerate from 0-60 mph in 6.6 seconds, based on GM engineering tests.

"Because our police customers need to conserve their budgets, we designed the 2012 Chevrolet Impala Police to help reduce fuel costs while standing up to the

toughest environments and most demanding situations," said Dana Hammer, police vehicle manager for GM Fleet and Commercial Operations.

The 2012 model will be the first Chevrolet Impala Police to feature StabiliTrak, GM's proven electronic stability control technology.

Significant brake upgrades shortened the vehicle's 60-0 mph stopping distance to 132 feet in GM tests.

The national fleet market is estimated to be 400,000 units.

Impala's steering and suspension systems are also new for 2012, reducing body roll and improving handling.

In response to strong demand from police customers, Goodyear Eagle RS-A all-season tires, which have a W speed rating, enable speed of up to 140 mph, if required. They are standard on the

2012 Impala Police.

Retail customers who purchase the 2012 Impala, which goes on sale this month, also will get the additional horsepower and fuel economy.

"The enhancements to the 2012 Impala's powertrain, steering and suspension produce a new vehicle that has improved performance, handling and safety features for police and general consumers," said Darren Post, vehicle line director for Impala. "And they'll see a savings at the fuel pump."

For more information on Chevrolet police vehicles, visit www.gmfleet.com/police.

For timely responses to fleet-related questions, join the GM Fleet and Commercial Customer Service LinkedIn group. Additional information for consumers can be found at www.chevrolet.com.