

Young Buyers Want Safety; Jeep Responds

The Insurance Institute of Highway Safety has named the new 2014 Jeep Cherokee a 2013 Top Safety Pick.

The SUV was one of two Chrysler Group vehicles to earn the designation during the latest round of IIHS evaluations. The other was the 2014 Fiat 500L, a four-door, B-segment hatchback.

In the last 10 months, 14 Chrysler vehicles have been named Top Safety Picks, said Chrysler spokesman Eric Mayne. Top Safety Pick testing simulates a side impact with a large SUV or pickup truck, front moderate overlap impact, roof-crush consistent with a rollover, and a rear collision capable of inducing whiplash, Mayne said. In each of these, the Jeep Cherokee, which goes on sale this month, recorded the highest possible rating of "good."

"The all-new 2014 Jeep Cherokee represents the pinnacle of innovation in the mid-size SUV segment," said Mike Manley, Jeep president and CEO.

"In addition to the breakthrough efficiency of its unique 4x4 system and the milestone introduction of its 9-speed automatic transmission – a world-first – the Cherokee features a host of technologies that combine to deliver outstanding occupant protection.

"That kind of robust perform-

ance delivers on the promise of the Jeep brand."

Joe Ellsasser, general manager of Golling Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram in Bloomfield Hills, said the dealership just received eight 2014 Cherokees in the last week of October.

"We have already delivered five by Halloween," Ellsasser said. "I think that safety is very important for a vehicle like the Cherokee because it's bringing in a younger buyer and they care more about safety. So being able to point to a designation by a group like the IIHS really helps."

Ellsasser said that the dealership is calling a lot of people and telling them to come in and give

the Cherokee a test drive.

"They want to sit in the car and get a sense of its size and how it drives," Ellsasser said. "They want to look at the fit and finish, which is excellent, and they like it when we talk about safety."

The other Chrysler vehicles that claimed Top Safety Pick status recently include, according to IIHS segmentation:

- 2013 Fiat 500 minicar;
- 2013 Chrysler 300 and Dodge Charger large family cars;
- 2013 Chrysler Town & Country and Dodge Grand Caravan minivans;

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New Jeep Cherokees arrive at Golling Chrysler Jeep in Bloomfield Hills.

GMC Moves Up to 9th in CR's Auto Reliability

The *Consumer Reports* 2013 Annual Auto Reliability rankings show that automakers from Europe and the U.S. are capable of building reliable vehicles. Audi, Volvo, and GMC captured three of the top 10 spots in the survey this year.

Survey results were released on Oct. 28 at a press conference before the Automotive Press Association in Detroit.

Three Japanese brands, Lexus, Toyota, and Acura captured the top three spots in the survey, which was conducted by the *Consumer Reports* National Research Center, said Jake Fisher, director of auto testing at *Consumer Reports*, during the Automotive Press Association event.

The survey is believed to be the largest of its kind; findings are based on *CR* subscribers' experiences with 1.1 million vehicles. *Consumer Reports* uses the survey data to compile reliability histories on vehicles and predict how well new cars that are currently on sale will hold up, Fisher said.

GMC emerged as the top domestic brand, finishing ninth – three places higher than last year.

In addition to GMC, Buick climbed nine slots to 12th place over last year. All Buicks except the V6 LaCrosse were average or better, Fisher said.

GMC spokesman Brian Goebel said people at GMC are encouraged by the progress the brand has made.

"As much progress as we've made, ninth place isn't good enough," Goebel said. "We're always looking to get better. These rankings by *Consumer Reports* demonstrate that our vehicle launchings over the past few

years have really caught on with the public. Our customers have really appreciated the new Acadia and Terrain. They are on track to have their best sales years ever."

Goebel said GMC launched the 2014 Sierra last summer and it has been a huge sales success. GMC will be launching the new Canyon mid-size pickup in the summer of 2014.

"We're really encouraged by the results of our recent launches," he said, "and by the products we will have come out in the next few months."

The Ford F-150 pickup with the 3.7-liter V6 was rated above average. The Chrysler 300 C also scored above average – last year it was the automaker's most troublesome vehicle.

Nissan sank to 22nd among the 28 brands in the rankings, Fisher said.

Two popular models, the redesigned 2013 Honda Accord V6 and the 2013 Nissan Altima,

scored too poorly in the survey for *Consumer Reports* to continue recommending them, Fisher said. Last year, *CR* had predicted that both vehicles would have at least average reliability.

Mazda slipped from fourth to fifth. Subaru and Scion, which also typically rank well in reliability, were torpedoed by their twin sports cars, the Subaru BRZ and the Scion FR-S, which scored below average. This dropped Subaru to 10th place, from last year's fifth.

Scion, for which *CR* had only

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2014 GMC Acadia

Hinrichs Honored for Arthritis Foundation Fundraising

A crowd of 350 people were on hand to see Joseph Hinrichs honored for his work in raising \$250,000 to support the Arthritis Foundation.

Hinrichs is executive vice president and president of the Americas at Ford.

"As honoree of the event, Mr. Hinrichs agreed to approach his colleagues within the auto industry as well his family and friends to lend their collective support to the Arthritis Foundation, Michigan," said Arthritis Foundation spokesman Chris Cahill.

Hinrichs was able to raise \$250,000 for the foundation this

year, Cahill said. As surprise to honor Hinrichs, the foundation brought his childhood hero and two-time Heisman Trophy winner Archie Griffin to congratulate him.

The former Ohio State running back appeared in a room filled with University of Michigan and Michigan State University fans. He was met with a mix of light-hearted cheers and jeers that was quickly followed by resounding applause after Griffin lauded Hinrichs for his dedication to family, community and industry.

Steve Garagiola from WDIV Channel 4 was the emcee.



GM Designer Tom Peters with Jay Leno at presentation ceremony

GM Performance Car Exterior Designer Accepts Lifetime Achievement Award From World-Renowned Design College

Longtime GM designer Tom Peters has earned a lifetime achievement award for his work.

His alma mater, Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, Calif., presented the award Oct. 27.

The California school has been at the forefront of art and design education internationally for more than 80 years.

Currently the director of Exterior Design for performance cars at GM, Peters works at the Tech Center Design building in Warren.

Presenting the award were Stewart Reed, chair of the college's Transportation Design Department, and comedian Jay Leno, "Tonight Show" host and noted car buff and collector.

In addition to more than 30 years of designing some of General Motors' most memorable vehicles, Peters led the exterior studio teams that produced two of GM's most important product introductions this year – the 2014 Chevrolet Corvette Stingray and 2014 Chevrolet Silverado full-size pickup.

In presenting the award, Reed said, "Through your efforts to promote the very best in automotive design, as seen in examples like the 2014 Corvette Stingray, you continue to represent Art Center in the best way possible and serve as an inspira-

tion for our graduates following in your footsteps."

Peters worked briefly at GM following his 1980 graduation from the college and returned in 1982 after two years with Texas Instruments. His portfolio includes concepts such as the Corvette Indy show car, Pontiac Banshee, Cadillac Sixteen and Buick Velite, as well as production vehicles such as the Corvette C6 and C7, current-generation Camaro, and the new full-size pickup trucks and SUVs from Chevrolet and GMC.

"The list of Art Center alumni at GM is long, but Tom Peters is without a doubt the most visionary designer I have ever known or worked with in my more than 40 years at GM," wrote Ed Welburn, vice president, GM Global Design, in a letter read at the event.

"The men and women who work for Tom share his desire and thirst for winning, and they create incredibly spirited designs."

Welburn went on to note that although "Tom has had an impressive career, let's not forget that he has plenty more to do in the years to come as a valued member of the GM Global Design team."

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Football great Archie Griffin with Joseph Hinrichs and Steve Garagiola.