PUMPED UP PRIUS
TOYOTA SHAKES UP HYBRIDS ONCE AGAIN WITH THE ALL-NEW 2016 PRIUS
Dealer Doings

A teacher, first responders and a state in drought benefit from local Toyota dealerships. And, the ultimate car guy is inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame.

Blossoming Bromance

Bill Penney Toyota’s sponsorship of fisherman Clay Dyer goes beyond business.

Pioneering the Future

Products, people and processes took center stage at the 2015 Toyota National Dealer Meeting.

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Toyota Hits the Road

Even Better Expedition brings Toyota engineers to a new kind of research facility: North American highways.

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On The Cover: Eyes On an Icon

Take a look at the fourth-generation Prius, which has sold more than 3 million units since its debut.

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Pioneering the Future

Products, people and processes took center stage at the 2015 Toyota National Dealer Meeting.

DEALER DOINGS:

Penske Earns Much-Deserved Hall Call

by Dan Nied

For 50 years, Roger Penske has kept America moving. Penske, chairman and CEO of the Penske Corporation and Penske Automotive Group, is the patriarch of 327 dealerships worldwide, including 23 Toyota and 13 Lexus stores.

That doesn’t even include Longo Toyota, the largest Toyota dealership in the world, which is run by Penske Motor Group. Roger Penske is the chairman of that, too, of course.

And if that weren’t enough, his racing teams have earned 15 Indianapolis 500 titles and numerous NASCAR wins.

With that kind of résumé, it’s no surprise that Penske was inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame in Dearborn, Mich., in July.


In the half-century since, he has built up a legendary automotive empire.

DEALER DOINGS:

New Wheels for a Top Teacher

by Charles Pannunzio

When the school district that includes Flagstaff, Ariz., began a program to honor its “Teacher of the Year” in 2013, Findlay Toyota saw an opportunity to help support educators in the local community.

The annual tradition continued when Whitney Tapia, a fourth-grade teacher at Knoles Elementary School in Flagstaff, won a year’s lease on a new Camry when she was named 2015 Coconino County Teacher of the Year.

“Each year we give them the car and we put a big wrap on it that says ‘Teacher of the Year,’” says Mark Monthofer, marketing and fleet director at Findlay Toyota. “A lot of us here, including the owner, including me, we all have kids in this community,” he adds. “It’s a small community and we feel like the teachers don’t get enough recognition, they don’t get paid enough, so we wanted to do something extra for the person who was selected for this special recognition.”

“I was so excited and really surprised,” says Tapia, who has been a teacher for nine years. “It’s awesome to have that validation.”
Toyota of Scranton Hosts ‘Heroes Day’

by Charles Pannunzio

Toyota of Scranton thanked first-responders from Northeastern Pennsylvania and marked the donation to the city’s Police Department with a Heroes Day event in May.

Greg Gagorik, president of Toyota of Scranton, says the event was geared toward recognizing police and fire/rescue workers and their families.

“This is a place where we can give back in a very meaningful way in our community,” he says. “It’s an opportunity to really show our support.”

The event included displays from the SWAT team and bomb squad, as well as tactical equipment. It was also the platform for Toyota of Scranton to present a 2015 Camry to the Scranton Police Department.

Gagorik says the car serves as both a donation to the city and an opportunity to show how well Camry can compete with the typical vehicles police departments use.

“We want to give back to the community, help out with their budget in the short-term and show the value of the Toyota brand and how it stands up over time,” he says.

City officials were very pleased with the donation.

“It’s got a little more comfort than we’re used to,” Scranton Police Chief Carl Graziano told WNEP-TV. “We use our vehicles 24/7, and they run really, really hard,” Mayor Bill Courtright told WBRE-TV, “so a gift like this is just invaluable.”

California Dealers “The Wash Can Wait”

by Mark Wasserman

Providing customers with a complimentary car wash after a service visit has been a tradition for many Toyota dealerships. But with California experiencing one of the most severe droughts on record, dealers in the Golden State decided that this tradition needed to change.

“The Wash Can Wait” program lets customers decline the car wash in order to save water. Dealers reduced washes by 75 percent during the campaign and are on track to save more than 20 million gallons of water by the end of the year. That is enough to cover nearly 50 football fields in a foot of water.

“As much as we love giving customers a little something extra when they bring in their cars, we know this is the right thing to do right now,” explains Glenn Kashima, service director at Tustin Toyota.

So what do customers think about “The Wash Can Wait?” After all, many have gotten used to the perk. “I always thought the car wash was a nice touch, but I understand the reality of the situation,” says Jean Morgan, owner of a 2004 Sienna.

“It is my honor to partner with Toyota. They always have the bigger picture in mind.”

Toyota continues to build on its longstanding relationship with SBP. Yes, there’s the $5 million fund to assist the organization’s national disaster recovery efforts. But for more than four years now, company employees have shared the automaker’s manufacturing expertise by training SBP members in the Toyota Production System (TPS), which makes organizations become more effective, maximizes resources and improves quality and safety.

After implementing TPS, the nonprofit cut the time and cost to rebuild a house in half.
Clay Dyer always wanted to drive. Bill Penney Toyota helped make that dream come true.

by Dan Nied

It’s more than a sponsorship. It’s a partnership. And it’s a friendship.

You could even call the relationship between professional fisherman and motivational speaker Clay Dyer and Zack Penney a bromance.

“He’s like my brother,” Dyer says. “You know how you meet people along the way, and it feels like you’ve known them all your life? That’s the way Zack is.”

Penney, dealer principal of Bill Penney Toyota in Huntsville, Ala., stands in awe of Dyer.

“From the moment I met him he made a big impact on me,” Penney says. “He radiates. You can tell something is different about him, and it’s not that he doesn’t have arms and legs.”

“It’s a game-changer when you meet him. He’s an inspiration to everyone around him.”

Dyer has been fishing since he was 4-years-old despite being born with no legs, no left arm and a right arm that ends above the elbow. Despite that, he’s competed on the Bassmaster tour since 2012.

After meeting Dyer at the 2012 Bassmaster Classic in Oklahoma, Penney made sure his dealership became one of Dyer’s major sponsors.

Then, Penney got to work on one of Dyer’s rare unfulfilled dreams: driving.

Dyer had mentioned his lifelong goal to be self-sufficient. He needed a vehicle strong enough to tow his boat and survive the rigors of a schedule packed with travel to tournaments and speaking engagements. In early 2014, Penney made a commitment to get Dyer a vehicle. Soon, he presented Dyer with a 2015 Tundra CrewMax.

And for good measure, Penney ordered the same model for himself.

They sent Dyer’s Tundra to Gulf States Mobility for modifications. When Dyer got the truck in July 2014, he was moved. And then he was moving.

“It takes a lot to impress me,” Dyer says. “I’ve seen so many amazing things in my life. When I saw the truck, I felt exhilaration and excitement; a lot of positive happy emotions. It was a dream come true.”

What Dyer saw was a Tundra in which he could shift gears with a touch screen, accelerate and brake with a shoulder pad mounted to the driver’s side door and flip the ignition on the back of the driver’s seat using his head.

Dyer says it took him a few hours to learn how to drive. In the first nine months of the Tundra’s life Dyer and his wife, Kim, have driven it from Alabama to Michigan, Texas and all over the South. Dyer says he’s driven about 32,000 miles.

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A few months ago, Penney and Dyer drove to an Alabama lake for some early morning fishing. “Clay jumps in the driver’s seat and drives us to the lake. He was smoother than me, driving these country roads with the boat attached,” Penney says. “He backs the boat in, one shot. I’ve been backing boats for 15 years and he does a better job of it.” That’s kind of Dyer’s thing, though. “Clay can pretty much do anything he puts his mind to,” Penney says. “It’s a game-changer when you meet him. He’s an inspiration to everyone around him.”

Engineers guide a convoy of Toyota vehicles across North America.

When Toyota Motor North America CEO Jim Lentz kicked off Toyota’s Ever-Better Expedition in Torrance, Calif., and Plano, Texas, in June, his first order of business was to describe exactly what it is. “For the next 110 days, our drivers and engineers will steer a convoy of vehicles across North America’s highways, byways and backstreets,” Lentz explained, “engaging and energizing team members along the way and inspiring all of us for future innovations.”

The journey—which has taken Toyota’s drivers and vehicles to the toughest urban and rural terrains of the United States, Canada and Mexico—was designed to get Toyota engineers on the road where they can better understand first hand how customers use their cars on a daily basis.

The power of the expedition was illustrated on July 16, when Toyota engineer Frank DiMaggio climbed into a New York City taxicab. Traveling through the Lower East Side, DiMaggio noticed the Prius swerving and lurching through the rigors of New York traffic. This cab was a fertile den of knowledge, brimming with gritty details. DiMaggio was downright smitten with the wear and tear. To a Toyota Technical Center engineer from Ann Arbor, Mich., this was a big deal. The chance to test and examine Toyota vehicles in demanding, real-world scenarios will stick with the team for years.

“What we saw that day will, in some way, inspire design development in the future,” DiMaggio said. “There’s no better place than a New York taxicab. The driver is putting 100,000 miles on that car each year. Those doors are opening and closing more than any test we could design in a lab. Even better, it’s not a test in a lab, it’s in the real world. It’s a direct line to the customer. We can’t replicate that. This is what Ever-Better Expedition is all about.”
Take the sensibility of the Prius’ first 15 years, add a new and improved exterior, impressive interior and whole lot of safety and fuel technology and what do you get? A car that’s ready to change the world—again.

In its first three generations, the Prius has established itself as a symbol of a better earth and a better way to get around. But after Toyota revealed the fourth-generation Prius in Las Vegas on Sept. 8, the Prius became something else. It became a statement.

As the brand new, redesigned Prius rose some 60 feet into a late summer Las Vegas sky, it shouted to the world that both sleek style and gas-sipping fuel efficiency can come together to create an impressively attractive package.

In front of about 350 journalists and social media influencers, the 2016 Prius took both the look and gas mileage of its forefathers to a whole new level.

“Prius set the global benchmark for hybrids, but now is breaking its own boundaries with more engaging style and fun-to-drive dynamics,” said Toyota Division General Manager Bill Fay. “This Prius will invite new drivers into the category by delivering an impressive look and feel, built on the foundation of safety and eco-consciousness that defines the vehicle’s heritage.”

In other words, it’s time to change the world once again. But this time, with a little more style and a lot more technology.

A MODEL OF EFFICIENCY

Today’s consumers expect environmental credentials, and the new Prius delivers. Smaller, lighter hybrid system components, higher-energy density batteries and an internal combustion engine tuning ground-breaking thermal efficiency (more than 40 percent) contribute to a significant advancement in fuel economy. With an expected 10 percent improvement in EPA estimated mpg on core models, Prius will offer best-in-class fuel economy among vehicles without a plug.

Perhaps the most significant feature of the 2016 Prius—at least as far as Toyota manufacturing is concerned—is that this is the first global vehicle to use Toyota’s New Global Architecture (TNGA).

Prius is used to setting the standard, so why should manufacturing be any different? TNGA will allow Toyota to build more cars on common platforms, and use shared parts intelligently to maximize Toyota’s supply chain.

And the new Prius is going to get that whole thing started in a big way.

THAT PRIUS LOOK

But there’s so much more to love.

For one, the exterior is longer, sleeker and more athletic. The hood swoops down like a super hero plunging through the air to rescue a noble citizen in danger. Bold character lines grace the side, starting from the front fenders.

Compared to the third generation, the Prius’ dimensions are 2.4 inches longer, 0.6 inches wider and 0.8 inches lower. Drivers will experience a low center of gravity and a more responsive suspension package. The result is enhanced control on the road and even more room.

The new headlights create a sassy personality for the car while the rear lights express the distinctive lines of the Prius from the rear spoiler to the trailing edges of the sides.

SAFETY SENSE

Prius is among Toyota’s first U.S. models to offer Toyota Safety Sense (TSS), a new multi-feature advanced safety package designed to help keep Toyota drivers safe for years to come.

The TSS package on the 2016 Prius includes:
• Lane Departure Alert with Steering Assist
• Automatic High Beams
• Pre-Collision System with Pedestrian Detection function
• Full-Speed Dynamic Radar Cruise Control

The iconic Prius is back and better than ever. It incorporates the best in new technology, greater fuel efficiency and revolutionary manufacturing.

Yes, over the course of its 15 years, Prius has stood out as a symbol. But when it goes on sale in early 2016, it will truly become a statement.
Akio Toyoda took a little extra time getting to the Toyota National Dealer Meeting in Las Vegas on Sept. 9.

Apparently the president of Toyota Motor Corporation, who arrived with a large convoy of Ever-Better Expedition vehicles and drivers (see page 8), made a few pit stops along the way. But when he finally took the stage, Toyoda was energized by the journey, which began in Australia last year and will ultimately cover five continents around the world.

"It’s been a great opportunity for us to continue our tradition of listening, learning and improving," Toyoda said. "Making better cars is not just about calculating engineering data or testing them in simulators. The minute we lose contact with the real world and our customers is the minute we lose our ability to build ever-better cars and create ever-better experiences."

Overall, the 2015 National Dealer Meeting focused on forward-thinking products and investments in the future.

A PROUD FUTURE

Senior Vice President of Automotive Operations, Bob Carter, opened in typical fashion: showing his love for the Camry. In fact, Carter couldn’t help but gush over recent statistics that say consumers consider Camry the most stylish car in the segment.

"My baby just won the beauty pageant," Carter said to applause.

But Carter also showed a love for manufacturing, detailing Toyota’s New Global Architecture (TNGA), which will improve manufacturing by grouping production of common vehicle platforms in each plant.

"In a nutshell, TNGA will make all our vehicles ride better, drive better, handle better and look better," Carter said. "It will give them better mpg, more efficiency and improved collision performance. TNGA will also allow us to build more models on common platforms and use common parts intelligently while fully leveraging our entire supply chain."

Carter also couldn’t contain his excitement over Toyota’s new manufacturing plant in Guanajuato, Mexico, that will be the first plant built from the ground up with TNGA capabilities.

"This will be the first ground-up state-of-the-art factory in the world utilizing Toyota’s New Global Architecture," Carter said. "This new plant is not only going to build more Corollas at an improved manufacturing cost, it will also open up capacity in our other North American plants so we can build more of the products you and your guests want."

Meanwhile, Toyota Motor Sales President Kaz Ohara touted Toyota’s new Safety Sense system.

"Toyota’s pursuit of ever-better safety technology continues," Ohara said. "We are very excited about the rollout of our affordable Toyota Safety Sense system, which includes pre-collision

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Mirai Is Coming
Group Vice President of Marketing Jack Hollis got dealers excited about the Mirai, which goes on sale in California next month.

Fair Game
Dealers participate in a simulation of the 2015 Trekpoints Tournament.

Truck Time
Toyota Division General Manager Bill Fay showed major enthusiasm for the 2016 Tacoma. The feeling was returned wholeheartedly by dealers who can’t keep trucks like Tacoma and Tundra on their lot.

Still Hot
Almost two years after its reveal, the FT-1 Concept still turns heads.

Reconnecting
From left: Buzz and Carol Rodland of Rodland Toyota catch up with Scion Corporate Manager Mark Angelacos.

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automatic braking. You can be sure we will have follow-up technologies to take us to the next level in safety, keeping us ahead of the competition.”

A LOYAL FAMILY
At last year’s dealer meeting, Toyoda announced the first Best in Town award, and this year he awarded it to Ann and Russ Humberston of Beaverton Toyota in Oregon. The award goes to the dealership that best creates an exceptional experience for its customers.

In closing, Toyoda reached out to the dealer family as a whole.

“To each of you, I say you are my friend, you are my family. Blood makes one related, but loyalty is what makes you family,” Toyoda said. “Thank you for your loyalty, your support and your belief. We are One Toyota. Thank you for making us ever better.”

A New Era
Now that Scion’s newest models—the iM and iA—are off to a strong start, Group Vice President of Strategic Planning Doug Murtha says: “We have an opportunity once again to make Scion a more effective place for experimentation and a greater source of new buyers to the Toyota family.”

Best in Town
Russ Humberston of Beaverton Toyota in Oregon was recognized with the very first Best in Town award, which is given to the dealership that best creates an exceptional experience for its customers.

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PREMIUM FEATURES
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WEIRD, RIGHT?