

## A 1,000-horsepower Hemi crate engine you can buy

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles launched its latest crate engine at the Nov. 5-8 Specialty Equipment Market Association (SEMA) Show in Las Vegas, Nevada. According to FCA, the supercharged 426-cubic-inch "Hemi" V-8 makes 1,000 horsepower and 950 pound-feet of torque. It's dubbed the **Hellephant** (a blending of the elephant nickname for the 1960s' Hemi engines, and the engines in the current Dodge Charger and Challenger Hellcat models) and can be bought from just about any Dodge/Chrysler/Jeep dealer.



You can buy a 1,000-hp crate engine from FCA for whatever vehicle you can fit it into.

Although pricing details are unknown, the 707-horsepower Hellcat crate engine sells for about \$20,000. We estimate about \$26,000 for the Hellephant, which can be retrofitted into older Dodge, Plymouth and Chrysler vehicles.



The Honda ROAV concept combines 3D printed parts with those from the Ridgeline and Civic.

## Honda's latest off-road concept

Honda's newest concept isn't a cushy sedan or electric-powered roadster. Instead, the **Rugged Open Air Vehicle Concept (ROAV)** draws inspiration from Honda's Pioneer 1000 side-by-side (two-seat) all-terrain vehicle, but the much larger ROAV uses parts from a surprisingly wide array of vehicles in Honda's stable. Built in just a few months, the ROAV rides on the Ridgeline's platform and suspension, and gets its power from the pickup's 3.5-liter V-6 engine. The ROAV's four bucket seats were taken from the Civic Type R and re-skinned with waterproof covers. Its four equal-size doors are straight off the Pioneer 1000. Much of the remainder of the vehicle has numerous 3D-printed parts. With increasing off-roading popularity, the ROAV could be a possible next-level ATV, placing Honda in the forefront in this category, although there are no official plans to go into production.



Dubai Police will be using this flying motorcycle for hard to reach areas.

## Arabian cops get hoverbikes

Regular readers of this humble Automotive section know about our yearning for flying cars. **Flying motorcycles** are close enough.

So we rejoiced this week when Dubai Police took delivery of the first production unit of Hoversurf's S33 2019 **Hoverbike**, and is now training personnel on its use. The eVTOL (electric-powered vertical-take-off-and-landing) vehicle weighs 253 lbs., and has a maximum speed of 65 mph and a safe flying altitude of 16 feet. A 2.5-hour charge will put it in the air for 10-25 minutes, or up to 40 minutes used strictly as a drone. Dubai Police will use it as a first responder vehicle in hard to reach areas, and if trials work out, will order more.

As an aside, Dubai — the largest city in the oil-rich United Arab Emirates — also has the world's fastest police car, an officially-marked Bugatti Veyron with a maximum speed of 253 mph, among a fleet of 14 other supercars.

The Hoverbike is available to the public for \$150,000, and since it has met U.S. Federal Aviation Administration guidelines, a pilot's license is not required to operate it.



The Cadillac XT4 comes with a 237-hp 2.0L four-cylinder, but the upcoming V-Sport model will get a 2.7L truck engine that makes 310 horsepower in the Chevy Silverado.

## Caddy's 2019 XT4 goes V-Sport

Sources have it that General Motors' luxury division will unleash a performance version of the **Cadillac XT4** sometime in 2019.

The **V-Sport** model will reportedly be fitted with GM's new turbocharged 2.7-liter four-cylinder engine that will see service as an option in the Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra pickups. That would give the XT4 V-Sport at least 310 horsepower. The only other engine is the base 237-horsepower 2.0-liter four-cylinder.

Along with increased output, the upcoming model will come with unique body trim for the fenders and rocker panels, plus a unique grille, wheels and sport-style front seats. You can also expect a sport-tuned suspension and more than the usual degree of base luxury and safety content.

### TEST DRIVE

## 2019 Lexus ES 300h

Continued from page 1

as blind spot monitoring with rear cross traffic assist, park assist sonar, emergen-

The car accelerates smoothly, has power to pass and cruises easily.

cy auto reverse braking and a panoramic view monitor.

The new fourth-generation hybrid drive system combines a 2.5L Atkinson-

cycle four-cylinder gas engine with a 29.1kW electric motor, for a combined system output of 215 horsepower and 163 lb.-ft. of torque. Coupled to a Continuously Variable Transmission, Lexus quotes a 0-60 time of 8.1 seconds.

While that'll get you a good view of the taillights of the fastest in the luxury sedan segment, the seat of the pants feel is faster. The car steps away from the line smartly, accelerates smoothly, has power to pass and cruises easily — all experienced with a luxury level of quiet (thanks to added sound insulation this year).

Engaging Sport mode dials up more



2019 Lexus ES 300h navigation-equipped models boast a 12.3-inch display that's crisp and bright, but the main interface with the system — a touchpad on the center console — requires finesse moves to operate, and is inexact and distracting.

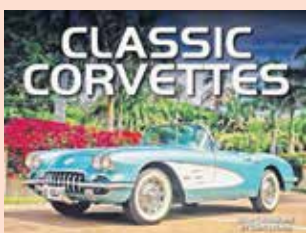
aggressive, off the line pickup, and introduces six virtual gears, if you choose to paddle shift. An Eco mode heightens fuel economy, and Auto Glide Control will allow the car to coast with less regenerative braking drag.

Speaking of brakes, the pedal feel of a hybrid's binders is sometimes subpar, but not so here. And speaking of mpg's, the ES 300h is rated to return 44 miles per gallon city, 45 highway and 44 combined. My road test of the hybrid netted 39 mpg's in mixed driving, with little regard

for soft peddling to maximize mileage. The car's cushioned ride and stable handling are consistent with segment expectations.

Three trim levels are offered for the ES 300h: base (MSRP: \$41,410), Luxury (\$44,065) and Ultra Luxury (\$45,060) — all plus \$1,025 delivery fee.

A regular contributor to the Times Union for more than 25 years, Dan Lyons is the award-winning author of six books, and photographer of 180 calendars.



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