

# Honda renews its Passport

Sources have picked up on a rumor that Honda will unveil a **brand new utility vehicle** that will likely hit the road as soon as mid-2019 (as a 2020 model). As yet there is little info regarding the shape of this newbie, but



Will Honda's new SUV resemble this fastback 2013 Acura ZDX?

speculation is that it will appear more like a fastback (think BMW X4 or the long-departed Acura ZDX). There's also speculation that Honda will revive the **Passport** name for the upcoming model and that it will slot between the five-passenger CR-V and the seven-passenger Pilot utility vehicles. (The original Passport was a rebadged Isuzu Rodeo that was sold from 1994 to 2002). It's also likely that the Passport will be built off the Pilot's platform, but the Passport will be shorter. Powertrain choices are likely to include a turbocharged four-cylinder engine as well as a hybrid option.



# No Ford Ranger Raptor for us

Ford's off-road ready **Raptor pickup** only made us hungry for more, and has us asking: What if instead of being based on the fullsize F-150, Ford were to give us a trail-hungry truck one size down? That would fill out the line-up, for sure, but despite sightings of what appears to be a Raptor off-road version of the midsize **2019 Ranger** pickup, reports are that such a model/trim level will not be sold in North America. Instead, it's destined for the automaker's dealerships in Europe, Asia, South America and Australia. That Ranger Raptor will likely be powered by a four-cylinder turbo-diesel and not a gasoline engine that was speculated to be used for the potential North America version. One reason being touted for restricting the junior Raptor's availability is that the projected list price would have been too high, relative to the current F-150-based Raptor. As well, the turbo-diesel is deemed to be not powerful enough for North American truck aficionados.



Tesla co-founder and CEO Elon Musk was forced to step down as chairman of its board of directors in September; his replacement has been named.

# Elon replaced on Tesla board

American luxury electric maker **Tesla Motors** has a new head for its board of directors this week after co-founder **Elon Musk** was pressured to step down from that role in September.



Tesla board member Robyn Denholm will take over the chair

The billionaire eccentric (and CEO of Space-X, and co-founder of PayPal, and driver behind Solar City) seemed to have gone off the rails lately, with especially controversial remarks on Twitter. In one tweet, he falsely accused one of the recent Thai cave rescuers of being a pedophile following a public dispute on how best to rescue the boys soccer team. (A defamation lawsuit is pending.) In another, he triggered a \$40m fine for fraud by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Committee by suggesting he was taking Tesla private. Space prohibits a full list of his erratic public pronouncements, but Tesla stockholders were surely keeping track of them. Musk will be replaced as chair of the board by **Robyn Denholm**. The Australian native is currently one of two female directors on Tesla's nine-member board. Musk will remain CEO of the company, and retain his own board seat. Despite all the drama, Tesla posted a third-quarter profit of \$312m, and the new **Model 3** is now the fifth best-selling passenger car in America.



The upcoming BMW X7 will be larger than the Mercedes-Benz GLS, but smaller than the Cadillac Escalade and the Lincoln Navigator.

# BMW creates a big monster

Word is that, by March, BMW will unleash the X7, complete with three rows of seats and an in-your-face grille and a price to match. The base X7 xDrive40i comes with a turbocharged inline six-cylinder engine producing 335 horsepower, while the X7 xDrive50i's twin-turbo 4.4-liter V-8 spits out 456 horses. Physically, the big rig is slightly larger than the Mercedes-Benz GLS, but not as large as the Lincoln Navigator or Cadillac Escalade counterparts. U.S. pricing will reportedly start at just under \$75,000.

TEST DRIVE

# 2018 Hyundai Ioniq

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of the Ultimate package (\$3,000). Also included in this bundle are automatic emergency braking, smart cruise control, lane keep assist, articulating headlights,

SEL models may be the best compromise of features and frugality.

rear parking sensors, an Infiniti premium, 8-speaker audio system, wireless device charging, memory function for the driver's seat, floor mounted, rear HVAC vents, and a cover for the cargo



bay. The final, Ultimate item (redundantly speaking) is three years of Blue Link guidance. Blue Link brings with it a bundle of safety, diagnostic and guidance services. The enhanced connectivity can be used for remote start (with climate control), destination search by voice, remote unlock/lock, car location, roadside assistance and stolen vehicle recovery. Taken together with the Premium trim level's other features (leather upholstery, heated front seats, power moon roof, 17-inch alloy rims), you have a well-equipped vehicle, but also one with a sticker price cresting \$30,000. SEL models may be the best compromise of features and frugality. While you shed three mpg's compared to the base Blue level, the mid-level models



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this vehicle at this preferred dealership:  
**LIA HYUNDAI**  
945 Central Ave., Albany, NY 12205  
518-458-2277 [www.liahyundaiofalbany.com](http://www.liahyundaiofalbany.com)

add some creature comforts (heated front seats, power driver's seat with lumbar control) and two popular — and necessary — safety features (blind spot detection and rear cross-traffic alert). To this, my test car added the Technology package (\$1,000), which sprinkles in lane keep assist, smart cruise control and automatic emergency braking, for a

delivered price of \$26,010. For this price, you have an unassuming, practical and very economical hatchback.

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.

Don't miss next week's Test Drive:  
**2019 Lexus es300h**