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IN TODAY'S E-MAIL

Monday, April 4, 2005

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The latest in auto industry news and reviews, culled from The New York Times and other sites on the Web. Compiled by Nick Kurczewski; edited by Norman Mayersohn and James G. Cobb.

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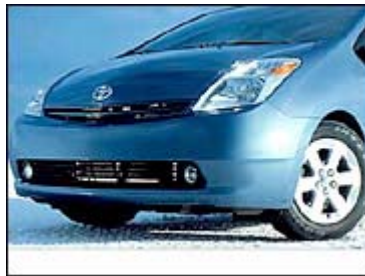
↓ [MOTOR MOUTH](#)

BREAKING NEWS: [G.M. Chief to Lead North American Auto Operations](#)

AUTO LOG

[Your Car: Politics on Wheels](#)

It has always been tempting to think you can figure out who a person is and what he thinks by what he drives. That subject was raised recently by Chely Wright in her country and western hit, "Bumper of My S.U.V.," in which she tells of a "lady in a minivan" giving her a vulgar hand gesture for driving a car with a Marines bumper sticker:



"Does she think she knows what I stand for/Or the things that I believe/Just by looking at a sticker for the U.S. Marines/On the bumper of my S.U.V.?"

The lady in the minivan might not know, but some of the finest minds in market research think they do. By analyzing new-car sales, surveying car owners and keeping count of political bumper stickers, they are identifying the differences between Democratic cars and Republican ones.

- [Go to Article from The New York Times, by John Tierney](#)
- [Go to Graphic from The New York Times](#)
- [Hawks Join Environmentalists to Encourage Fuel Efficiency \(The San Francisco Chronicle\)](#)

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JOYRIDES: FUN STUFF

[Marlins and Hornets and Gremlins, Oh My: The Quirky Classics of A.M.C.](#)

Most of us remember only the



Future Cars



2006 BMW M6

- » [About This Car](#)
- » [Future Cars](#)

First Glances From the New York International Auto Show

- [Ferrari F430 Spider](#)
- [Nissan Sport Concept](#)
- [Mercedes-Benz R350 and R500](#)
- [Hyundai Azera](#)
- [Cadillac XLR-V](#)
- [Bentley Continental Flying Spur](#)
- [Lexus GS450h](#)
- [Suzuki Concept-X2](#)
- [Dodge Charger Police Cruiser](#)
- [Ford Shelby Cobra](#)
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Sell Your Car

wacky Gremlins and Pacers, but American Motors produced many terrific designs before its demise.

Everett Collection

- [Go to Article From The New York Times, by John Matras](#)
- [Party On, Mirthmobile! \(The New York Times\)](#)

Faster, Mommy, Faster!

A Jeep-driving suburban mommy who feels "forever 18" while driving reflects on the prospects of losing her license.

- [Go to Column From The New York Times, by Tammy La Gorce](#)

Cocaine Is the Source of Family's Car Trouble

Giving new meaning to the term "high resale value," a Louisiana family discovers that its mechanically troubled 1996 Toyota Camry is worth more than \$40,000.

- [Go to Article From The Slidell Sentry \(Louisiana\)](#)

Car and Driveway

Having trouble deciding just what car will look perfect in the driveway? Call Steven Harris, a New York designer, who will be glad to provide the matchmaking.

- [Go to Article From The New York Times, by Mike Guy](#)
- [Go to Slide Show](#)

Thwack! Whir!... Whir? Segway Polo Is Born

Dean Kamen invented the Segway in the hopes that it would revolutionize transportation, but the maligned devices have done little more than bump up polo-pony unemployment figures.

- [Go to Article From The New York Times, by Josh Sens](#)

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BEHIND THE WHEEL: PRODUCT REVIEWS

Virtue of Chic With the Value of Cheap

Kias are cheap to buy and cheap to run. With the new Spectra 5, Kia stuck to this successful strategy while managing to finally add some visual excitement.

- [Go to Review From The New York Times, by Michelle Krebs](#)
- [Social Climbers From Korea \(The New York Times\)](#)



Piling on the Perks

Lexus would like you to believe that the new GS is a design leader. Another view is, "Somebody should give these guys Pininfarina's phone number."

- [Go to Review From The Los Angeles Times](#)

Liberty CRD Is for Diesel Lovers

The diesel-powered Jeep Liberty may have a certain funky charm, but don't take that fuel economy rating on the window sticker too seriously.

- [Go to Review From USA Today](#)

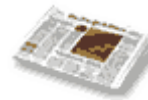
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[What's "the ultimate power-up" in video games?](#)

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ROAD SIGNS: CONSUMER NEWS, RECALLS AND SAFETY ISSUES

DaimlerChrysler Recalls 1.3 Million Mercedes Vehicles

From Stuttgart, the statement on the biggest recall in the company's history is, "We are now producing the best product quality ever."

- [Go to Article from Reuters, via The New York Times](#)
- [DaimlerChrysler Appoints New Executive \(Reuters, via The New York Times\)](#)



Sean Gallup/Getty Images

U.S. Automakers Lose Ground to Rivals

Japanese car companies continue to win market share as Ford and G.M. struggle for a crucial rebound in sales.

- [Go to Article from The New York Times, by Danny Hakim](#)

Ford to Write a Report on Global Warming

Environmentally focused Ford shareholders have pressured the company to address its commitment to reducing emissions.

- [Go to Article from The Associated Press, via The Plain Dealer \(Cleveland\)](#)
- [Mean and Thirsty \(MSN Autos\)](#)

Hyundai and Kia Recall More Than 30,000 S.U.V.'s

Despite making major improvements in quality, Hyundai and Kia are not immune to the occasional stumble.

- [Go to Article From Reuters](#)
- [Hyundai Pushes Quality While Detroit Boosts Power \(The Globe and Mail, Canada\)](#)

Lawsuit Documents and a Study Raise Questions on the Safety of Ford Explorer Roofs

A study by a consumer advocacy group accuses Ford of ignoring evidence that stronger roofs would lead to fewer injuries in rollover accidents.

- [Go to Article from The New York Times, by Jeremy W. Peters](#)

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SHOWROOM FLOOR: PRODUCT NEWS

Hybrid-Car Tinkerers Scoff at No-Plug-In Rule

Despite warnings from manufacturers, hybrid enthusiasts are getting a jolt out of modifying their cars to run longer on battery power.

- [Go to Article from The New York Times, by Danny Hakim](#)
- [Queenslanders Queue for April Fuel's Day \(National Nine News, Australia\)](#)



Is Bling Still King?

Andrew Sacks for The New York Times

Huge chrome wheels? Yes. Tinted windows? Of course. Pavement scraping suspension? Always. A coolness factor cranked up to 11? Not anymore.

- [Go to Opinion From The Truth About Cars](#)

Rise of the Green Machine

Long after the tree-huggers declared their love for hybrids, the tech geeks have discovered the Prius. Who's next, soccer dads?

- [Go to Article from Wired](#)
- [Diesel Hybrids on the Fast Track \(Wired\)](#)

New BMW Vehicle to Be Built in Greer

BMW will build its competitor to the new Mercedes-Benz R-Class wagon in the same factory that makes the X5.

- [Go to Article from The State \(South Carolina\)](#)

Honda Focus on R&D to Keep Creative Edge

Honda hopes to make up for what it lacks in sheer size - compared with industry giants like Toyota and General Motors - with forward-thinking new technology.

- [Go to Article from Reuters, via The Boston Globe](#)

iPod Integrated Into Mercedes Cars

Mercedes-Benz has good news for drivers who want MP3 with their m.p.h.

- [Go to Article from Softpedia](#)

G.M. Builds Fuel-Cell Truck for U.S. Army

The United States Army is going green - via a new hydrogen-powered Chevrolet pickup.

- [Go to Article from The Associated Press, via Newsday \(New York\)](#)

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ON TRACK: MOTOR SPORTS**Wheldon Leads Andretti Sweep of I.R.L. Race**

It is a good thing - at least for competing teams - that Andretti Green Racing only has a four-car lineup.

- [Go to Article from The Associated Press, via The New York Times](#)



Gavin Lawrence/Getty Images

Harvick Goes From Bad to Worse to First

The high-banked Bristol Motor Speedway is famous for producing wild races. True to form, Sunday's race was filled with spins, crashes and impressive come-from-behind driving.

- [Go to Article from The New York Times, by Viv Bernstein](#)
- [Wallace Making His Last Drive Into Contention \(The New York Times\)](#)

Alonso Completes Renault Hat-Trick

Despite temperatures in excess of 100 degrees, Renault driver Fernando Alonso seemed to barely break a sweat in his commanding victory at the Bahrain Grand Prix.

- [Go to Article from Reuters, via The New York Times](#)
- [Ban The Bling \(The Mirror, Britain\)](#)

Millican Starts Quest for No. 5 With Win at San Antonio

Clay Millican shows no sign of slowing down as he seeks his fifth I.H.R.A. Top Fuel championship.

- [Go to Article from Speed TV](#)

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ASSEMBLY LINE: NEWS FROM DETROIT AND OTHER MOTOR CITIES

Chief of G.M. to Lead North American Car Division

Faced with a sales and profit drought, the chairman and chief executive of General Motors, Rick Wagoner, assumed direct oversight of the company's North American operations.

- [Go to Article from The New York Times](#)
- [How Can General Motors Remake Itself? \(The New York Times\)](#)



STAN HONDA/AFP/Getty Images

DaimlerChrysler to Scale Back Mini-Car Unit

Smart cars are cute, small and easy to park. So why is the brand having such trouble finding a profitable spot in DaimlerChrysler's portfolio?

- [Go to Article from The New York Times, by Mark Landler](#)

Saab's Top Official Quits to Join Liquor Company

Debra Kelly-Ennis leaves her position as head of Saab USA for a company with products that really give people a buzz.

- [Go to Article from The Daily Oakland Press \(Michigan\)](#)
- [G.M. Names New China Head \(The Australian Financial Review\)](#)

Shifting Buyer Trends Set Back Western Carmakers in China

VW and G.M. have rushed into the Chinese market, only to find that what buyers really want are cars that cost less than \$5,000.

- [Go to Article from The New York Times, by Keith Bradsher](#)

Mitsubishi Motors Seeks Damages From Ex-Officials

In an unusual move, the company will try to collect about \$12 million from former executives who covered up manufacturing defects.

- [Go to Article from The New York Times, by Todd Zaun](#)

Daimler Sees Supply Management Mistakes

Juergen Schrempp, chief executive of DaimlerChrysler, said that the company's depending on outside suppliers was a bad policy.

- [Go to Article from Reuters, via The New York Times](#)

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MOTOR MOUTH: CAR CHAT

Last Week's Discussion Have you been to the New York International Auto Show? What do you think of the cars on display? Share your stories.

rjvallie said: "Although there is justifiable criticism that the new Charger as a 4-door besmirches its history ... it certainly would be my design choice over the current Chrysler 300C (which deserves the same 4-door criticism)."

This Week's Discussion

Democrats and Republicans, is your car making a [political statement](#)? Share your stories.

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