

# Beyond Grand Rapids

## Edmunds Inside Line picks Pontiac G8 over Dodge Charger

The Pontiac G8 is arriving in dealerships in the U.S. this month, and all of the early reviews have been glowing. One of those reviews came from a team at *Edmunds Inside Line*, which decided to compare the newest Pontiac to the Dodge Charger RT. Here is just a small part of that report that includes both an extensive written comparison and video coverage of the two vehicles being put to the test. *Edmunds Inside Line* stated:



“We flexed the muscles of these two cars on the highways and through the canyons, but ultimately we decided these two all-American bad boys really need a track to show their stuff. So we let these two Detroit tigers loose and watched them duke it out.

“The run from 0-to-60 takes a respectable 6.1 seconds in the Charger. Quarter mile is managed in 14.5 seconds at 97 miles per hour. That’s okay until the G8 has its turn. The Pontiac gets to 60 in 5.4 seconds and ripped up the quarter mile in 13.6 seconds at 105 miles per hour — a performance that almost beats the 425 horsepower Charger SRT8.

“Forget for a moment that in every performance category the G8 GT walks all over the Charger RT. Go ahead and overlook the G8’s more aggressive good looks. Just focus on this: on top of all these things, the Pontiac is cheaper with a base price of just under \$30,000. That’s almost \$1,500 less than a Charger RT. Chrysler has some very serious competition. Competition that also happens to be a raging bargain.”

## Toyota reacts to truck sales

Toyota will trim production of full-size Tundra pickup trucks as U.S. vehicle sales slow. While Tundra sales grew 66% in the first two months of 2008, total demand for full-size pickups fell 9.9% in that period.

Source: Bloomberg, March 13, 2008

## Reinventing the automobile

The automotive industry is deadly serious about reinventing the automobile. And Beth Lowery, General Motors vice-president responsible for environment, energy and safety policy, is looking to reduce our dependence on oil by developing alternative-fuel vehicles.

“Being 96% dependent on petroleum is not a good business strategy because of the volatility with respect to the price of that fuel, where you can get the oil from and the lack of control of the supply,” she said. “And all of our research and surveys show people love their personal mobility, so it’s important we bring them choice.”

By the end of this year, GM will offer eight different hybrid models worldwide and introduce 16 more in the next four years. It will soon have 25 FlexFuel cars and trucks capable of operating on E85 ethanol. Within two years it expects to launch the plug-in Chevy Volt and have a “financially competitive” emission-free hydrogen fuel-cell vehicle.

“Since the 1970s, GM has reduced smog-forming emissions from our vehicles by over 99%. New vehicles are so clean today that painting a room with one gallon of water-based latex paint will generate more smog-causing emissions than driving a GMC SUV from Toronto to Vancouver and back again.”

Source: The Vancouver Province, March 14, 2008

## Experts cut vehicle forecasts

J.D. Power and Associates cut its 2008 forecast for new vehicle sales in the U.S. by 4.8% to 14.95 million, a level last seen in 1994, and said that the sales market will weaken further in the second quarter before beginning a rebound. J.D. Power’s prior 2008 sales forecast was 15.7 million; the last time U.S. sales totaled less than 16 million vehicles was 1998.

Source: Dow Jones, March 18, 2008

## GM to introduce another small car

General Motors wants to launch a second small car in India in the next two years as it looks to capitalize on growth in emerging markets to offset any sluggishness in U.S. sales, GM’s David Reilly said. The model will not compete directly with Tata Motors’ low-cost Nano but will be cheaper than GM’s current lowest priced car in India.

General Motors, which has a 3% share of the Indian vehicle market, has a manufacturing plant in the western state of Gujarat and is building a second facility near Pune in neighboring Maharashtra state.

Source: Reuters, March 17, 2008



# AutoKnow



*General Motors Vision Statement:* GM’s vision is to be the world leader in transportation products and related services. We will earn our customers’ enthusiasm through continuous improvement driven by the integrity, teamwork and innovation of GM people.

## It Has Got to be Here Somewhere?

There are two types of people in the world: There are those who have all their important paperwork in one file, clearly labeled and ready at a moment’s notice. And then there are the people who store important paperwork in very “secure” locations and as soon as they can remember where that “secure” location is, they might be able to get their hands on a birth certificate or marriage license.

If you fall into group two and are thinking about participating in the SAP, it might be a good idea to start your hunt for those secure locations now. Depending on what option you may choose in the SAP, you might be asked to supply a copy of:

- Social Security Cards
- Birth Certificates
- Marriage Licenses
- Divorce Decrees
- Court-ordered Payment Documentation

Plus, employees might need to provide this type of information for spouses, children or other beneficiaries. So if your search might take awhile, it’s a good idea to start now.

In addition, if you can’t find this paperwork, starting now gives you time to request these documents from the necessary government agencies. In fact, some agencies allow requests to be made over the internet.



## PMN Supervisor, Support Person of the Month

Congratulations to **Jason Cook**, who was named March Supervisor of the Month by the Grand Rapids Metal Plant Professional Managers Network (PMN). Jason was given this award because “Jason is a strong leader for all of us to learn from. He is extremely knowledgeable and always willing to help out. He is the first line of support for almost any issue in the plant.” Jason, who is the second-shift Tech Support planner, represents the GM Core Value of Teamwork.



Jason Cook

Congratulations also to **Sue VanDuyn**, who was named March Support Person of the Month by the Grand Rapids Metal Plant PMN. Sue’s nomination read that she “is always ready to help when the need arises. She is instrumental in getting all filing-period vacations in the system and making sure they’re done correctly. Sue is a great example of GM’s Core Values of Integrity, Teamwork, and Individual Respect and Responsibility.” Sue is the plant manager’s administrative assistant.



Sue VanDuyn

## Consumer Reports Releases American Top Picks of '08

Consumer Reports recently released its annual American Top Picks list, and GM earned several honors. The editors wrote, in part:

"While we don't consider country of origin as a factor in our ratings for our primary Top Picks list, the piles of mail (snail and e-mail) we get leave us no doubt that many people factor 'buying American' into their decision. So, for those folks, this list looks at what domestic-branded cars are the best choices out there.

"It would be a relatively simple matter to compile this list if Top Picks were merely the highest-scoring car in each group. But to be a Top Pick, a car has to have performed well in our testing, be relatively trouble-free to own, and safe, too. Here are the other criteria to determining a Top Pick:

- We need to have reliability data for the car, and that data must show at least average or better reliability.
- Stability control must be readily available.
- If crash tested, the results have to be decent."

For the full story, <http://blogs.consumerreports.org/cars/2008/03/american-top-pi.html>.

Category	Top-scoring American Car	American Top Pick
Small Sedan	None Recommended	None
Family Sedan	Chevy Malibu LTZ V6	Ford Taurus
Upscale Sedan	Cadillac CTS	Buick Lucerne CXS
Luxury Sedan	Cadillac STS	Cadillac STS
Small SUV	Saturn Vue XR	None
Midsized SUV	Saturn Outlook XR	Saturn Outlook XR
	GMC Acadia SLT2	GMC Acadia SLT2
	Ford Taurus X	Ford Taurus X
Minivan	Chrysler Town/Country	None
Pickup Truck	Chevy Avalanche	Chevy Silverado
Fun to Drive	Chevy Corvette	None
Green Car	None Tested	None

### Free Tax Preparation

Families whose 2007 household income was \$39,783 or less can receive free tax preparation through United Way. All a person has to do is call United Way at 616-459-2255.



### Safety Corner

From a strictly measurement perspective, we cannot have more than **23** additional recordable injuries between now and the end of 2008 if we want to meet our Recordable Injury Rate stretch goal of 2.20.



### Near Misses in Aviation

Because of near miss observations and other technological improvements, the rate of fatal accidents in the U.S. aviation industry has dropped about 65%, to one fatal accident in about 4.5 million departures, from one in nearly 2 million in 1997.

"It's not one thing. It's a series of small things," says John Cox, who was an Airline Pilots Association safety representative for 20 years. Many of those small things were minor problems observed in everyday operations, he said, then counted, scrutinized and eliminated before they caused an accident.

### Know Safety, No Accidents

	2007	Through 3/27/08
First-aid Injuries	454	107
Recordable Injuries	65	12
Lost Work Days	6	0
Near Misses Reported	232	94

### Child Care Office: Summer Fun!

Summer Guides will be available late April and May to help parents and grandparents learn about summer camps and other activities for youth during the summer. You can receive a paper copy of the guide when you visit the on-site office or you can request a guide be emailed to you that will allow you to link to camps and the other activities websites for more information. Visit the office now to sign up for the Summer Guide!

# Around Grand Rapids

## Take a Walk for March of Dimes

This year's March for Babies walk will begin at 9:00 a.m. Saturday, April 26, at Foremost Insurance. Our goal is to sign up 50 GRMP employees to walk at the annual event.

If you would like to be part of a Grand Rapids Metal Plant team and sign up to walk, then please call one of our co-champions, **Larry Melville** (3112) or **Mike Vincent** (3188). If you can't walk, please support those who do by pledging whatever you can. We'd like to quadruple last year's total of \$760.



### March of Dimes has touched your life if:

- Your baby received a vaccine to prevent polio
- Your baby received a critical newborn screening to check for potentially dangerous but treatable conditions
- You took folic acid before and during pregnancy to prevent birth defects of the brain and spinal cord
- You had a premature baby who spent time in a neonatal intensive care unit or was treated with surfactant therapy, a lifesaving treatment developed with March of Dimes research grants
- You had a healthy baby due in part to good prenatal care at home and from your doctor

### Dear GRMP Employees,

I would like to thank all the employees, retirees, and spouses who have taken classes at the Learning Center. I was fortunate to be able to meet and help many wonderful people over the last eight years. Thank you for the beautiful gift basket, the kind words and well wishes these last couple of weeks. It seems there are few people these days who can truly say they love their job. I was a lucky one for many years, but as they say, all good things must come to an end. I do still have a job with Godwin, and I am looking forward to my new adventure.

Thank you again.

Amy Singer

### UAW-GM QN Suggestion Corner

	03/08/08-03/17/08	YTD
*Awards Paid:	12	188
\$ Paid Out:	\$ 1,033.99	\$100,980.49
Savings to GM:	\$ 0.00	\$602,480.59
<b>Tangible Awards Paid Last Week:</b>		
• There were no tangible awards during this two-week period.		
*Tangible and intangible awards		

### Grand Rapids Metal Center

Reminder  
GM-GMS Calibration  
begins  
May 12, 2008  
Are you and your team prepared?

23 more days!

### Personnel Changes

In our last *AutoKnow* we welcomed **Scot Nemecek** to the Grand Rapids Metal Plant. Scot has transferred here from Lansing Delta Township, where he was superintendent of general assembly. Now that we have a photo of Scot, who is our second-shift north press superintendent, you can put a



face with the name.

Also, please extend congratulations to **Neil Deskevich**, production supervisor in north press. Neil will transfer to Lordstown Assembly, effective April 7, where he will work in the body shop in the east plant.

