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THE BLOG

Requiem for a Hummer

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Dan Becker and James Gerstenzang

Director and Editorial Director of the Safe Climate Campain, respectively

Dearly beloved, we are gathered here to bid farewell to a giant, one whose demise has been recorded around the world; such was the impact of this icon of the interstates. One of massive strength, it left behind a vast mark — some would say gash — on our planet.

General Motors' Hummer has died. But it will continue to spew its fumes — and spread global warmth — for years to come.

The Hummer was born in 1992, the offspring of an M1A1 Abrams tank and, it is rumored, Beelzebub.

Too big for its garage, it was raised in a driveway in Kokomo, Indiana. Eventually, it moved to the wide-open spaces of Scarsdale, N.Y. But where ever it wandered, it was misunderstood, got no respect — and, often, not enough gas.

The Hummer did what most cars do, but oh so much more. It drove through big puddles. It dropped kids at school. And like the true truck it was, it hauled lattes home from Starbucks.

It had but five seats, just like the Prius. For all its hulk and bulk, it carried a modest trunk. Still, the Hummer managed to generate conflict even among the most conflict-averse. We remember the time an auto reporter called to say he was taking the Hummer for a test drive. He looked down at the car stopped next to him at a red light. There sat five nuns. Each blessed him — with a one-finger wave.

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Over its lifetime, the Hummer's greatest success was excess: Excess gas consumption — 10 miles per gallon — and excess pollution.

Some people hated the Hummer, but at heart it was just a big garbage truck that dumped into the sky.

The Hummer will be missed, particularly by the world's oil cartels that benefited from Hummer's success and became its close drinking buddies.

Its passing prompted King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia and President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad of Iran to declare budget emergencies.

Indeed, many petro tyrants recalled their late nights together when a well-lubricated Hummer would regale them with its adventures, like the time it emitted more carbon dioxide in one day than the entire nation of Slovenia.

The Hummer was predeceased by a step-brother, the Ford Excursion, affectionately known as the Ford Valdez. Survivors include Chevy Suburban, Ford Super Duty Pickup, Dodge Ram, Nissan Armada and Arnold Schwarzenegger.

Services will be held in Federal Bankruptcy Court.

Dan Becker is executive director of the Safe Climate Campaign, which advocates strong measures to curb global warming. James Gerstenzang, who formerly covered the White House and the environment for the Los Angeles Times, is the campaign's editorial director. A version of this eulogy was delivered on the public radio program Living on Earth.

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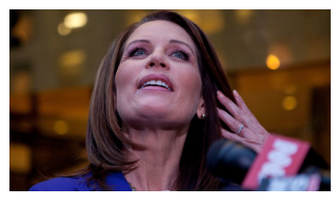

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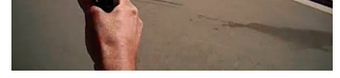

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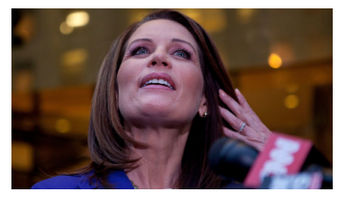

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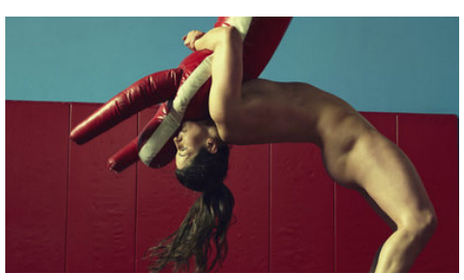

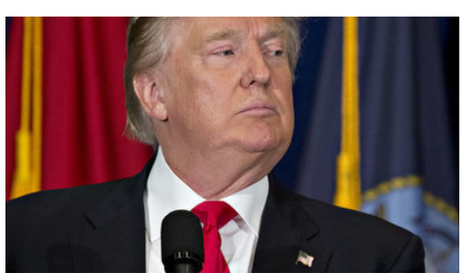

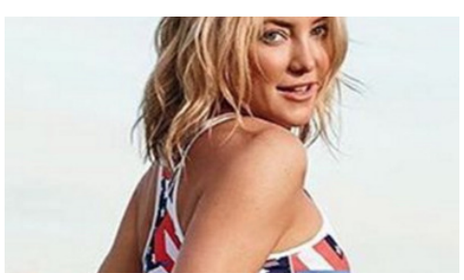

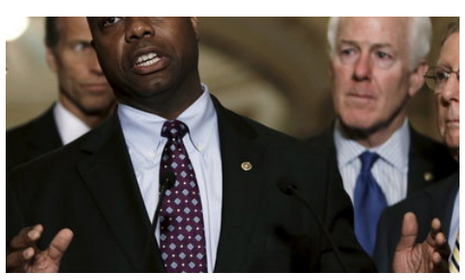

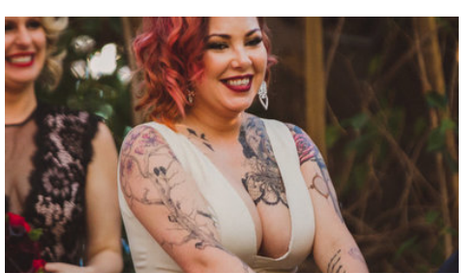

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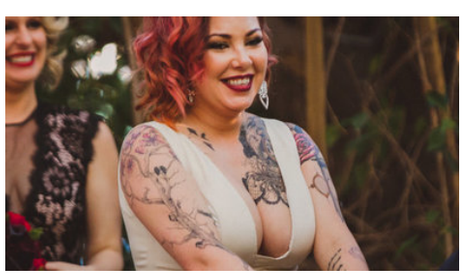

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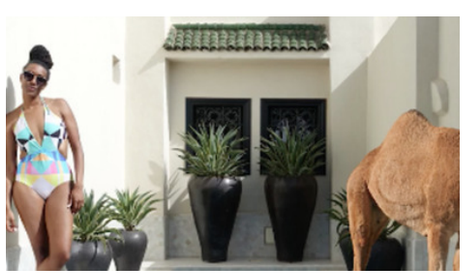

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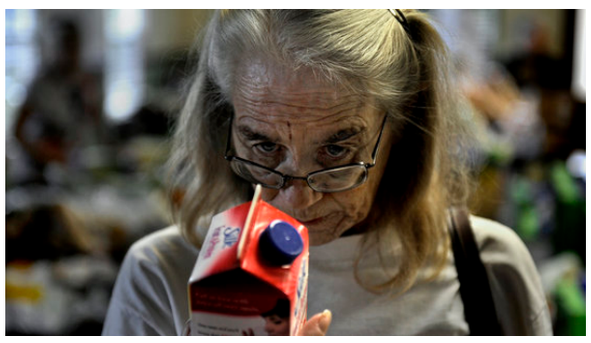

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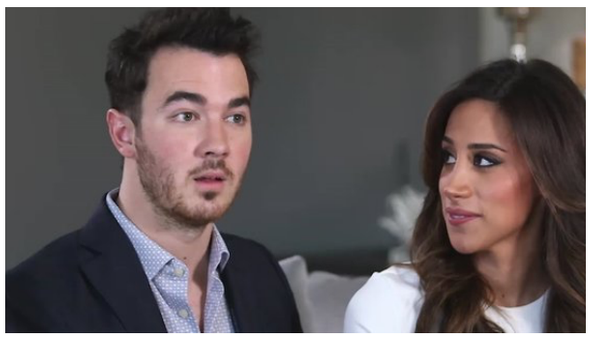

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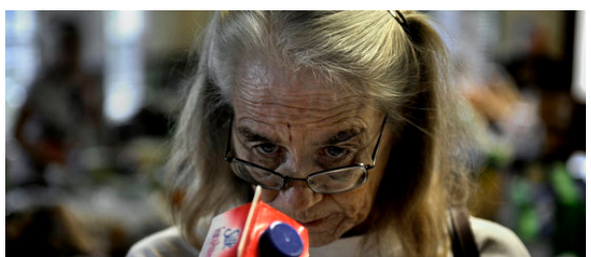

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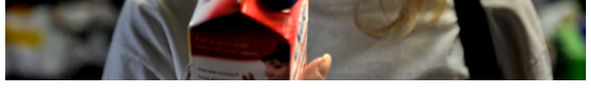

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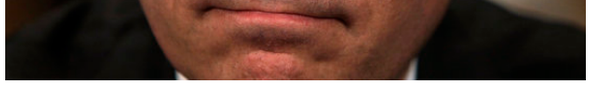

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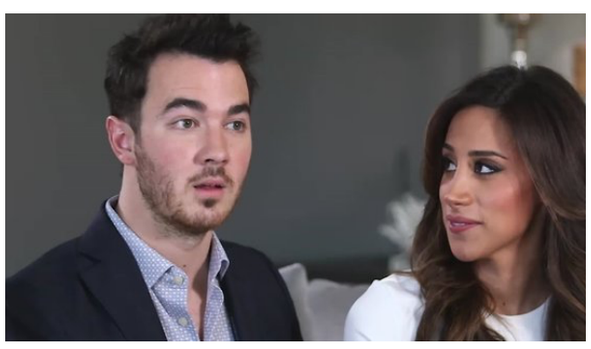

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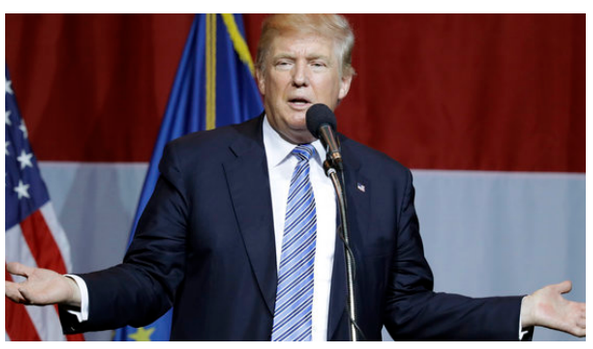

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