

'67

**A 4-door Thunderbird,
Some Mustang-Type Sporty Cars,
And a Lot of Face-Lifting**

BY WAYNE THOMS

WHAT'S COMING FOR '67?

STEP RIGHT UP folks, for the greatest show on earth. They're all new, all beautiful, and waiting for your pleasure. Just come on in and take a look; we know you'll be delighted."

In a few more weeks that line, or a similar spiel meaning the same thing, will be the order of the day as TV's gravel-voiced fender-pounders urge you in to take a closer look at the '67s. That's right—1967 automobiles are almost upon us, in spite of the fact that

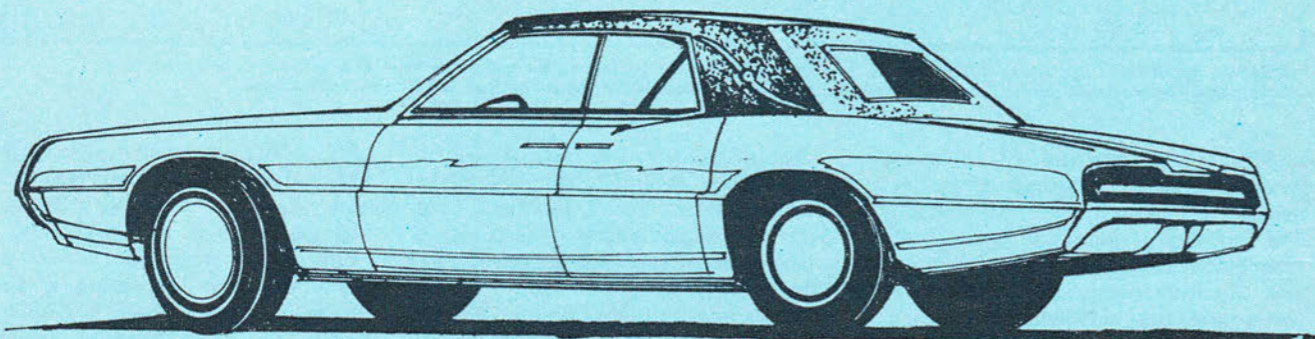
some of us have hardly had time to digest the crop of '66 models.

The cars to come are a mixed bag. There are a couple of new sport-oriented models, hoping to catch the same brass ring that Mustang snatched on its first whirl, and there is a good deal of sheet metal face-lifting that will be passed off as "all-new." There are, as usual, some genuinely all-new machines, and a few (also as usual) with virtually no changes. Of some interest,

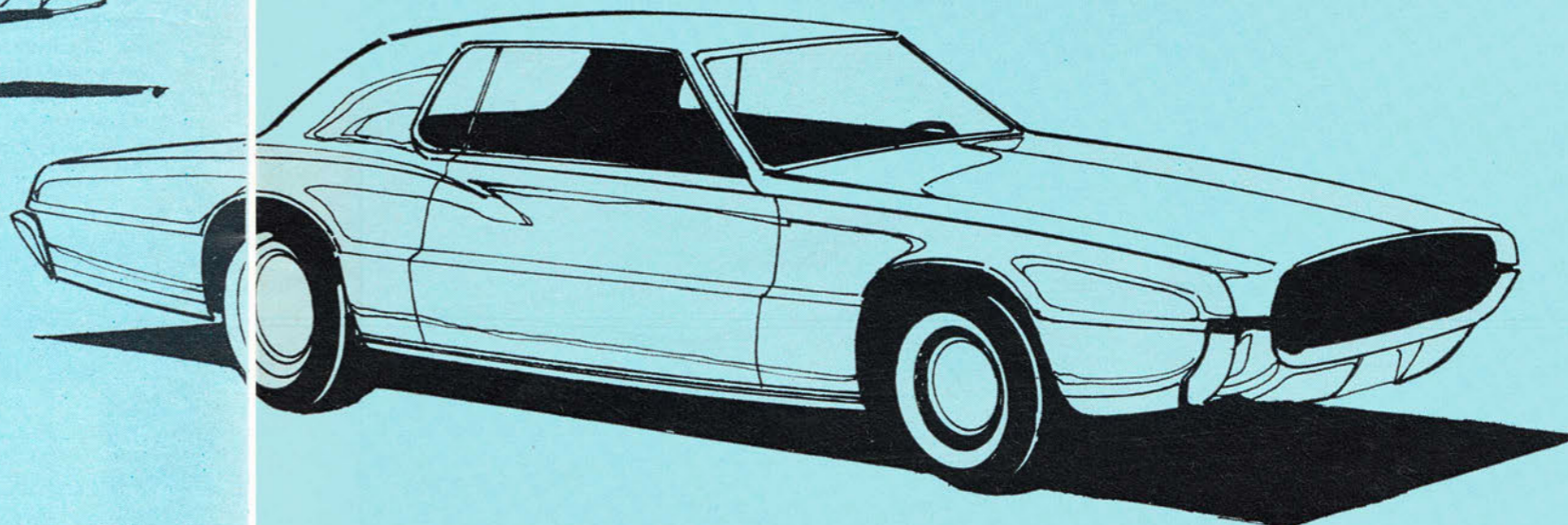
the first ripples of safety features from the muddy waters of the Washington hearings will be promoted this year. These are largely ideas which could be incorporated after designs were fairly well locked in.

All in all, it will be a year much like many others—exciting for the first few weeks of spotting new models on the road or, better still, taking delivery of one. Then, as the populace grows jaded with the latest body shapes, there will

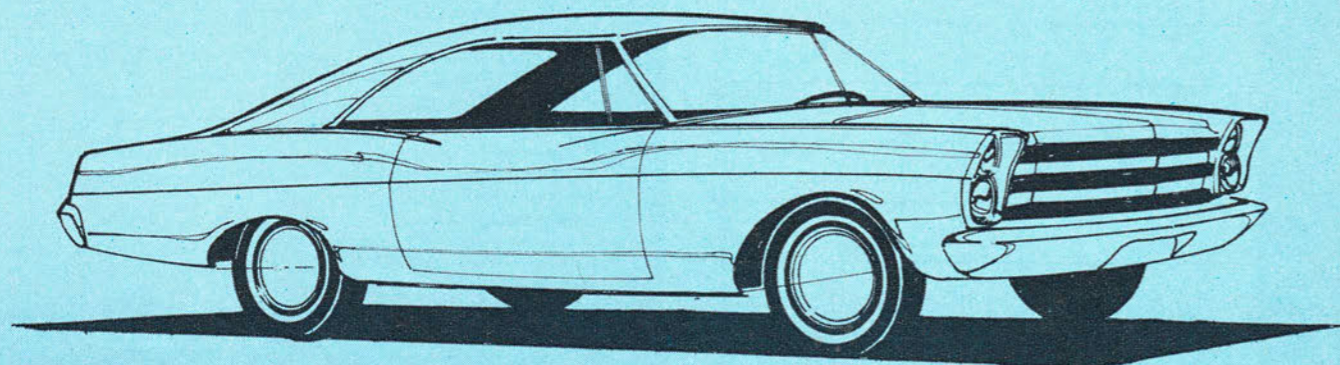
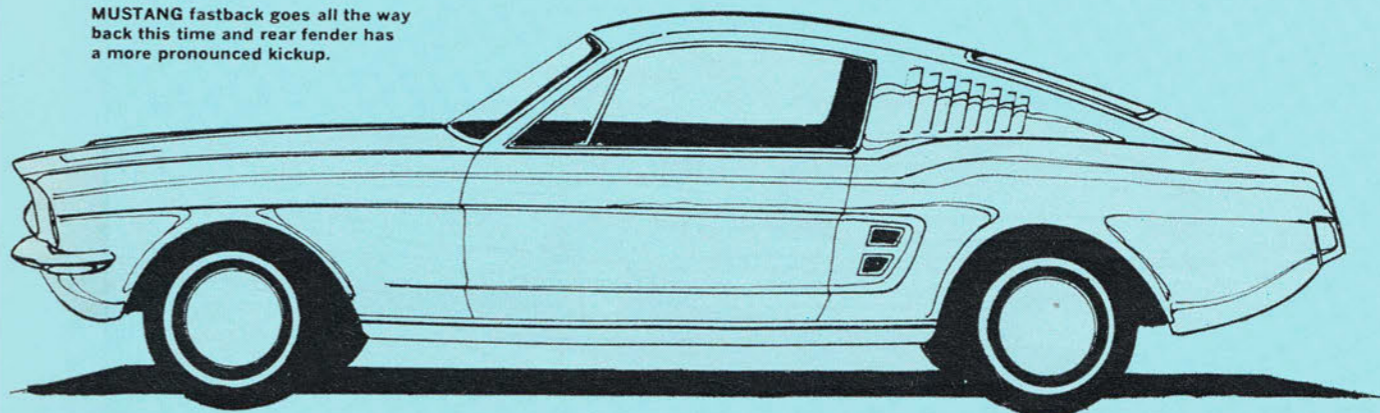
ILLUSTRATIONS BY GENE GARFINKLE



DRASTICALLY restyled Thunderbird will have perimeter frame, new 4-door body (above) and an even larger wall-to-wall taillight.

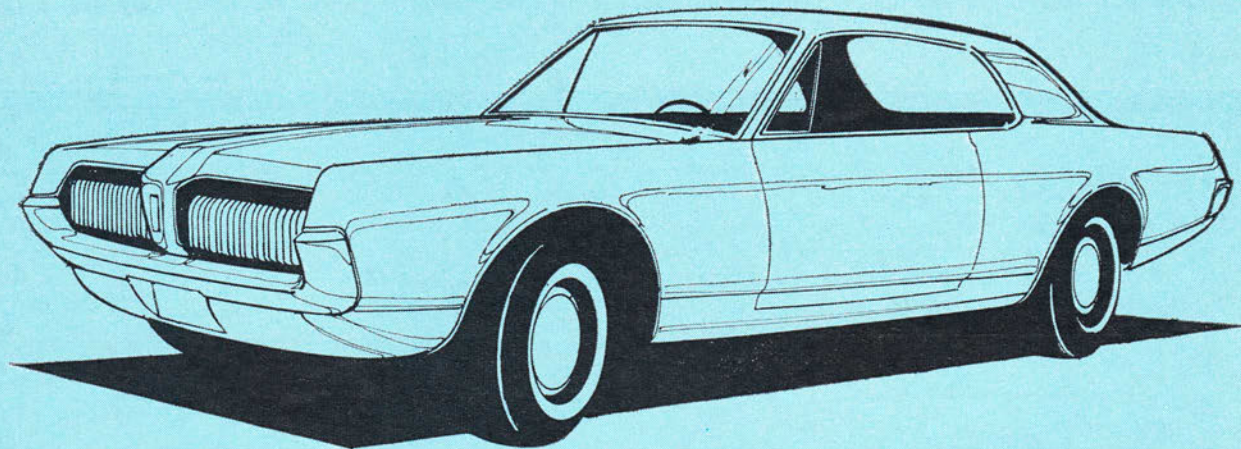


MUSTANG fastback goes all the way back this time and rear fender has a more pronounced kickup.

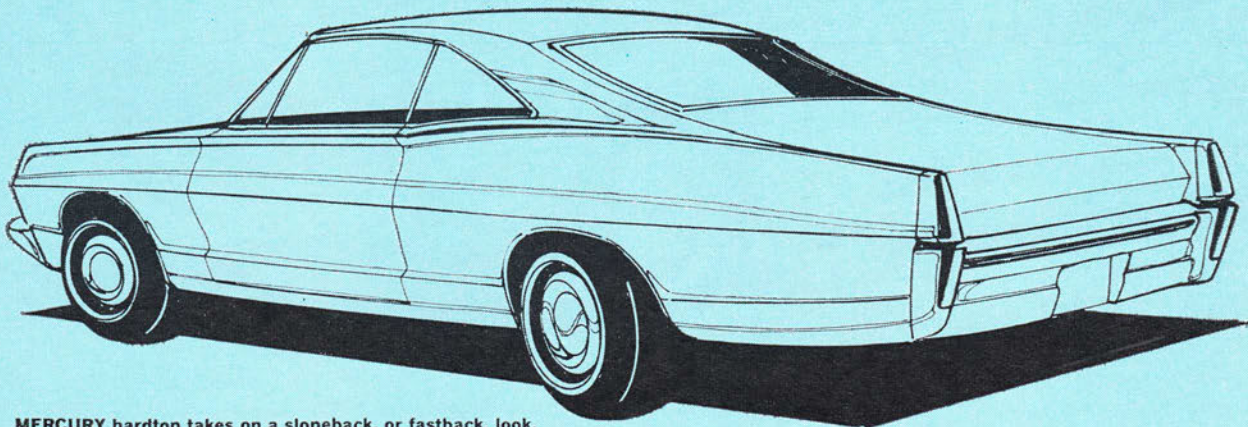


FORD FAIRLANE for '67 will have few changes other than grille, but will have a 427-cu. in. engine option available.

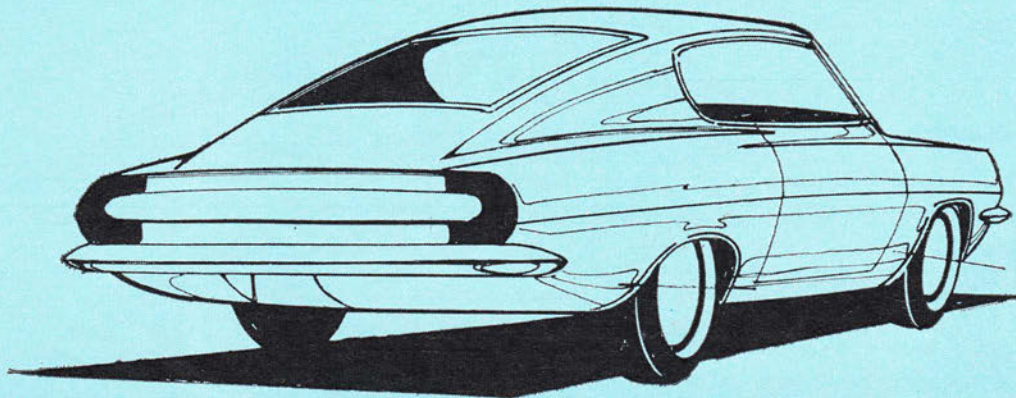
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COUGAR will be Lincoln-Mercury's entry in the personal car sweepstakes, will have a 390-cu. in. engine as an option.



MERCURY hardtop takes on a slopeback, or fastback, look. Front end will have a definite resemblance to Lincoln.



BARRACUDA has had a considerable change for '67. Line will be expanded to three models with notchback and convertible.

come the faint wonderings of how *next* year's cars will be. But before we go that far, here is what some of the '67s will be:

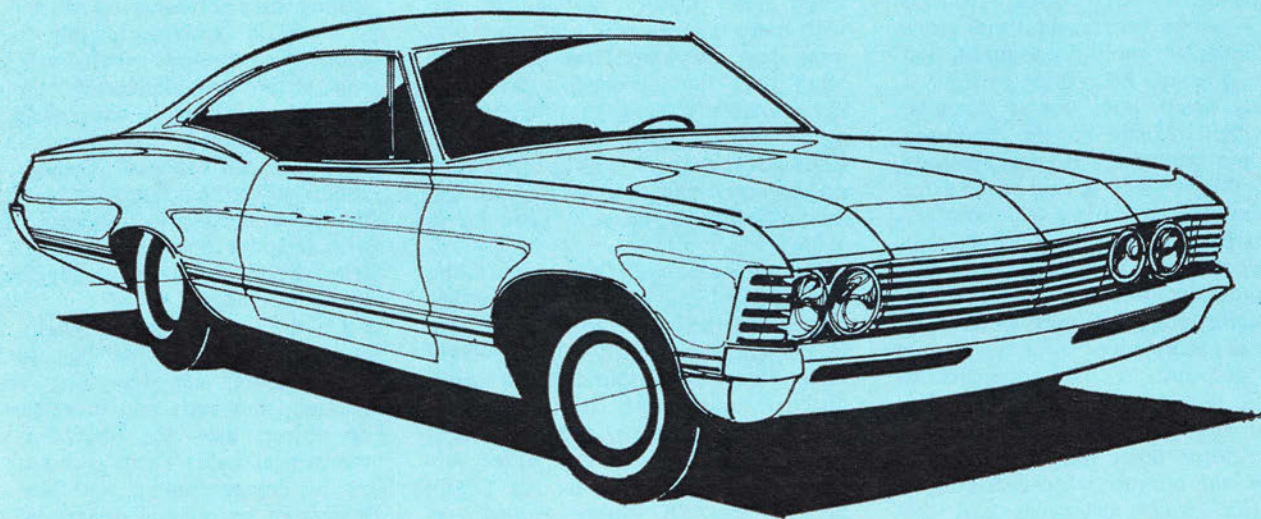
FORD MOTOR CO.—for the big Fords, a new look top and bottom will be mixed with some of 1966. It can't be said that it's all-new sheet metal, because the front end, particularly the headlight treatment, has only small changes. However, the grille carries a

slight Cadillac flavor. The roofline on the fastback Galaxie is faster than ever, flows right back to the tail, virtually eliminating the notch at the base of the rear window. Taillamps are vertical, fitted near the ends of the rear fenders, which are sharply ridged on the upper edge, as are the front fenders. The lines fade away in the doors.

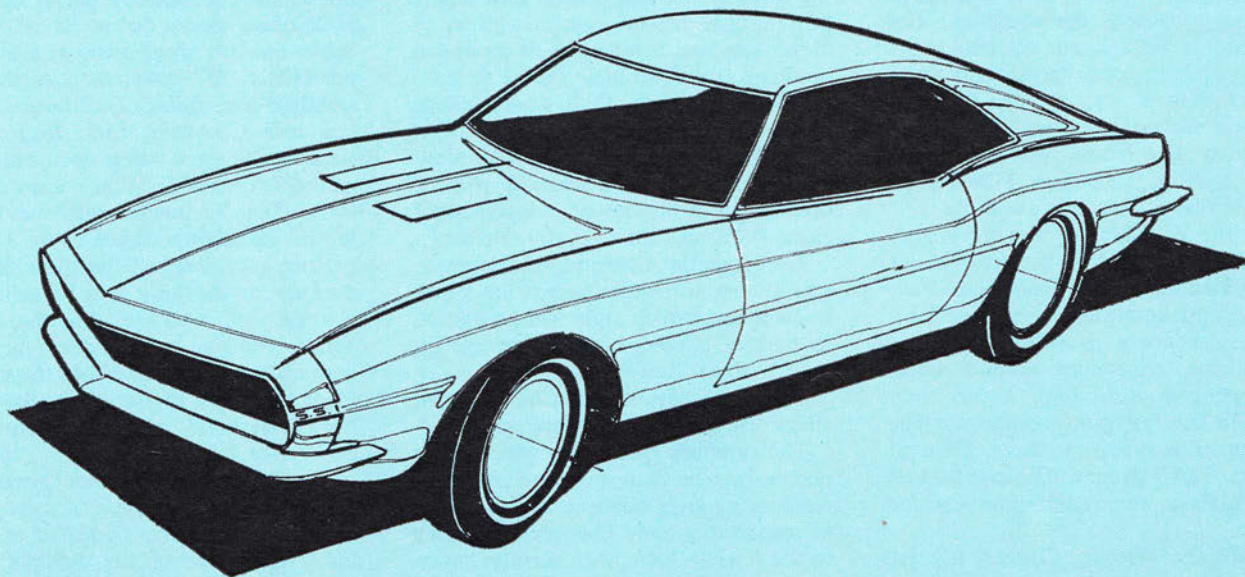
For the Fairlane there will be almost no changes, except for fresh grille inser's, molding and side trim. The 427

engine will be offered, making the car a perfect stoplight draggin' wagon. A look at the Falcon reveals similar lack of appearance change, but the 427 is not offered.

Mustang's idea of meeting new competition, at least in the GT fastback version, is a higher rear fender line that gives the illusion of a lower roof. The hood has a more pronounced downward slope leading into a larger grille opening. Headlights are set well



CHEVROLET goes Riviera with turning lamps concealed behind those fender-end grilles, and swooping fender and rooflines.



NEWEST member of the Chevrolet family will be the "Panther." Distinctively styled, it's slightly larger than Mustang.

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back, with driving lights at the ends of a single horizontal grille bar. Two hood scoops near the front open toward the rear. The vent louvers in lieu of rear quarter-windows remain. At the rear is a concave area covered with chromium strips that partially conceal the lights. This chromium may have to go before announcement because, as a dust collector, it cuts taillight brilliance.

Mustang interiors typify Ford's safety package theme—large "pods"—padded eyebrows over instruments and glove box, similar but more pronounced than current practice. Everything in sight is padded—wheel hub, center console, the works! Much of the anodized aluminum brightwork is gone, replaced with padding which is said to be safer and non-reflective. It's a bit more expensive to do it this way, a fact that will be reflected in price tags.

Thunderbird manages to come up with something that may find fairly universal acceptance from a styling point of view. A low silhouette is achieved with hood and deck tapering toward the bumpers at both ends. Fender edges taper into, and become part of, the bumpers. Most striking is the grille, which protrudes past the fenders and bumper, features an oval shape with concave eggcrate insert. A close examination shows there's a Ferrari influence. Wheel wells are flared outward to accent the openings. The rear end is once again all one enormous red light, only larger and more striking than it was in '66. Quarter-windows are small, canted and shaped somewhat like those of this year's Cadillac. And, the biggest T'Bird news of all is that a 4-door is available.

For the '67 Mercury would you believe a Mack Truck grille? How about a Continental-flavored front end? Very much Continental, as a matter of fact. Body sides are a profusion of sculptured lines, chromium around wheel well openings and along lower body sides. In the fastback roofline models, the top line appears more General Motors than Mercury. The crystal ball doesn't show any radical changes for Comet.

As for the Mercury Cougar, it's not a bad exercise in the art of styling. And, with a big V-8 aboard, it should offer ample performance. It has Continental-type front fenders with blade-edge tops front to rear, rear quarter-windows and panels much like Cadillac, plus clean side treatment. The

grille, divided in the center, carries a number of vertical bars that flip back to reveal headlights. At the after end, the trim is designed to match the grille. It is a slightly larger car than the Mustang, and should be a modest seller, perhaps a pace ahead of Dodge's Charger.

Speaking of the Continental, it won't appear much different on the outside, except for very minor grille, taillight and trim alterations. Underneath there is a perimeter frame; another unit construction car bites the dust.

GENERAL MOTORS—Don't look for the V-12 out of Cadillac, a rumor which was very hot, but do look for front-wheel drive in the Eldorado series. It will be on the Toronado/Riviera body shell (factory designation: E), with more rear window notchback and more rear overhang, less front overhang than the Toronado, the front-drive system it uses. In other words, more conventional, more dignified. Cadillac customers willing to cough up the near-\$8000 price don't want too much flash. Maybe next year for a V-16.

Hottest news out of Chevrolet is the Panther, which may have another name, but there will be no mistaking it, no matter what it's called. Slightly larger than a Mustang, it's a semi-fastback coupe, with clean but graceful fenders and sides, and a squared-off rear end. There will be three versions: The plain Panther; RS (Rally Series); and SS (Super Series). As nearly as can be forecast, the primary variation will be exposed headlights on the basic model and flip-out lamps on the others. The entire front end tapers into a neat plastic eggcrate grille. A chromium ring is set off with a painted nose cap (they call it a "racing stripe") on the SS. Also, the SS has twin scoops on the hood, which are eliminated on the RS and presumably on the standard model. Various engines will be offered, up to the hottest, which should cause it to cut into Corvette territory.

The friendly Corvette, incidentally, gets almost no change except for a new hood scoop, which style will be offered as part of a fancy option package on regular-sized Chevrolets.

Corvair, Chevelle and Chevy II can effectively be ignored as new models.

The ordinary Chevrolet, which more people bought than anything last year, receives enough changes to qualify it as respectably new. The front end goes to the Riviera look, with turning lamps concealed behind grilles in the front fender ends. The top is virtually a carbon of the Riviera, except for the trim at the bottom of the rear window; in this case, the deck lid goes all the way to the glass. Fenders have the same general shape, but are different

from last year's by virtue of a sharp fin along their upper edges front and rear. Taillights are set, and the deck lid flows smoothly, into the bumper. The hood has a trio of fins which more or less match those atop the front fenders. Frankly, for a blend of ideas already presented elsewhere, it presents a good appearance.

How about a Chevrolet high style pickup in the standard-size Chevy series? That's what is coming. The basic outline is conventional, but it features wheel openings contoured as per tire shape and accented with chromium trim; a simple grille; headlights in square bezels; and a squared-edge, Cadillac-style hood. On the inside there are bucket seats with a center foam bolster so that the utility of seating three abreast is not lost.

There is nothing terribly big at Buick. The Skylark gets a fresh grille, with square headlight bezels that indicate the day is close when we'll have square headlights—as soon as a few state laws are changed. A single horizontal grille bar intersects a vertical bar in a deep grille opening. Other trim includes hood scoops on a flattened hood and false waste gates on the front fenders.

On the standard series Buicks, fresh sheet metal below the belt line includes more side sculpture, slightly blunter front ends and more fastback up above; tops are Riviera-style. A mechanical note: There is a new 430-cu. in. engine coming, with new castings from an existing design. What of the Riviera? Very small alterations are made to grille and taillamps.

Generally, no major changes occur at Oldsmobile, except for a different grille of no special distinction. Also, the below-the-belt sheet metal is altered as per GM's "B" body, the one that fits standard-size Buick, Oldsmobile, Pontiac and Chevrolet cars. Biggest noticeable change is wheel openings flared as the Toronado for that "inspired by" look. The Toronado gets the indent for the headlamps taken away. On the performance side will be the Cold Air package or maybe it will be called the Forced Air package, on the 4-4-2. There will be a high-riser manifold and ambient air ducted into the engine, from the front of the car to keep the hot underhood air away from the carburetor intake.

Pontiac styling changes amount to face-lifting, but present a new look, especially at the front end where headlights disappear in the daylight, concealed by GM's popular retracting system. The grille is split, the nose is pointed and taillights wrap around. The body side is alive with sculpture and planes. A straight line runs nose to tail, a lower line tapers from the front door to the rear wheel opening

and the rear fender bulges. It's good, but the rest of the GM line is catching up with the refreshing styling that gave Pontiac a boost a few years ago. Pontiac is a cinch to produce a '67½ model, based on the Panther sporty car. The division has been showing a coupe called the Banshee, a reasonably accurate version of how the production model will appear.

AMERICAN MOTORS—Rumbles from within have it that some major restyling is ready for market, and from smiles of anticipation on the faces of company executives, it must be fairly interesting. The simple fact is that the crystal ball is cloudy on that side of the auto picture. We'll just have to wait and be surprised.

CHRYSLER CORP.—There are some big and not-so-big changes here. The full-sized Chryslers, which share the basic body shell with Plymouth Fury and Dodge Polara, get new sheet metal. The clever part is the way in

which stylists add a piece here, take one off there, change a fender and come up with a stable of different cars—all from the same tooling. Be that as it may, the Chrysler will favor GM's looks as they relate to Buick, Oldsmobile and Pontiac. A pointed Pontiac nose, roofline extending well beyond the rear window, and more bulge, plus kick-up in the rear fenders, will be part of the package.

One look at the Barracuda shows that it has undergone quite a change. For one thing, there will be three versions—fastback, notchback and convertible. The fastback has a smaller rear window than the current model, while the notch-roof model (it may be a '67½) employs a rear window so concave that it would appear to be a good bet for extreme distortion. The grille is quite different from '66—a double cavity; the front fenders come to a sharp leading edge, Continental style; and the rear quarter-window treatment is more like the Dodge Charger. The front fender fades away

into the quarter panel, and the quarter panel is chopped off abruptly at the end of the car, where a concave tail section encloses taillights and trim material. The "S" offers hood vents.

The Valiant does not share styling honors with the Barracuda. Instead Valiant and Dart, with whom it does share a body shell, get greatest restyling treatment—a softer line throughout. Very little change comes in the intermediate-size, the Plymouth Belvedere class.

The Imperial goes into a big switch, adds a low-priced model on the Chrysler body shell. One source has it going to unit construction, all models to share the Chrysler exterior sheet metal. However it emerges, the effect is more up to date, sort of Cadillacish in rear deck and hood.

There it is—a teaser of what's coming from mysterious Detroit this fall—the 1967 cars. There won't be any fewer models than before, which makes the selection large enough to offer something for just about any taste. ■

SAFETY FOR '67

The Buyer Can Expect Add-on Items And a \$150 Price Boost

BY GENE BOOTH

NOW THAT THE initial furor has calmed, perhaps rational dialogue can be conducted on the inherent safety of the American passenger automobile. The 9-month confrontation between science and the safety crusaders during the past legislative season succeeded only in creating massive confusion among Americans about the role of the automobile in highway fatalities. Strident voices submerged realistic appraisal of the problem, so a clarification is in order to show the American motorist just where he stands.

The purchaser of a 1967 automobile can expect to pay an average of \$50 more for the car than a comparable '66, according to *CAR LIFE* calculations. When 1968 models emerge, the tab will be \$150 more. With one exception, this is the cost of design changes which, though of dubious safety value, have been dictated by the critics and their legislative sponsors. The exception is inclusion of exhaust emission

control devices, averaging \$50 in cost, which will be required nationwide in 1968 as protection against what is considered a health hazard.

Though cost responsibility here lies in Washington rather than Detroit, legislators tend to sweep this under the rug by asking if the car buyer can put a price on his safety. But just what sort of safety is the buyer going to get for his money? For 1967 he is to get 16 of the 17 items required by General Services Administration for publicly purchased cars; another nine GSA requirements and tougher standards for several of the original items are proposed for 1968.

THE '67 STANDARDS call for safety door latches and hinges, seat belt anchorages front and rear (and for shoulder belts in front), padded dash and visors, 4-way emergency signal flashers, safety glass, standard automatic transmission gear quadrant

(PRNDL), multi-speed electric windshield wipers and washers, glare reducing surface on instrument panel and windshield wiper arms, smog reduction device, safety tires and rims, backup lights, outside rearview mirrors —most of which already are on '66 ▶



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