

YOUNG: Well now, it is with deep emotion that we note the passing of a true giant in the automotive field. Dan Becker has this appreciation:

[MUSIC: Ray Davies "Funeral March" from Wurlitzer And Church Organ Music (Cavendish Music 2009)]

BECKER: Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to bid farewell to a legend, one whose demise has been recorded around the world; such was the impact of this icon. 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 throughout its life, 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. I 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.

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 – especially by the world's oil cartels who benefited from Hummer's success and became its close drinking buddies. Many petro-tyrants recall their late nights together when a well-lubricated Hummer would regale them with his adventures, like the time he emitted more carbon dioxide in a day than the entire nation of Slovenia.

The Hummer was predeceased by 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.

YOUNG: Commentary from the Safe Climate Campaign's Dan Becker.

[FUNERAL PIPE ORGAN]