

Buick Verano Trumps Competition With Appearance on National TV

DETROIT – Buick Verano sales continue to grow quickly three months into its public life. On Sunday, March 11, the new luxury sedan got the “Celebrity Apprentice” treatment when it was the subject of teams competing to create a consumer launch event.

When the NBC-TV episode ended, host Donald Trump famously yelled “You’re fired!” to the celebrity who contributed the least to his or her team.

Viewers at home will be able to “co-view” the episode through a Celebrity Apprentice app available in Apple and Android stores. The app uses sound activation technology to hear the television and guide the viewer along in real time with the show, asking questions and offering special features along the way.

Downloading the app allows viewers to enter a sweepstakes to win a 2012 Verano,

along with two tickets to the live finale of Celebrity Apprentice in New York City, complete with two first-class airline tickets, a two-night stay in a luxury hotel, and other perks. More information can be found at Buick.com.

During the show, Buick also debuted two new 30-second TV spots showcasing Verano’s advanced features. “Tour Bus” focuses on the IntelliLink infotainment system, while “Quiet World” highlights QuietTuning technology. Each is available for viewing online.

The first commercial, “Tour Bus,” will feature indie rock band Neon Trees. A free song from the band will be available for download through the Celebrity Apprentice app during the show or on the Buick Facebook page after the episode.

Verano sales in February were 1,688 units compared to 265 in December, its first full

month on sale. At times, more than one in two buyers have come from outside General Motors to buy the car.

USA Today recently called Verano “a compact with big car hush.” and “came away impressed on all counts.” In January, Verano topped an AutoTrader.com list of vehicles with the largest month-over-month increase in reader interest.

“Already, Verano is building a strong fan base among media and consumers alike,” said Brian Sweeney, U.S. vice president of Buick and GMC Sales and Service. “Early sales momentum shows the desire for Buick’s luxury content and quality in a smaller vehicle.”

LaCrosse, Buick’s top-selling model in February, posted a year-over-year retail sales gain of 24.9 percent. Interest in the eAssist model, which consistently outsells hybrid competitors from Lincoln, Infiniti,



One of two new Buick Verano TV commercials is called “Tour Bus,” a 30-second spot that highlights Verano’s IntelliLink infotainment system. The GM car is featured on NBC’s “Celebrity Apprentice.”

and Lexus, continues to grow. A midsize luxury sedan that doesn’t sacrifice space to

achieve 36 highway mpg, the eAssist model represents about 25 percent of LaCrosse sales.

“Celebrity Apprentice” continues to be one of NBC’s top-rated entertainment programs.

GM VP Ed Welburn Is Honorary Chair Of 2012 EyesOn Design Car Gathering

by Gerald Scott News Dept.

Although the calendar says it is still officially winter these days, the good folks who organize the annual EyesOn Design car show in June are going gangbusters, already now putting together the 25th anniversary car show.

That’s right, hard to believe, but it’s already the 25th anniversary of the annual car show organized and supported since 1987 by the design staffs of the Big Three automakers.

The show is scheduled for Father’s Day, Sunday, June 17, at the Edsel & Eleanor Ford House in Grosse Pointe Shores. The organizing entity around the show is the Detroit Institute of Ophthalmology (DIO), which uses admissions and other fees associated with EyesOn as the charity’s principal fundraiser.

The occasion of the 25th anniversary provides an excellent opportunity to celebrate the rare, significant, dramatic and iconic designs

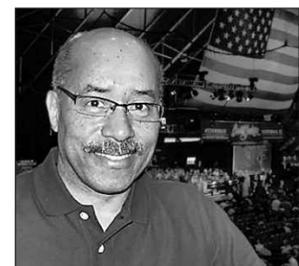
of the past, present and future that have evolved the automobile from simple transportation to rolling sculptural objects of desire.

The design staffs of the Big Three support all of the dinners and exhibitions associated with EyesOn Design and for the 25th anniversary year, it was announced last week that the Honorary Chairman would be Ed Welburn, Global Vice President, Design, General Motors.

Also, the General Chairman this year will be Frank Valdez and the Vice Chairman is Robert Grosscup. The Vehicle Selection Committee Chairman is Werner Meier.

Here is the main schedule of EyesOn related events held during Father’s Day weekend in June:

- Press Preview Day – June 12 at the Edsel Ford House;
- Eve of the Eyes – June 14 at Lawrence Tech University in Southfield;
- Vision Honored – June 15 at the Grosse Pointe Yacht Club;
- EyesOn Design / Garage



The Eyes on Design car show will be celebrating its 25th anniversary in June. It was announced that Ed Welburn, Global-VP, Design, General Motors, will be the 2012 Honorary Chair of the annual event.

Crawl and Tour – June 16 at Stahl’s Automotive Foundation in Chesterfield Twp.;

• EyesOn Design Auto Exhibition – all day Sunday, June 17, Edsel Ford House.

Also, the Lifetime Design Achievement Award will be given out to Chris Bangle of Bangle Associates and retired Global VP of Design for BMW.

The 2012 Poster Artist / Subject is Tom Hale and a 1941 Lincoln.

Chrysler Hosts ‘Heavy Metal’ Autos

by Jennifer Knightstep Special Writer

Whether they favor carefully restored classics or custom street rods, car collectors have one thing in common – they all think their vehicle is museum-worthy.

In some cases, the Walter P. Chrysler Museum agrees, and until the end of April, two of these treasured vehicles, both classic Dodge Vipers, are on display at the Museum in one installment of a rotating Collector’s Curb exhibit called “Heavy Metal.”

The pair of Vipers is on loan to the Museum from local owners, Tom Abrams of Northville and Sandy and Lori Emerling of Troy. From afar, the Vipers look very similar, but a closer look reveals the differences in the vehicles themselves, and their stories. Abrams’ Viper is a 1998 GTS-R in pristine condition, with a handful of miles on it.

It’s a gorgeous vehicle, one to be admired from a distance, celebrated at displays and exhibits like this one. The Emerlings’ 1996 GTS paired with it is just as beautiful, but it’s driven often and enjoyed hands-on by its owners, and is displayed with a vast array of the Emerlings’ Viper memorabilia, culled from a much larger collection.

Together, the Vipers are a formidable pair, their muscular lines inspiring the exhibit’s name, “Heavy Metal.” The narrowly focused exhibit runs until the end of April.

The Chrysler Museum’s Collector’s Curb series exhibits won’t end once the Vipers have left the building, though.

Beginning May 1 and running through June 24, a 1941 Plymouth Pick-up and 1979 Midnight Express will be featured in a Collector’s Curb “Tricked Out Trucks” display.

Three other Collector’s Curb exhibits are planned to



PHOTO: JENNIFER KNIGHTSTEP

Tom Abrams’ 1998 Dodge Viper is displayed at the Walter P. Chrysler Museum’s Collector’s Curb as part of the “Heavy Metal” auto exhibit until the end of April.

run through the end of the year, each featuring a pair of locally-owned vehicles on a theme, ranging from “Mighty Mopars” to “Dodge – Classics and Moderns.”

“We like the Collector’s Curb because it’s another way for people to enjoy the Museum,” says Executive Director James Worton.

“The private collectors and their car clubs are excited to share their vehicles, and the people who visit the Museum like the variety.”

The Collector’s Curb series is in its second year, and Worton and his Collections Manager, Ashley Ray, predict it will continue for years to come. The specific displays are planned in advance, the vehicles selected by a volunteer committee that includes members of local car clubs.

The challenges of displaying the various privately-owned vehicles are numerous, but Ray enjoys them. “When we were bringing in the Imperials for our ‘Imperial Aspirations’ exhibit, we had only inches left in our elevator,” Ray explains.

The care she and her staff

take with the vehicles is evident, and the displays themselves are simple, allowing the cars to shine.

Mitch Ryder, B-52s to Perform At 2012 Belle Isle Grand Prix

DETROIT – An exciting blend of Motor City rock, good-time party music and one of country music’s most beloved stars highlights the entertainment lineup for the 2012 Chevrolet Detroit Belle Grand Prix (CDBIGP).

The June 1-3 event weekend will not only feature the return of world-class auto racing to the Motor City, it will also include some popular and exciting musical acts throughout the three-day weekend. The CDBIGP is proud to announce the featured acts for the event – Mitch Ryder and the Detroit Wheels, the B-52s

and Ronnie Dunn will all perform on the MotorCity Casino Hotel Entertainment Stage.

Adding an exclamation point to “Free Prix Day” at the Grand Prix on Friday, June 1, Mitch Ryder and the Detroit Wheels will take to the MotorCity Casino Hotel Entertainment Stage, located in the Meijer Family Fun Zone, at 6:30 p.m. ET Friday evening.

The rock band is a Detroit favorite, with Rolling Stone Magazine naming Ryder as one of the top five most important rock and roll singers ever to emerge from the Motor City.



PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

Chrysler designer Jeff Gale, left-center, with hand up, makes a point during the judging of the student entries in the 2012 Steel Wheels auto design competition at LTU in Southfield. At far left is GM’s Erwin Angala and center foreground, with pen, is GM’s Brian Clauw.

Big Three Designers Judge ‘Steel Wheels’ Contest

by Gerald Scott News Dept.

It was rewarding to see Big Three design staffs watering the garden, so to speak, for the next generation of auto designers.

This notion was true at the Steel Market Development Institute’s Wheels Task Force / 2012 Steel Wheels Design competition at Lawrence Tech in Southfield last week.

Tire manufacturer Michelin was also a corporate sponsor.

There, LTU students competed for real scholarship money based on their ability to design modern wheels for hybrid vehicles – but by using steel as the central wheel build material.

And it was Big Three designers who helped the Steel Institute and LTU to together judge the numerous and worthy student entries.

Judges from General Motors included GM Design staffers Brian Clauw, Todd Parker and Erwin Angala.

From Ford, there was Dong Park and George Bucher and Chrysler was represented by design manager Jeff Gale, the son of the well-regarded, and retired Chrysler designer Tom Gale.

GM’s Brian Clauw is coincidentally a graduate of LTU, so he was happy to be back on

campus supporting the next generation of designers.

“I’m always impressed with what the students come up with,” Clauw said. “And these days, their presentation skills are as important as their actual design skills.”

Added his GM colleague, Erwin Angala, “What the students presented today was leaps and bounds above what

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