

# Battery Show Visitors Talk About Growing EV Industry

by Jim Stickford

The push to develop better battery systems for Electric Vehicles (EVs) and Hybrid Electric Vehicles (HEVs) has been good for businesses in Southeast Michigan as evidenced by the turnout of local firms at The Battery Show trade event in Novi Nov. 13-15.

Bill Arrandale, account executive for TUV SUD America in Auburn Hills, said his company, which tests systems for customers in the auto business, attended the convention to expand its customer base in the energy storage arena.

"Companies, as they design systems, need someone to test them in the design cycle and then in the product validation cycle," Arrandale said.

"Right now, business is good. Batteries are a growing field in the auto industry as well as in other industries and we're seeing a huge upswing in business. I know it sounds like a cliché, but sales in the last couple of months have been excellent, especially when compared to just a few years ago."

Abe Shocket, manager, advance engineering for TE Connectivity of Troy, said his company is a component supplier to firms like Siemens. He was a speaker at the show and said among the products they sell is the "nozzle" charging plug that is used in electric charging stations. These stations can be sold to businesses or even set up in the garages of people who own EVs or HEVs.

"The theme of my talk is that we need to be able to place charging stations at multi-family dwelling units – apartment buildings," Shocket said. "To do that, we need to lower the cost of infrastructure, which can be quite

high. I've seen cases where installation costs are higher than equipment costs."

Shocket said that most taxpayers would probably oppose using their tax dollars to install expensive charging stations at someone's apartment building. At the same time, a landlord would balk at the cost if his current tenants didn't have EVs.

His solution is to lower the cost of infrastructure by installing level 1 chargers, which charge a vehicle slower than level 2 chargers. A level 1 device might cost only \$100 to install to an already-existing electrical outlet, such as a lamp post.

Since much of the driving people do is to and from work, parking a car for eight hours to charge while someone is at work isn't a problem. That person will then go home and park his car at his apartment overnight, allowing for another multi-hour charge time.

Shocket said things are going well at the company's Troy office and he expects business to continue along this line.

Bob Malcolm, electrical engineering manager for Hybrid Design Services (HDS) in Troy, said business for his company, which designs and engineers prototype components and systems for HEV and EV systems, has been great.

"We're here to show our products and services and grow the business," Malcolm said. "We also get to see the tech that's used in our business and meet with suppliers."

Malcolm said he retired from Chrysler in 2007 and joined HDS in 2008. Even during the hard economic times, business at his company was good.

"I believe we need to have alternatives to gas engines," Malcolm said. "It can be tough to



Bill Arrandale, account executive for TUV SUD America.

make the case here in this country where the price of gas is about \$3.50 a gallon.

But in Turkey, where the price is closer to \$9 a gallon, making the case for alternatives is easier. There's still great interest in EV technology. We're getting inquiries from companies who want us to design components, or, in one case, build a heavy truck."

Rodney Rusk is automotive industry manager, North America, for Rexroth Bosch Group in Rochester Hills, a firm that makes assembly automation equipment for companies that make EV batteries and battery systems.

"People have these designs so they need equipment to make the designs happen," Rusk said. "Over the last two years, we've seen an increase in our business. We've worked with GM on the Volt and with their sub-suppliers.

"We now want to expand our presence in the EV market, which is growing hesitantly, but it is growing. It could be more robust, but we're seeing more confidence from others."

Dominic Petitta, business development manager for Element Materials Technology in Warren, said that he and his colleagues are excited to be a part of the EV industry right now. The company tests components and systems.

"We made a significant investment in equipment in 2007," said Petitta. "There are not many labs that can do what we can do."

This is an exciting time to be a part of the EV market."

The battery show was held in Novi Nov. 13 - 15.

## Got News?

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# GM Foundation's New Float Ready For Thanksgiving

The General Motors Foundation has unveiled a new float it's sponsoring during America's Thanksgiving Parade on Nov. 22.

With a theme of "Education Fuels Tomorrow's Innovators," the float showcases the Foundation's commitment to investing in America's youth – the next generation of innovators.

The float is being designed and built by The Parade Company. It celebrates education, specifically the United Way "Network of Excellence," created by the GM Foundation's \$27.1 million commitment to seven Detroit-area high schools and administered in conjunction with United Way for Southeastern Michigan.

The goal is to raise graduation rates by 30 percent over five years while supporting the leaders and innovators of tomorrow.

Representatives from the "Network of Excellence" high schools participated in the float unveiling, and members of the East Detroit Marching Band accompanied the float on its maiden journey along Atwater Street.

"This float is GM Foundation demonstrating its commitment to the youth and families of our community," said Michael J. Brennan, United Way for Southeastern Michigan president and CEO.

The float offers a futuristic scene with two students leaving high school and embarking on their futures.

Arriving at a crossroads, the students find themselves presented with educational roads to take: Science Way, Math Lane, Engineering Road and Technology Drive. Each road provides examples of the opportunities that await them as STEM majors.

The float is 17 feet tall and 60 feet long.

## 'Hooligans for Heroes' Raises Money For The Wounded Warriors Project

Calling the Detroit City Football Club semi-pro soccer team a bunch of hooligans is no insult, said team member Gene Butcher.

That sobriquet is part of the name of the club's charitable wing, "Hooligans for Heroes," which raises money for wounded veterans returning from war zones.

"Our soccer club has a support club that operates along the line of the support clubs European soccer teams have," Butcher said. "The support club was started by me, my brother Ken and a friend of ours and fellow soccer club member Drew Gentry."

The club sponsors parties that start before the Detroit City Football Club's games. Members then march to the playing site and during the game they blow horns and play drums to support the soccer team, Butcher said.

One of the things European support clubs do is sell gear with the team's colors. Scarves are very popular, but they also sell things like team flags that fans can wave at games.

"If you have ever sat in the section of a stadium that is filled with a particular team's supporters in Europe, you will notice that everyone is wearing scarves with the same colors, the colors of a particular team," Butcher said.

"We have scarves and other gear our support club members and others can buy at the games. One day, a woman name Julie emailed us and said that her husband, Chris Monroe, was stationed in Afghanistan and that he was a huge soccer fan."

"She wanted to buy one of our team flags to send to her husband."

They were happy to send her a scarf, Butcher said. And a couple of weeks later they received an emailed photo of Monroe in Afghanistan manning a machine

post. But he was flying the flag they had sent his wife.

"Chris also has a blog where he writes his thoughts," Butcher said. "In one of his posts, he wrote that two of his best friends were seriously injured by an IED. That got us thinking."

Butcher said while this was going on, the three team members were also looking for a charity to support. They couldn't find one that really clicked with them.

"We have some fame around the country," Butcher said. "We said to ourselves, why not spend some of that fame helping our wounded veterans, so we formed Hooligans for Heroes to raise money for that purpose. All money raised through the sale of our gear goes directly to the nationally-known charity, The Wounded Warriors Project."

Hooligans for Heroes officially came into being during the summer of 2012, Butcher said.

The group will hold a tailgate party at Ford Field on Dec. 8, when the U.S. National Women's Team plays China. Gear will be on sale at the session.

Butcher said putting Hooligans in the title of the charity was on purpose.

In Europe, ardent soccer fans are called hooligans and some have been known to start riots at games. This was their way of taking back the word and making something positive out of it.

"In total, we have donated about \$3,200 to the The Wounded Warriors Project," Butcher said. "The money came from our sales and from the two fundraisers we held."

The most recent fundraiser was a charity concert held in Smalls, a night club in Hamtramck. The event was organized by support club member Eric Abbey who plays in the band, "1592."

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