

Downtown Orion Tree Lighting Is Wed. Night

The Lake Orion Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Development Authority team up throughout the year to bring great family events like the Lake Orion Annual Tree Lighting to their community.

The lighting ceremony will be Nov. 28 at 6 p.m. in the village of Lake Orion (next to Orser Studio). It will be followed by carolers, a visit from Mrs. Claus, and free hot chocolate.

Kids can make an ornament and bring it back to hang on the community tree the night of the ceremony. Free ornament kits are available at Caruso Chiropractic and BCF Custom Flooring in the downtown area.

"We were very pleased with the large turnout we had last year, and we hope to draw even more families to this year's event," said Martha Bergquist, who is on the tree lighting committee. "It's the magic I see in the children's eyes that keeps me coming back." Stores will be open until 8 p.m.

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AH Tree Lighting

The 19th Annual Tree Lighting in Auburn Hills will take place on Dec. 7 in the downtown area. More in next week's edition.

Pontiac Parade Set for Dec. 1

by Jennifer Knightstep

There's no better way to kick off the holiday season than with a parade featuring Santa and Mrs. Claus, but for more than 30 years, four cities in the heart of Oakland County have upped the wintertime fun ante at the Holiday Extravaganza.

This year they are adding features like a petting zoo, face painting, arts & crafts, and even hot cocoa.

The Winter Extravaganza – a collaboration between Pontiac, Auburn Hills, Waterford Township, and White Lake Township – will take place this year on Saturday, Dec. 1.

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Engineer Explains GMC Truck Ratings So Operators Don't Get Carried Away

by Jennifer Knightstep

General Motors trailering engineer Robert Krouse is on a mission. He wants to make sure every full-size GMC pickup owner knows GAWR from GVWR and GCWR. So what are these odd acronyms, and what do they mean? That's exactly what Krouse wants to explain.

These four-letter acronyms represent various gross weight ratings, important because exceeding any of them is unsafe, and it's a driver's responsibility to know them to avoid exceeding them.

Krouse explained, "Nearly every vehicle performance attribute is designed and tested to one or more gross weight rating. Body and chassis structural durability, powertrain and driveline durabil-

ity, handling, braking, thermal and propulsion performance are all validated to specific ratings. That's why it's so important for owners to understand those limits."

The three most important acronyms, says Krouse, are GAWR, GVWR, and GCWR. They are all gross weight ratings, but each indicates a specific sort of rating, as Krouse explains.

- GAWR is the Gross Axle Weight Rating, or the maximum amount of weight that can be placed on either a truck's front or rear axle, including the weight of the truck, driver, passengers, equipment and cargo. A higher front GAWR generally means more capacity for accessories like plows (attached to the front), while a high rear GAWR relates to a higher payload (for items in the truck).

Dan Reid, communications manager for the SRT Brand, said the last Viper rolled off the assembly line at the Conner Avenue Assembly Plant in Detroit in the summer of 2010 when the company was going through bankruptcy.

"We had to take a very hard look at all of our vehicle lines and we put the Viper on at least a temporary hiatus, just because we had so many other things to take care of," he said.

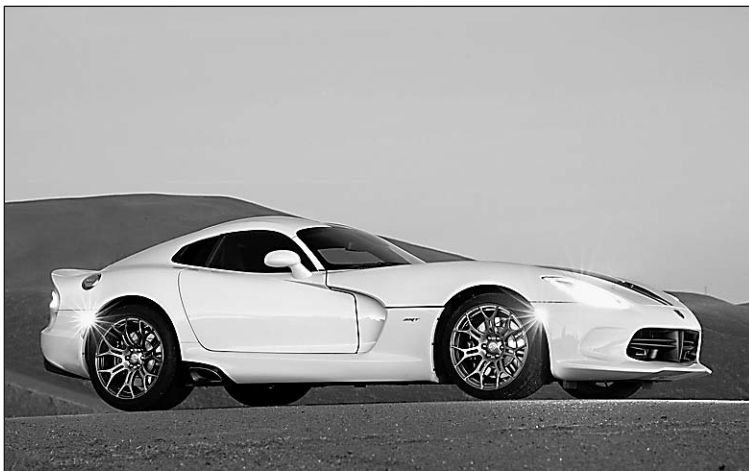
Reid said in the fall of 2010, Gilles, who was then head of Design, was having some of his designers sketch what the next Viper would look like even before they were given the green light to resume production.

"The car's been a flagship for

the company since 1992 when it first appeared in the market," Reid said. "It's really something that Chrysler's very proud of, not just the brand, previously the Dodge brand, but now the SRT brand . . . It kind of had a good ending to a rebirth of the car," Reid said.

The Viper's return was willed on not only by enthusiasts and Gilles, but by performance enthusiasts all around the world.

"It also goes to the top of the company," Reid added. "Sergio (Marchionne, Chrysler chairman) did see what this car means, and what it means to Chrysler Group as a whole, not just here in the U.S., but around the world."



2013 SRT Viper

Exide and Valeo Display New Technologies on a Passat

Two companies were on hand in Southfield on Nov. 16 to show off what new technology can do to increase the efficiency of Electric Vehicles (EVs).

Exide Technologies and Valeo were at Bocco Ristorante in Southfield with a specially-modified VW Passat. The vehicle had Valeo's new electric supercharger and Exide's new and improved lead acid batteries to power the LC Super Hybrid Passat.

Brad Warner, regional communications manager for Valeo North America, said his company participated in the demonstration, which was organized by the Advanced Lead-Acid Battery Consortium (ALABC) to show off just what his company's new technology can do.

"Our Electric Supercharger is a

new technology that only Valeo can offer manufacturers," Warner said. "It is a further step in the reduction of the displacement size of turbocharged gasoline and diesel internal combustion engines without losing power, even at low speeds, by injecting pressurized air into the engine."

"The Electric Supercharger has the potential to reduce vehicle fuel consumption by up to 10 percent."

Warner said Valeo is able to get this level of performance because, instead of a turbocharger driven by exhaust gases, the device is driven by an electric "switched reluctance" motor.

This enables an almost-instantaneous increase in speed, Warner said, that is three to five times greater than an electric motor or traditional turbocharger driven

by exhaust gases.

The system also makes sufficient electrical energy repeatedly available for short periods of time and enables a new generation of reduced-capacity engines to be developed with higher gearing to allow lower engine speeds for more efficient fuel consumption without hurting performance.

Linked to an electrical system for energy recovery when braking, it offers a less-expensive hybridization alternative, Warner said. For every 1 kW of electrical energy used, five additional kW of power is provided to the driver.

Chip Bremer, marketing and communications manager for the ALABC, said Exide provided the batteries for the LC Super Hybrid. Exide and the consortium put on the demonstration, Bre-

mer said, because they felt it was important to show manufacturers just what today's lead-acid batteries can do.

"When people think of lead-acid batteries, they tend to think of them as they were 20 or 30 years ago," Bremer said. "There have been so many advances made to the technology since then."

"For example, we learned that if you add a certain amount of carbon to a lead-acid battery, you increase its power and life span."

Part of informing the public about lead-acid technology means informing them of the recycle rates. Fully 98 percent of lead-acid battery components are recycled. That closed-loop recycling system is just part of a larger lead-acid battery infrastructure that exists today.

Food Drive on Target To Meeting Its Goal

Lake Trust Credit Union conducted a non-perishable food drive at its branch in Auburn Crossing earlier this month.

According to branch manager Joseph Byers, "The amount of food collected here overflowed the bin. The bins hold between 250 and 350 pounds of food each."

"Our goal was to collect 21,000 pounds among all of our branch locations."

Lake Trust officials say they're so close to meeting or exceeding their goal, that a final tally would have to be made of every bin.

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A pickup pulling a flatbed and a John Deere 410e. Note the axle positions and the weight on the gooseneck.

- GVWR is the Gross Vehicle Weight Rating, or the maximum amount of weight for the entire truck and everything in it. This number isn't simply each axle rating added together; for that to work, the owner would have to precisely load so that each axle weight rating is met just as the overall vehicle rating is met, which isn't possible in real-world conditions. As a result, GVWR is always lower than the sum of

each axle to account for changes in weight distribution.

- GCWR is the Gross Combined Weight Rating, or the maximum weight of a truck and an attached trailer, plus everything in each of them. Some of a trailer's weight is supported by the truck – this is known as tongue weight – a GCWR isn't simply the GVWR plus the trailer's weight. When attaching a trailer, factor tongue weight into a truck's payload capacity.

Krouse suggests that pickup truck owners familiarize themselves with each of these ratings, and what they mean, to keep safe, and to extend the life of their trucks. "It's very important," he said, "that drivers observe these limits to maintain safe stopping distances. Not only that, overloading a truck causes excessive wear on suspension and brakes and could lead to engine or transmission failure."