

GM, Chrysler and Ford Announced Stronger November 2012 Sales

by Jennifer Knightstep and Jim Stickford

Overall, the sales of vehicles made by Detroit manufacturers went up in November, with Chrysler leading the way.

Citing the growing popularity of each of its brands, Chrysler Group reported its best U.S. November sales figures since 2007. Sales figures for the month totaled 122,565 units, a 14 percent increase over the same month last year.

The stellar November sales marks the 32nd consecutive month of year-over-year sales gains for Chrysler.

The Chrysler, Dodge, Ram Truck, and Fiat brands each posted sales increases over the previous November.

The Chrysler brand posted a modest increase of 1 percent, Ram Truck an increase of 23 percent, Dodge an increase of 32 percent, and Fiat a 123 percent increase.

The impressive sales increases can be linked to the success of particular models, including the popular Fiat 500, Dodge Journey crossover, and Jeep Wrangler, each setting their own sales record for the month of November.

Reid Bigland, president and CEO of the Dodge brand and head of U.S. Sales, is optimistic about the future.

"We are expecting a strong December as the industry continues to recover from the East Coast hurricane and consumers continue to respond to our popular year-end Big Finish event," Bigland said.

GM reported its strongest November sales period since 2007. Deliveries were up 3 percent compared with November 2011 figures, with deliveries amounting to 186,505 vehicles.

Total Chevrolet sales for November 2012 were 128,867, representing a zero percent change from last year. Retail sales were 88,640, which were down 4.3 percent from 2011. Overall, Chevy has sold 1,684,555 vehicles up to December, which is a 4.3 percent increase from 2011.

GMC saw total November sales rise to 29,832 which was up 1.2 percent from 2011. But retail sales at 25,101 were down 3.4 percent from last year. Buick's re-

tail sales at 12,232 were up 18.4 percent and Cadillac's retail sales at 13,547 were up 25.9 percent.

Year-over-year sales to retail customers were essentially equal to a year ago and sales to fleet customers were up 16 percent.

"In November, we saw strong car and crossover sales and we continue to make inroads with younger customers, import drivers and buyers focused on fuel economy," said Kurt McNeil, vice president of U.S. sales operations.

"Sales at Cadillac and Buick are benefiting from the buzz generated by new products, including the Buick Verano, Cadillac XTS and Cadillac ATS."

Sales of GM passenger cars increased 19 percent in November compared with a year ago. Crossovers were up 9 percent



2013 Cadillac XTS



2013 Dodge Journey



2013 Ford F-150

percent. Buick and Cadillac had their best November sales since 2006 and 2007, respectively.

Passenger car sales were up 77 percent at Cadillac, 22 percent at Buick and 13 percent at Chevrolet. Combined sales of mini, small and compact cars were up 51 percent compared with a year ago, driven by the new Buick Verano and Chevrolet Spark, a 27 percent increase for the Chevrolet Cruze, a

Chevrolet Volt and a 12 percent increase for the Chevrolet Sonic.

Ford sales analyst Erich Merkle reported that Ford saw a 6 percent increase in total sales, with retail sales up 12 percent. He added that the sale of small cars drove November figures.

"When we look at small cars, sales totaled almost 27,000 vehicles in November and represented our best November for small-car

sales since 2000," Merkle said. "(That's) a 76 percent increase over last year in small car sales."

Ford has also seen success with pickup truck sales, Merkle said. November represented the 16th consecutive year-over-year monthly sales increase for Ford pickups.

November 2012 sales figures were up 18 percent compared with November 2011.

'Anne of Green Gables' is Coming To Community Center Dec. 21-23

by Jim Stickford

The Warren Civic Theater's production of the classic "Anne of Green Gables" runs Dec. 21-23 at the Warren Community Center. Reserved seats are \$12 (\$5 for children 12 and younger).

The L.M. Montgomery classic, technically not a Christmas story, takes place over several years on Prince Edward's Island in Canada, and there are several scenes that take place during the holiday.

The theater group decided to do "Anne of Green Gables" because over the last several years they did traditional Christmas plays. As a result, they ran through standards and were looking to do something a little different.

They liked the story because it's about family and how people help each other out and raise each other up, said artistic director Greg Trzakoma.

"This production will feature about 40 actors," Trzakoma said. "They will be kids, teens and adults. This production will feature two actors as Anne. In act one, she is played by Ginger Johnson. In act two, when the character is older, she is played by Cayenne Johnson. They are sisters."

The production is being directed and sales of trucks were down 11

percent. Buick and Cadillac had their best November sales since 2006 and 2007, respectively.

Trzakoma said he has been with the theater group since its founding in 1994. A U of D college graduate with a theater degree, Trzakoma said he got the job by answering a newspaper ad.

The Warren Parks and Recreation department had put on a kid's theater workshop that was very popular, Trzakoma said. Many of the participants had "aged" out of the program and people saw a need for a more formal group to hold productions.

In 1994, he answered the newspaper ad that was seeking an artistic director for the newly-formed Warren Civic Theater group.

He worked with two dozen youngsters on a one-night production of "The King and I." That proved very popular and was the start of the Warren Civic Theater. Now they put on multiple shows that run over several nights during an entire year.

Once "Anne of Green Gables" is completed, the theater group will hold auditions for its next production, "The Little Mermaid Jr."

"This is interesting," Trzakoma said. "Disney has a production of 'The Little Mermaid' running on Broadway right now. Well, the 33 percent increase for the



Sisters Cayenne (left) and Ginger Johnson play the title character Anne in different stages of her life in the Warren Civic Theater's production of "Anne of Green Gables."

company also has a whole series of plays they call their junior collaboration plays.

In this case, "The Little Mermaid Jr." is the Broadway play edited down to about 90 minutes, with songs rekeyed for children."

In addition to having a shortened version of their Broadway play, Disney also provides other elements such as recorded practice music and such.

"We're one of the first theater groups to put on this particular play in metro Detroit," Trzakoma said.

"This should be a huge produc-

tion. Anyone who tries out between the ages of seven and 18 will get a role. We'll also need stage people, costume people and such."

Auditions are the week of Jan. 14, 2013. Callbacks will be on Saturday, Jan. 19.

"Anne of Green Gables" will be performed at the Warren Community Center on Dec. 21 and 22 at 7 p.m. The Dec. 23 performance is at 3 p.m.

For more information on both productions, call 586-268-8400, or visit the Civic Theatre website at www.warrencivic.org.

Bands, Choirs to Perform at Vehicle Engineering Center

Christmas is coming to GM's Vehicle Engineering Center (VEC) is a big way thanks to the GM Men's Club.

Local community bands began putting on live performances in the lobby of the VEC starting on Dec. 4.

The concerts are being held every Tuesday and Thursday from 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. The next performance is on Dec. 11, fol-

lowed by concerts on Dec. 13 and Dec. 18.

The final performance is on Dec. 20, with a special presentation by the Fillmore Elementary School Choir.

This performance will feature a 30-student choir singing Christmas classics.

The bands come courtesy of the Warren Consolidated School District's middle schools and

high schools.

People stopping by to see the concerts are also urged to visit the GM gift shop, located on the first floor of the VEC building.

All profits raised through the sale of GM merchandise go to charity.

Those interested in learning more about the GM Men's Club and what they do should visit gmmensclub.org.

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