

GM Shows Its Healthy Heart, Donates Camaro to Auction

A unique Chevrolet Camaro donated by GM to the American Heart Association was sold for \$400,000 at the Barrett-Jackson Auction in Scottsdale, Ariz.

The name of the buyer has yet to be released.

All proceeds from the auction benefit cardiovascular research through the Southeast Michigan American Heart Association.

Money raised from charitable auctions such as this is vitally needed because, according to the American Heart Association, 82.6 million heart disease and stroke survivors are living proof that donations make a difference.

"The heart is the engine of the body," said Jim Campbell, vice president, Chevrolet Performance. "Just like a car, if the engine isn't running in top condition, it affects the entire body. We are happy to be able to help the Association accelerate advances in cardiovascular research with a very special Camaro."

The factory drag-race car is the only 2012 Central Office Production Order (COPO) convertible offered for sale, and the only one painted Inferno Orange Metallic. A total of only 69 COPO Camaros were built in 2012.

Since 1949, contributions to the American Heart Association have produced significant findings and discoveries, which opened doors for thriving, lifesaving campaigns such as Go Red For Women Luncheons, Heart Walks, Heart Balls and Jump/Hoops For Heart.

"Funding our mission equates to more lives saved or vastly improved . . . it is both that simple and profound," said Kathy Kauffmann, executive director and vice president for the Southeast Michigan American Heart Association.

"Thanks to generous supporters

like Chevrolet, the American Heart Association continues to bring life-saving research and resources to communities across Michigan."

The association is recognized as a worldwide leader in cardiovascular research. In 2012, \$9.3 million was invested in research in Michigan. Since the organization's inception, \$3.4 billion has been invested nationwide. As a result, research advances such as the artificial heart valve, CPR, and lifesaving drugs have been created to save lives.

The American Heart Associa-



This Camaro sold for \$400,000 to benefit the American Heart Association.

tion is the nation's oldest and largest voluntary health organization dedicated to fighting heart disease and stroke.

Its mission is to build healthier lives by preventing, treating and

defeating these diseases. The group funds cutting-edge research, conducts lifesaving public and professional educational programs, and advocates to protect public health.

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Walk for Warmth Raises \$30K to Help Pay Utility Bills

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This year marked the golden anniversary of the event – the 23rd annual Walk for Warmth, held on Feb. 23.

"Every year, we are blown away by the community support," Borngesser said. "The energy and enthusiasm of the walkers and sponsors is heartwarming and truly makes a difference in the lives of those in need of a helping hand during the cold winter months."

OLSHA's Walk for Warmth fundraisers benefit residents of Oakland and Livingston counties. They are able to access the Emergency Utility Assistance program, which is funded by contributions from Walk for Warmth, when faced with a utility shut-off notice.

Although many people associate utility emergencies with the cold winter months, these funds are actually used to assist those in need throughout the year.

The Genisys Band played music for those who walked.



The bright lights of the Great Lakes Crossing carousel add to the festive occasion as Genisys employees, their families and Genisys members get ready to 'make tracks' at the Feb. 25th Walk for Warmth benefit fundraiser.

Chrysler's 34 Month Sales Streak Is Now 35 Months

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It's a record that Chrysler is very proud of and, of course, one the company would like to see continue.

Chrysler said its February sales rose 4 percent, marking its best February sales month in five years.

"In spite of a cautious ramp-up of some of our most popular products which limited inventory last month, we still managed to record our strongest February sales month in five years and our 35th consecutive month of year-over-year sales growth," said Reid Bigland, head of U.S. sales. "Looking ahead, we expect to get our inventory gaps corrected over the next 90 days, resulting in additional products contributing to our growth."

The Dodge brand posted a 30-percent sales gain for the month, Ram Truck and Fiat brands were up 2 percent year-over-year, while Jeep sales fell 16 percent in February. Chrysler brand sales also fell 7 percent.

Chrysler Chairman and CEO Sergio Marchionne also noted in a year-end earnings call that Chrysler's first-quarter sales performance is expected to be lower compared with the first quarter of 2012 due to product launches.

Monthly Jeep sales, for example, have been down in recent months due to product launches and temporary plant shutdowns.

The sales streak started when Chrysler reported a 25 percent year-over-year sales increase in April 2010, a mere 10 months after Chrysler Group began operating in June 2009.

Ralph Kisiel, spokesperson for Chrysler Sales and Dealer Communications, said that Chrysler has launched 18 all-new or refreshed products, including the Jeep Grand Cherokee, which was very well received by consumers. "Product is the heart of any

sales streak, and that's definitely the case here," said Kisiel.

He also cited improved marketing, especially Chrysler's very successful ad campaigns broadcast during the 2011, 2012 and 2013 Super Bowl games.

Kisiel said ads that debuted during these games for the past three years have really connected with the public and Chrysler has received a lot of positive feedback on these marketing campaigns.

He also cited exterior design changes, completely new interiors and new powertrains that are far more fuel efficient than before.

"All these new products have been resonating with consumers and that's why we've been enjoying a 34-month sales streak . . .

Cadillac Creates XTS Livery Package

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"XTS represents a new approach to luxury, centered on advanced technology and design," said Don Butler, vice president of Cadillac marketing. "This same approach extends to Professional Vehicles, where we are bringing a new formula to the livery customer. Every experience in a Cadillac, front seat or rear seat, meets a higher standard for luxury, performance and technology."

Unlike many of the cars built for the livery and fleet industries in the past, the special XTS model is at the higher-end of the product range, including 19-inch wheels, exterior door handles with LED illumination, safety technology – such as a rear vision camera – and a micro-fiber suede headliner included in the XTS Platinum Edition.

An available rear seat comfort package includes heated seats, window sun shades and a power inverter to charge mobile devices. Navigation, offered through Cadillac's CUE system for connectivity

We're thrilled that we've had this sales streak and we'd love to have it continue through this year," said Kisiel. "But there are factors which could affect it."

Kisiel said the real test will come in March, because it will be compared with March 2012, which was the best sales month of the year. Chrysler sold 163,381 units in March of last year.

"While everyone here is rooting for our sales streak to continue during this first quarter of 2013, what's more important are the flawless launches of our new Grand Cherokee, the Liberty replacement, and the Ram Heavy Duty trucks," Ranieri summed up. "If we can keep the streak going, then all the better."

and control, is also available in the W20 Livery Package.

Carey International, the world's largest livery company, was one of the first companies to sign on, purchasing 150 new Cadillac XTS W20 Professional Services Sedans.

"Our customers wanted approachable luxury and enabling technology," said Gary Kessler, president and CEO of Carey International. "We chose the XTS as the cornerstone of the Carey brand because it represented the perfect combination of power, luxury, technology and sophistication that our customers desire and demand today."

Carey conducted extensive research into 24 vehicles before choosing the XTS W20.

"In the end, the decision to go with the XTS was a no-brainer."

Cadillac's Professional Vehicles program includes a select number of coachbuilders authorized by Cadillac to convert vehicles for use in commercial or fleet duties according to a specific set of standards.

Ridler's Ball Autorama's Oscars Event

The 61st Anniversary Meguiars Detroit Autorama arrives at Cobo March 8, and America's hot rod show celebrates the 50th anniversary of the Ridler Award.

"We are going all out," says Peter Toundas, show manager and president of Championship Auto Shows, Inc., producer of Detroit Autorama. "We are kicking off the big event with a stellar Friday night that we are calling the 'Ridler's Ball,'" presented by Chevrolet Performance.

"The roster of attendees include a who's who of the hot rod-custom car world across North America,

and we will name the 50 most important car builders, owners, and designers who have contributed to the growth of the Ridler over its history. It's like our Oscars."

A panel of judges from Chrysler, CCS and Detroit Autorama will select winning entries from the freshman-junior class and senior class. Prizes will include a scholarship to the College for Creative Studies, summer design automotive classes at CCS, iPads, tours of the Chrysler Product Design Office and free passes to Autorama.

More info at autorama.com.

Regulation and Manufacturing Costs

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"Unemployment is high. The global economy remains shaky," he said. "Too many Americans no longer believe that our country's best days are ahead of us. Those naysayers are wrong – assuming we get our policies right."

DEC member Patrick Michel, vice president of Dassault Systemes for the Michigan area, gave his thoughts on Timmons' speech in an interview. Dassault Systemes is a global producer of 3-D design software and digital mockups based in France, with U.S. headquarters in Waltham, Mass.

"As someone who works with manufacturing companies each day, it was good to be reminded of what a powerful impact manufacturing can have on the economy," Michel said. "We agree with Timmons' perspective that manufacturers need to be prepared for the next growth wave to compete globally. Technology is a key component of that preparedness and we are helping our clients innovate through the use of 3D technologies in manufacturing."

Michel particularly agreed with Timmons' call for policies to make U.S. manufacturers the most innovative.

"From Dassault Systemes' perspective, we believe history has shown the role innovation plays in powering job creation and building a strong economy," he said. "Countries that put a strong focus on technology and innovation have typically led the world in offering high wages that help improve their overall standard of living."

Timmons said U.S. manufacturers are hampered by a lack of people with strong STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) skills. Michel said it's a complex problem going beyond the need to improve STEM education.

"Technological innovation helps to improve the competitiveness of U.S. manufacturing and our economic future is dependent on remaining a leader in science and technology," Michel said. "Connecting with youth early on is key to getting them into STEM education and careers."

Information on the National Association of Manufacturers can be viewed at www.nam.org.