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Early Sales 'Encouraging' On Chevy Cruze Diesel

by Jim Stickford

There are lots of ways an automaker can provide the public with fuel-efficient vehicles, and Chevrolet is betting that a diesel-powered passenger car is one such alternative.

"Introducing the Chevrolet Cruze diesel just makes a lot of sense," said Chevrolet Cruze Spokesperson Annalisa Bluhm. "We have a wealth of knowledge on diesel-powered cars from our European operations. Here in the U.S., diesel engines have been used for more business-oriented purposes such as pickup trucks used by farmers, or delivery vans. But we believe there is a demand for a diesel passenger car."

Bluhm said the Cruze, which went on sale in 13 different markets around the country in May, goes on sale nationally later this summer. Its diesel engine was designed by engineers in Pontiac, Italy and Germany in conjunction with engineers at Bosch.

"We have a group of passionate engineers here and in Europe," Bluhm said. "They have a lot of expertise in diesel engines and it behooves us to use that international expertise in the designing of a passenger car diesel engine for the North American market."

Designing such an engine is a collaborative process, Bluhm said, and working with a supplier like Bosch is part of that effort.

Bernd Boisten, regional president, Diesel Systems, North America, at Robert Bosch, said that a lack of awareness of how diesel technology has changed has been one of the problems in getting the public to accept diesel cars. So having Chevrolet build a diesel passenger car is a big breakthrough.

"For us, it's a big thing that Chevrolet is introducing a clean diesel passenger car to the North American market," Boisten said. "This is world-class technology and we are convinced it will be very appealing to the U.S. consumer."

Boisten said a recent study of consumer attitudes by CNW Marketing Research in Oregon shows that fully 30 percent of consumers looking to buy a new car would consider buying a clean diesel passenger vehicle. He said that's a big change in attitude from 10 or 15 years ago.

Too often in the past, Boisten said, the public thought that diesel engines were dirty and provided poor performance. But companies like Bosch, working

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



Jan Waun checks the status of her Chevy Volt at a PEV charging station near Auburn Hills city hall. The 'fill-up' is free and the only gas she has to buy is for the car's generator to produce electricity for its battery.

AH Rolls Out PEV Welcome Mat With Car Stations

by Irena Granaas

The wave of the future has definitely come ashore in the city of Auburn Hills in the form of new charging stations for the convenience of those driving plug-in electric vehicles (PEVs).

In fact, the community's forward thinking in this area has earned the city kudos from the state of Michigan and from the federal government.

As announced recently by city officials, Auburn Hills has been named a partner in the Workplace Charging Challenge, a collaboration between the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and American innovators to accelerate the development and commercialization of the next generation of PEVs and charging infrastructure.

The ultimate goal is to increase the number of American employers offering workplace charging by tenfold in the next five years.

The announcement was made by the DOE's assistant secretary, David Danielson, during his keynote speech at the Electric Drive Transportation Association Annual Conference in Wash-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Fehan's 2012 SEMA Custom Camaro 1-LE Inspires Chevy Racing, Brand Confidence

by Irena Granaas

He may be holding down a full-time "day job," but Bob Fehan doesn't let that get in the way of his lifelong passion - designing and building (and sometimes racing) specialty vehicles, a passion Fehan has pursued with spectacular success for more than 35 years.

Fehan, vice president of Engineering at Gibbs Sports Amphibians in Auburn Hills, took some time out of his busy schedule recently to talk about his latest creation, the customized 2012 Chevrolet Camaro 1-LE.

He built the race car in partnership with Chevrolet Performance to campaign at major track events and auto shows.

Past and present credentials include owner/president at Bob Fehan Motorsports Inc., vice president of Manufacturing at Gibbs Technologies and senior manager of Manufacturing at Chip Ganassi Racing with Felix Sabates.

The Camaro 1-LE took its first bows in November at the 2012 SEMA (Specialty Equipment Market Association) Show in Las Vegas, where the striking red-and-black race car won the People's Choice award at the premier automotive specialty products trade event.

"And I got a very nice award from Mr. Ruess himself (Mark Ruess, president of GM North America)."

More than just auto enthusiast eye candy, the 1-LE was built from the get-go to hold its own on city streets and race tracks, and has been amped up even fur-

ther by Fehan, aided by Chevrolet Performance and others.

Fehan said he was very impressed by the car itself, and then how well the stock vehicle performed right off the showroom floor.

"It just whet my appetite like you wouldn't believe, and then, when I got behind the wheel, it absolutely blew me away, how well it performed, its handling, braking and how it cornered," he said.

"It was like driving a Go-Cart. I just couldn't believe GM could build a stock vehicle like that and sell it."

"I couldn't wait to start working on it."

Fehan lent his creative touch to the car's exterior and interior, added various engine modifications, and some requisite safety and other modifications required for racing.

The award-winning result speaks for itself, as was demonstrated just recently.

As he was driving the Camaro 1-LE to his Auburn Hills office to be photographed for this article, pulling onto I-75 northbound, other drivers were racing to get next to him, "winding their windows down and giving me a



The 2012 SEMA Chevrolet Camaro 1-LE Track Event/Race Car

thumbs-up at 80 miles per hour."

With performance enhancements and eye-catching details added by Fehan, and legendary Chevrolet Camaro racing DNA built into the stock vehicle, the 1-LE seems to be fulfilling its mission as ambassador for Chevro-

let, the Camaro brand and Chevrolet racing.

Here are some specs provided by Fehan about the 2012 SEMA Chevrolet Camaro 1-LE Track Event/Race Car SCCA T-2 CLASS,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



A 2004 prototype of GM's hydrogen fuel development efforts

GM, Honda Collaborate On Clean Mobility Technology

GM and Honda have entered into a long-term, definitive master agreement to co-develop next-generation fuel cell system and hydrogen storage technologies, aiming for the 2020 time frame.

"This collaboration builds upon Honda and GM's strengths as leaders in hydrogen fuel cell technology," said Dan Akerson, GM chairman and CEO. "We are convinced this is the best way to develop this important technology, which has the potential to help reduce the dependence on petroleum and establish sustainable mobility."

GM and Honda plan to work together with stakeholders to further advance refueling infrastructure, which is critical for the long-term viability and consumer acceptance of fuel cell vehicles.

According to the Clean Energy Patent Growth Index, GM and Honda rank No. 1 and No. 2, respectively, in total fuel cell patents filed between 2002 and 2012, with more than 1,200 between them.

Takanobu Ito, president & CEO of Honda Motor Co., said, "Among all zero CO2 emission technologies, fuel cell electric vehicles have a definitive advantage with range and refueling time that is as good as conventional gasoline cars."

"Honda and GM are eager to accelerate the market penetration of this ultimate clean mobility technology, and I am excited to form this collaboration to fuse our leading fuel cell technologies

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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