



GM designer Steve Chaney sees how it was done back in the day.



Current GM employees Lexi Scott and Mari Pine check out classic cars.

GM Employees Savor Sights At Tech Center Car Show

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lamps, bumpers, fascia and grille of the car, I am amazed.

"The lighting design is so simple. They just snap the lights right in, as opposed to now where lighting has become an integral part of the exterior design. It just shows you how far we've come."

Chaney said the reason cars in the 1980s and 1990s were so bland was that, due to things like higher federally-mandated fuel standards, Detroit automakers had to shift a lot of resources into improving fuel efficiency.

"Those guys did what they had to do," Chaney said. "Now, we have to improve fuel economy and make sure the car looks and performs great. Today's vehicles have to do everything well. It's hard to do, but we're getting it done now."

The Mercury Chaney was looking at is owned by GM retiree David Wakely. He worked at the Tech Center for 28 years as a body engineer, retiring as a design manager in 2009.

"People ask why I own a Mercury, even though I am a GM guy," Wakely said. "It's simple – it's a rare car."

Wakely said the man who sold it to him back in the 1980s said there weren't too many of these particular Mercurys. So Wakely investigated and learned that only 53 were made back in the 1960s and decided to buy the car.

"I recently had Ford do a title search and they told me that only two are left," Wakely said. "I really don't show the car and enter it into contests. I just take it to shows and let people look at it. My son Bryan now works in the VEC building as a designer and owns a 1967 fastback Mustang, a 1986 Buick T-Type and 1968 Charger. I guess it runs in the blood."

The 2013 show had a special emphasis on the Corvette to celebrate that make's 60th birthday. Ronald Lambert brought his restored 1966 Sting Ray to the Tech Center. He worked as a mechanic at GM for 33 years, first at Chevrolet Engineering, then at Truck Engineering, before retiring in 2008. His car drew some long looks.

"I've owned my Corvette for about 15 years," Lambert said. "I bought it from another man who worked at GM. And I bought it because I like it. The Sting Ray is a beautiful car."

Lambert takes the vehicle to about a half-dozen car shows a

year. He used to do more, but has slowed down. He said that these old cars need a lot of tender loving care.

One of the people looking at Lambert's 'Vette was Gary Singles, a dynamometer operator at GM's Truck Center. He retired in 2001.

"I love coming to this show and looking at all the great cars," Singles said. "It's amazing how many employees own these specialty cars. I myself own a 1955 Chevy 210 two-door. I've had it since 1998."

Singles takes his car to about eight shows a year. He doesn't care about winning prizes.

"The shows are great because they are a great way to stay in touch with your friends and fellow car buffs," Singles said. "This show is great because these cars are owned by people who work in the industry and really love cars."

Delphi Auto Offers Solution for the Sounds of Silence

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products like the Vehicle Sound Generator."

Delphi's patent-pending device uses unique algorithms, pitch shifting and amplitude scaling to indicate a vehicle's speed, throttle and acceleration.

In addition to the obvious safety benefits of the device, the Delphi Vehicle Sound Generator can be customized to emit distinctive sounds to differentiate each automaker's products, using customer-supplied sound tracks.

"The flexibility of the high-fidelity system adds an opportunity for customization," said Jerome Coudre, Product Marketing manager, Delphi's Body & Security. "Not only can an automaker custom-design the low-speed warning sounds, but the sound generator can also be integrated with other vehicle systems to sound when, for example, a battery needs changing or to confirm that a charging session is complete."

Delphi's single-box configuration combines electronics and the speaker actuator in the same box. Rugged enough to be mounted under a vehicle's hood, the sounder has a frequency range of 300 Hz to 10 KHz, a 32-bit microprocessor with flash memory and an audio class-D amplifier.



GM's not resting on past success. Today's cars have proven quality.

July Retail Auto Sales Look Strong in 2013

Edmunds.com, the online car shopping and automotive information web site, forecasts that 1,328,397 new cars and trucks will be sold in the U.S. in July for an estimated Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate (SAAR) of 15.8 million. The projected sales will be a 5.3 percent decrease from June 2013, but a 15.2 percent increase from July 2012. Edmunds.com anticipates that this month will be the biggest July performance since 2006 when automakers sold 1,489,359 vehicles.

"Overall sales are undoubtedly strong, but what makes July truly impressive is that fleet sales are so low," says Edmunds.com Senior Analyst Jessica Caldwell. "That means retail sales are stepping up as the driving force for the auto industry. When people jump back into the market, it's great news not just for the automotive sector, but for the entire U.S. economy."

Edmunds.com estimates that retail SAAR will come in at 13.6 million vehicles in July, with fleet transactions accounting for 14 percent of total sales, the lowest proportion for any month this year. An estimated 3.18 million used cars will be sold in July, for a SAAR of 36.2 million (compared with 3.07 million – or a SAAR of 37.1 million – used car sales in June).

In a bit of a surprise, Edmunds.com projects that Toyota will beat out Ford in total sales this month, the first time since March 2010. The Japanese automaker, says Edmunds.com, will claim 15.0 percent of U.S. auto sales in July, its highest share since January 2013. Ford's share, meanwhile, is expected to fall 2.2 percentage points from June, the biggest month-to-month decrease of any automaker. Its projected 14.6 percent share this month will be the company's lowest single-month share since August 2009 (14.3 percent).

GM is expected to sell about 240,000 vehicles, up from 201,000 in July 2012. Ford is estimated to sell 194,000, up from 173,000 last year. Chrysler's sales should be about 140,000.

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