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Dennis Jones of the GM Competitive Benchmarking team

GM Conducts 3-D Light Searches for Quality

Precision not patriotism is the focus of red-white-and-blue light scanning used by General Motors' Competitive Benchmarking team to dissect competitor vehicles.

The high-tech search for what is good and bad is conducted about three dozen times a year globally with models strategically selected that are all-new or feature industry-first systems and technologies, said GM spokesperson Jennifer Ecclestone.

The light scanners mathematically capture precise 3-D images of vehicle structures and components. Complete sets of scans be-

come reverse-engineered computer models for comparing with GM designs, Ecclestone said.

The lessons learned from such comparisons drive cost and mass reductions as well as quality improvements in Chevrolet, Cadillac, Buick and GMC vehicles with each model year.

The team also dismantles and scans GM vehicles to validate parts, quality check manufacturing processes and troubleshoot part irregularities.

"3-D scanning is a time-efficient and cost-effective way of keeping up with rapid advancements being made all over the industry," said Larry Pecar, senior supervi-

tor, GM Competitive Benchmarking.

"The technology also allows us to gain a better understanding of the reasons for other automakers' recalls so that we are better able to avoid making the same mistakes."

GM has used 3-D scanning for more than a decade. The technology projects a red, white or blue light pattern onto the vehicle surface while an advanced camera or sensor captures its contours and records where the object is in space and its orientation, Pecar said.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

And the Chrysler ETTEE Goes to...

In true Hollywood style, Chrysler Group and the UAW rolled out the red carpet for the automaker's high achievers in manufacturing.

The first-ever World Class Manufacturing (WCM) Academy Awards ceremony was held at the UAW-Chrysler Technology Training Center in Warren on Dec. 12.

Chrysler Group's Vice President of Manufacturing Mauro Pino and the UAW's Vice President of the Chrysler Department General Holiefield hosted the event for more than 500 atten-

dees. Among them were award nominees from 26 facilities in the U.S. and Canada.

The WCM Academy Awards event was designed to honor the best performances in manufacturing at the plant and individual levels, said Chrysler spokesperson Jodi Tinson.

Winners were recognized for successes achieved as a result of the training received at the WCM Academy, which got its start in January 2012.

Using the core values of the academy - Excellence, Talent, Togetherness, Energy - a special

award was created called the ETTEE and was presented to 27 winners in 14 award categories.

"Our people are the lifeblood of this company, so we were thrilled to host the first WCM Academy Awards to recognize their hard work and achievements," said Pino.

"Working to make improvements in our manufacturing processes is not only rewarding for each employee personally, but also for Chrysler Group as a whole."

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



Chrysler's Warren Stamping Plant was among ETTEE award winners.

Red Kettles Still Hot for Donations To Salvation Army

by Jim Stickford

Christmas 2013 may have come and gone, but there's still time for people to give to the Salvation Army.

"Our goal for the Christmas 2013 season in southeastern Michigan is \$8.75 million," said Salvation Army spokesperson Andrea Kenski. "As of Dec. 26, we've raised \$4.3 million, but our Red Kettle Campaign doesn't officially end until Jan. 31, 2014, so there's still time for people to make donations."

And making a donation is easier than ever, Kenski said. There is a special texting app that makes it possible for smartphone operators to donate \$10 to the local Salvation Army by texting "SALMICH" and punching in 80888. An automatic \$10 donation is added to the texter's phone bill.

People can also go online at www.salmich.org to learn more about how they can make donations to the Red Kettle Campaign while there's still time, Kenski said.

"The money goes to so many programs," Kenski said. "I've been the spokesperson for the local Salvation Army for two years, and I'm still learning about what they do."

Funds raised are used to support programs and services to assist local families and individuals in times of need 365 days a year in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb counties, including food and shelter, Kenski said. Here are some stats on where Red Kettle donations go:

• Last year, The Salvation



Major Romeo Alop at Campus Martius Park in Detroit

Army was able to provide more than 3.3 million meals and more than 737,000 nights of shelter to those in need.

• Christmas assistance for

families with children, individuals with special needs and senior citizens will include a box of non-

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Ford Faces Tough Challenges, Warns of Slower 2014 Profits

DETROIT (AP) - Ford Motor Co., a darling of the auto industry's comeback, is facing its biggest test since CEO Alan Mulally charted its successful course out of the Great Recession.

The company outlined its challenges to Wall Street Dec. 18, telling analysts assembled in New York that profits will slow next year, largely because its North American cash machine is facing intense price competition and higher costs due to new model rollouts.

The admissions sent Ford's stock tumbling 6.3 percent that day, the largest one-day decline since August of 2011.

The shares dropped 12 percent from late October to mid-December, partly due to stories

about Mulally possibly leaving for Microsoft.

Ford was near collapse in 2006 when it hired Mulally. The company borrowed \$23.6 billion to make it through the recession and finance a restructuring. It shed unprofitable brands, closed plants and invested in new cars and trucks that are sold worldwide. Now, it's making billions.

The analyst meeting started on a good note - Ford predicted a pretax profit of \$8.5 billion for this year, among the largest in company history. But ultimately, the discussion with analysts raised broader questions about whether the U.S. auto industry, which consistently has led the economy after the recession,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

Looking Back at Big Three's Productive, Successful Year

by Jim Stickford

2013 was a big year for Detroit's carmakers. They saw a strong comeback in both sales and vehicle quality, with each manufacturer enjoying success with different vehicles.

The year started off with the announcement at the North American International Auto Show that Corvette was bringing back the Stingray.

The announcement was made by Mary Barra, (more about her later), who was then senior VP -



Mary Barra

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

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