

'We Will Make Driving Safer' – Mary Barra

Cadillac will begin offering advanced "intelligent and connected" vehicle technologies on certain 2017 model-year vehicles, General Motors CEO Mary Barra said Sept. 7 during her keynote address at the Intelligent Transport System (ITS) World Congress in Detroit.

In about two years, Barra said, an all-new 2017 Cadillac vehicle will offer customers an advanced driver-assist technology called Super Cruise, and in the same timeframe the 2017 Cadillac CTS will be enabled with vehicle-to-vehicle (V2V) communication technology.

"A tide of innovation has invigorated the global auto industry, and we are taking these giant leaps forward to remain a leader of new technology," Barra said.

"Through technology and innovation, we will make driving safer."

Super Cruise, the working name for GM's automated driving technology, will offer customers a new type of driving experience that includes hands-off lane following, braking and speed control in certain highway driving conditions.

The system is designed to increase the comfort of an attentive driver on freeways, both in bumper-to-bumper traffic and on long road trips.

V2V communication technology

could mitigate many traffic collisions and improve traffic congestion by sending and receiving basic safety information such as location, speed and direction of travel between vehicles that are approaching each other, Barra said.

It will warn drivers and can supplement active safety features, such as forward collision warning, already available on many production cars.

As the world becomes more congested and new populations need access to personal mobility, Barra said, accidents continue to be a global concern. A recent National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study estimated that the economic and societal impact of motor vehicle crashes in the United States is more than \$870 billion per year.

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GM CEO Mary Barra speaks to ITS World Congress in Detroit.



This van was donated to FIU by Chrysler Corporation.

Chrysler Works with FIU For 'Engineers on Wheels'

Chrysler and the Chrysler Foundation are always looking for ways to promote STEM education, said Chrysler spokesperson Mike Palese.

So, when Florida International University (FIU) proposed its "Engineers on Wheels" program to bring STEM education resources to local schools, the Chrysler folks jumped on board.

FIU's College of Engineering and Computing will begin rolling engineering education into South Florida's public school class-

rooms this fall with the launch of "Engineers on Wheels."

The program, sponsored by Chrysler and The Chrysler Foundation, is an innovative, hands-on STEM education initiative.

"Chrysler is active with 30 universities across the country," Palese said. "It's part of our effort to recruit engineering talent. The schools have what is called a 'university relations team.'"

The team is usually made up of

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BorgWarner Reveals New, Upgraded Solenoid for GM

by Jim Stickford

Sometimes something as small as a mini direct-acting variable force solenoid (VFS) can be a very big deal.

What is a mini direct-acting variable force solenoid?

It's a transmission control solenoid – smaller than regular solenoids – that increases accuracy and reduces leakage more than variable bleed solenoids.

Auburn Hills-based auto supplier BorgWarner recently announced that it's now supplying its new VFS to 2015 GM vehicle models.

"This is a big deal because it was something we designed beginning about three years ago for GM's GF-6 six-speed transmission," said Jeremy Barge, chief engineer for BorgWarner Transmission Systems.

"A few years ago, GM launched the GF-6 as a global platform for mid-size engine vehicles. The GF-6 is a six-speed front-wheel-drive system that is truly a worldwide platform."

Once GM got the GF-6 up and running, they let it be known to their suppliers that they were looking for refinements in the efficiency and performance of the platform, Barge said. That's where BorgWarner's new VFS comes in.

"It provides an upgrade to both fuel economy and shift performance," Barge said. "So we went to work and designed our mini direct-acting VFS."

"Because the GF-6 is a global platform, applications now exist in every major global market – North and South America, Europe, China, Korea – in the world."

Barge said the BorgWarner VFS

will be featured in 2015 Chevy, Buick and GMC vehicles.

BorgWarner started working on the new VFS about three years ago, Barge said.

GM agreed to purchase it about two years ago, and it took that long for BorgWarner to get the approval from GM to inform the public about the product.

"That's pretty normal for this kind of thing," Barge said.

"The VFS is being made in our facility in Mississippi. We are now working on applications with other automakers."

"Right now, our plan is to expand production and sales globally."

"The improved efficiency and

accuracy of BorgWarner's mini direct-acting VFS result in better fuel economy and shift feel for drivers," said Robin Kenrick, president and general manager of BorgWarner Transmission Systems.

"Shorter system calibration time, 'drop-in' replacement and reduced development cycles also make these new solenoids a fast-to-market solution for OEMs."

"We are pleased that GM has chosen to bring BorgWarner's next-generation technology for hydraulic controls to consumers with this global program."

Barge said the new VFS is suited for a variety of applications. Because BorgWarner's VFS is in-

sensitive to temperature and supply-side pressure variations, shift quality is improved.

All of this is achieved with minimal revision to the existing transmission valve body, while improving customer quality perception and satisfaction.

Barge said GM and BorgWarner have a long-standing relationship, and this product builds on that.

"I think the development of this product allows customers to take advantage of performance to optimize and reduce total fuel consumption," Barge said.

"From my perspective, everything we work on is meant to improve performance and fuel efficiency. So to be able to design



New solenoid for GM vehicles

and create something as relatively small as a transmission control solenoid and have that part do so much and have such a significant impact is really cool.

"This is quite impressive and we take quite a bit of pride in its development."

Ford F-450 Pickup 'Best-in-Class Towing,' Says VP Raj Nair

The Society of Automotive Engineers reaffirmed the 2015 Ford F-450 as the undisputed heavy-duty towing leader with a 31,200 pounds towing capacity.

The organization tested the pickup using its J2807 standard test, said Ford spokesperson Scott Fosgard.

SAE J2807 establishes tow vehicle performance requirements against certain performance criteria to determine a truck's maximum trailer tow rating, Fosgard said. Ford is a founding member of the J2807 committee, which includes other truck and trailer manufacturers.

"We leave no doubt with customers that the F-450 pickup truck has best-in-class towing of 31,200 pounds – whether tested using our own internal towing standards or SAE J2807," said Raj Nair, Ford group vice president, Global Product Development.

Nair said Ford improved the 2015 F-450 pickup by giving it a more capable version of the F-350 frame, plus a more capable suspension and 19.5-inch wheels and tires to enable its best-in-class towing.

The F-450 pickup is available exclusively as a crew cab 4x4. The truck's J2807-certified maximum tow rating is 2,200 pounds greater than its closest competitor's crew cab 4x4 pickup, said Nair.

Best-in-class towing performance is achieved with Ford's second-generation 6.7-liter Power Stroke V8 turbo diesel engine that has been developed to provide the segment's top combination of power, torque and efficiency, Nair said, adding that the Power Stroke boasts best-in-class 440 horsepower across all Super Duty pickup models – from F-250 to F-450. Super Duty also offers

860 lb.-ft. of torque for the same models.

Ford is the only heavy-duty pickup truck manufacturer that designs and builds its own diesel engine and transmission combination – from concept to execution – ensuring the powertrain

will work seamlessly with all chassis components and vehicle calibrations, Nair said.

This approach enables Ford engineers to optimize the pickup's performance across the en-

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F-450 was SAE-tested using organization's J2807 standard.

Detroit Auto Scene

31201 Chicago Road South
Warren, Michigan 48093

586-939-6800

Contact us:
Info@DetroitAutoScene.com

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Jim Stickford, news

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'We Will Make Driving Safer' – GM CEO Barra

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Advancing technology so that people can more safely live their lives is a responsibility GM embraces, Barra said.

"No other suite of technologies offers so much potential for good, and it's time to turn potential into reality," Barra said.

"That's why I'm announcing today that GM will put its first V2V-enabled car on the road in about two years. What's more, I'm announcing that we will bring an advanced, highly automated driving technology to the market in the same timeframe.

"We are not doing this for the sake of the technology itself. We're doing it because it's what customers around the world want – and not just GM customers.

"That's why I am asking all of you to accelerate your work in the field as well. If we make bold moves together, then our generation will stand on the shoulders of engineering giants like Charles Kettering, Henry Ford, Eiji Toyoda and Karl Benz. I know we can do it."

Culver's Event Will Celebrate End Of Cruise Season

Summer's over and Joe Zimmer, owner of the Culver's restaurant in Lake Orion by the Palace, would like to have a party to celebrate the summer that was 2014.

"We're holding our sixth annual 'Cruiser Customer Appreciation Celebration,'" Zimmer said. "This year's event is set for Sunday, Sept. 21. There will be a buffet outdoors with chicken and pulled pork. We will also have entertainment as well. The DJ Billy D will be there, and performing live will be Tom Mazza, whose repertoire includes the works of Sinatra, Diamond and Buddy Holly."

Zimmer said the yearly celebration is a way to thank all the cruisers who stop by Culver's every Tuesday during the summer. This year's cruise season started on May 6, and the restaurant averaged about 400 cars a cruise.

"I've got to tell you, we had some really beautiful cars this year," Zimmer said. "We always do, but this year was particularly nice. It was also a very wet summer, so we ended up having a lot of indoor cruises this year. That's when they go into the restaurant and we have things like bingo. These cruises evoke such friendship, come rain or shine."

Zimmer said that the Rochester Corvette Club has decided to meet every Friday at Culver's, making the restaurant the place to be for classic car fans.

Tickets for this year's celebration, which is from 1 to 5 p.m., are \$8 for adults, \$5 for children.

Teddy Bears Ride in Style – In Chevy Suburban, 'Vette

Chevrolet is celebrating National Teddy Bear Day and teamGM Cares Week by donating 48 small and one very large teddy bear to the Sunshine on Wheels program at New York's Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center in Manhattan.

Three members of the GM Asset Management team, each of whom is a cancer survivor, helped deliver the teddy bears to young patients.

The third annual "teamGM Cares Week" is a national initiative for General Motors' employees to volunteer time and manpower to local non-profits and communities, said GM spokesperson Monte Doran.

He added, "National Teddy Bear day falls on Sept. 9 every year, and coincidentally is during teamGM Cares week. "September is also Childhood Cancer Awareness Month."

"As someone who believes in the power of charity and altruism," said volunteer Sean Graham, director of Investment Operations for GM Asset Management, "as well as one who has been impacted by the effect cancer has had on my family, I am excited to participate in this donation and partnership with Memorial Sloan Kettering.

"I hope we are providing as much of a benefit to these children and staff as we are receiving by giving back in this small way."

The bears were driven through the heart of New York on their way to Memorial Sloan Kettering. A 2015 Chevrolet Suburban carried the 48 small bears along the route, while a 51-inch-wide bear rode shotgun in a 2015 Corvette Stingray Convertible.

The bears also wore gold ribbons in recognition of National Childhood Cancer Awareness Month.

Memorial Sloan Kettering is an

affiliate hospital of the Sunrise Association, which has an ongoing partnership with GM, Doran said.

The Sunrise Association operates a Sunrise on Wheels program, which brings games and activities to children undergoing chemotherapy treatment at the hospital.

That wasn't the only charitable project in New York that GM was involved in last week.

On Sept. 10, for the second year in a row, the General Motors Foundation donated \$100,000 to aid Central Park Conservancy's "Keeping it Green" program designed to introduce pre-kindergarten through 12th grade students to the importance of preserving and caring for New York City's Central Park.

The program, offering age-appropriate environmental and horticultural information to school groups, engaged more than 750 students last year.

With renewed support from the GM Foundation, the Conservancy will continue to offer "Keeping it Green," to school groups during the week, as well as weekend sessions for families beginning this fall, said GM Foundation President Vivian Pickard.

"The 'Keeping it Green' program is a wonderful way to offer unique learning experiences to New York students and families, while helping to maintain the beauty and integrity of Central Park," said Pickard.

"Preserving this natural resource is incredibly important and we're committed to helping students and communities gain respect for this and other important landmarks."



Giant teddy bear enjoys view from Corvette on way to cancer center.

To mark the GM Foundation's renewed commitment, 20 teamGM Cares Volunteers from GM's New York City offices completed a variety of tasks in the Park last week, including the removal of invasive plant material and painting benches near a heavily visited entrance on the Park's east side, Pickard said.

"Thanks to the GM Foundation's ongoing support, the Con-

servancy will continue to provide environmental stewardship opportunities to families and schools in the City's greatest outdoor classroom – Central Park," said Doug Blonsky, president and CEO of Central Park Conservancy and Central Park Administrator.

"Their partnership will help sustain Central Park as a one-of-a-kind, shared backyard to all New Yorkers."



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Remembering When the Bicycle Was King

by Jim Stickford

Many have forgotten that the foundations of Michigan's auto industry got their start, in part, from the state's bicycle industry.

Many, but not the Wheelmen, who recently had a display at the Old Car Festival held at The Henry Ford in Dearborn Sept. 6-7.

Tyson Brown, who works Technical Assistance & Product Support, Vehicle Service – Chassis, Body & Paint for Chrysler, has been a Wheelman since the 1980s.

"I am a bicycle history enthusiast," Brown said. "I used to work at a bicycle shop when I was younger and I got exposed to automobiles through my grandfather, William Nickle, who owned a 1912 Model T. That was the first car I ever drove. He taught me when I was 13. When I learned how to drive a regular car, I found it strange that there weren't three floor pedals."

Brown's grandfather would take him to Greenfield Village and they would learn about the history of the automobile and the bicycle in Michigan.

Brown described the Wheelmen as a national, nonprofit organization dedicated to keeping alive the heritage of American cycling, promoting the restoration and riding of early cycles manufactured before 1918, and encouraging cycling as part of modern living. Members are also intent on learning lost skills, retelling lost stories, researching and writing of the golden era of cycling.

So the local chapter of the Wheelmen setting up a display of antique bicycles at the recent Old Car Festival was only natural, Brown said.

"A lot of people don't know this part of the auto industry's history," Brown said. "But a lot of famous auto pioneers got their start

in the bicycle industry. The Dodge brothers are the most famous. They got their start making sealed bearings for bicycles before getting into making auto parts and finally manufacturing cars."

A century ago, Michigan, like a lot of states, had local bicycle manufacturers. Not all bike makers who got in the car business were from Michigan, Brown said. The Columbia bicycle company, which was known for making an electric car called the Pope, was based in Connecticut.

"Their vehicle was really ahead of its time," Brown said. "But in its day, the time wasn't right for an electric engine, so it disappeared."

One Michigan bicycle manufacturer that managed to hit it big was National Bicycle Manufacturing of Bay City, Brown said. In 1913, it produced its own trucks under the nameplate, Natco.

"These were early trucks," Brown said. "I guess you could call them proto-pickups. In those days, there weren't big semi trucks like a Mack. The company was eventually bought out by William Durant and Louis Chevrolet and became a part of the Chevy empire."

"That facility in Bay City was used to make parts for Chevy vehicles. It's still there in the form of Bay City Powertrain."

In fact, Brown said, a lot of ideas we associate with the automobile got their start with bicycles. The pneumatic tire, for example, was first used for bike tires way back in 1892.

People these days often complain about the quality of road, Brown said. But he bets they would be surprised to learn that the first "good roads" campaigns were started by bicyclists more than 100 years ago.

The club had "at least" 100 members at the car show, Brown said. They showed off their col-



Tyson Brown

lection of antique bicycles and were dressed in clothing appropriate to the times.

When the Wheelmen aren't putting on displays at Greenfield Village, Brown said, they are often preparing to participate in parades. They sometimes even get together to talk about their love of antique bicycles. One thing that Brown finds interesting is that the bicycle really hasn't changed all that much in the last 100 years.

Put a century-old bike up against one from today, and most people won't notice many differences. What has changed is what today's bicycles are being made of.

The use of carbon fiber has grown, Brown said. But there are still a lot of bikes being made today that resemble bikes from 100 years ago.

Chrysler Works with FIU For 'Engineers on Wheels'

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school alumni who work for Chrysler, Palese said. Members interact with the school, Chrysler and STEM students who might be interested in working at Chrysler once they've graduated.

"The faculty at FIU approached the Chrysler university relations team at the school and told them about the program and asked if Chrysler wanted to participate," Palese said.

"The answer was yes, and so Chrysler and the Chrysler Foundation donated the van they are using for 'Engineers on Wheels.' It's exactly the kind of program we like to see put together to help promote STEM education."

The Engineers on Wheels program works closely with FIU's Education Effect – a university community school partnership that launched its second site at Florida's Booker T. Washington Senior High School this year.

Palese said the Engineers on Wheels van will visit South Florida classrooms this fall, providing hands-on activities and engineering experiments led by FIU students and overseen by FIU faculty.

"We are delighted that FIU is bringing its Engineers on Wheels program to Miami-Dade County Public Schools," said Cristian Carranza, a district administrative director who oversees science, math, career and technical education.

"This will give our students the kinds of high-tech, hands-on education they need to prepare for future success in STEM subjects and careers."

As part of Chrysler's broader strategy to recruit and retain talent, especially those in the field

of engineering, the company has worked closely with FIU to recruit more than 20 students over the past three years.

The Engineers on Wheels program will help maintain the pipeline of college-bound students interested in pursuing fields of study related to the automotive industry, said Palese.

"Inspiring young, bright people to pursue an education and careers in science, technology, engineering and math is essential to Chrysler Group's ability to compete and succeed," said Georgette Borrego Dulworth, director of Chrysler's Talent Acquisition and Diversity.

"We are pleased to support FIU's initiative to deliver STEM education to K-12 students by putting great minds in science and engineering on wheels."

Chrysler donated the new 2014 Ram ProMaster van, Palese said, while the Chrysler Foundation donated \$15,000 to help FIU establish the Engineers on Wheels program.

Engineers on Wheels builds on the success of the college's annual Engineering Expo, which brings more than 1,400 K-12 students from Florida schools to learn from students, researchers and staff and to discover the possibilities in STEM fields.

"Since its inception 13 years ago, we have seen a surge in the number of K-12 students and schools that attend our annual Engineering Expo," said Amir Mirmiran, dean of the College of Engineering and Computing.

"Engineers on Wheels gives us the opportunity to take our lab experiments and instruments to the schools and impact a larger audience – show them what engineers do and what it takes to become an engineer."

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2014 Ram 2500

'Best Value in Canada' Award Goes to Ram 2500 Pickup

Chrysler's 2014 Ram 2500 Heavy Duty pickup has been awarded a Vincentric "Best Value in Canada" award.

Vincentric co-founder Dave Wurster said Ram winning this award is something of a big deal.

"The pickup truck market is very competitive," Wurster said. "Any way that an automaker can distinguish its product from the very strong competition they face is good."

"If you can distinguish your product by things like cost of ownership and fuel economy – even better."

To pick its "Best Value in Class," Wurster said, Vincentric "fastidiously scrutinizes objective data on vehicles in each segment of the market, factoring in everything from the cost of insurance and repair to fuel consumption, maintenance and depreciation."

There are a couple of reasons for the difference between things like cost of ownership in Canada versus the U.S., Wurster said.

For example, a lot of pickups are sold in places like Texas, where snow is not a problem. Snow is always a factor in vehicle ownership in Canada, and as a result, four-wheel-drive vehicles tend to be more popular in Canada.

Other factors such as residual value differ from country to country. If a truck is more popular in one country, that truck will maintain a higher residual value.

Basically, Wurster said, there are a lot of factors in play. Even within the U.S., things like residual value can vary from region to region.

"Once Vincentric crunched the numbers for the full-size, three-quarter-ton heavy-duty pickup truck segment, the 2014 Ram 2500 Heavy Duty was the pickup that scored furthest below the expected ownership costs," said

Reid Bigland, president of Chrysler Canada.

"We are excited to share those results because we recognize that a low cost of ownership is as important to our demanding Ram customers as our reputation for having the longest-lasting full line of pickup trucks in Canada."

When asked if he was surprised at the Ram 2500 doing so well in its report, Wurster said no.

"The Ram 2500 earned the Vincentric Best Value in Canada award by delivering best-in-class performance when we measured total cost of ownership and compared it to expected results for the 2500 and its competitors."

"Contributing to its success was its class-leading insurance costs, maintenance costs, and retained value percentage over five years," Wurster said.

He said that the Detroit automakers have continued to put out good product in the truck markets.

"All three – GM, Ford and Ram – have really put out some great trucks recently," Wurster said. "It seems like every time a new truck comes out, they switch places in the rankings. That's especially with Ford and GM, but Ram in the past 18 months has really been doing well, too."

Vincentric is a privately held automotive data compilation and analysis firm headquartered in Bingham Farms, Mich.

The company provides data, knowledge, and insight to the automotive industry by identifying and applying the many aspects of automotive ownership costs. Using Dynamic Cost to Own, its comprehensive, proprietary cost-of-ownership database, it measures and analyzes the overall cost of owning and operating vehicles and its impact on the value provided to buyers.

JDRF Walk Set for Sept. 28

The annual JDRF Walk to Find a Cure for type 1 diabetes will be held at the GM Tech Center in Warren on Sunday, Sept. 28, between 8:30 and 10:30 a.m.

Gael Sandoval, senior manager for Ford's Global Action Team, said the event got its start back in the 1990s because Edsel Ford wanted to do something more to find a cure for the disease that affects three million Americans.

"In 1993, Edsel Ford's then-young son Albert was diagnosed as having type 1 diabetes," Sandoval said. "He decided to get involved and wanted Ford Motor Company to do more, so the Ford Global Action Team was started to help raise funds to fight the disease."

The JDRF, formerly known as the Juvenile Diabetes Research Fund, changed its name because the medical community no longer uses the term juvenile diabetes.

"The reason is simple," Sandoval said. "About 85 percent of the people who have type 1 dia-

betes are adults. Every year, approximately 30,000 people a year are diagnosed as having the disease. About half of them are children.

"But thanks to insulin, these children grow up and become adults. But they still have the disease. So most people with type 1 diabetes are adults."

Sandoval said that this year there will be two walks. The one at the Tech Center and one in Dexter.

"So there should be a walk near you wherever you live," Sandoval said. "The goal of the two walks is to raise between \$3.5 and \$4 million."

"At the Tech Center, there will be hydration stations, food stops and children's activities, so it should be a fun day for the family."

Sandoval said that anyone interested in signing up for the walk or donating money should visit the JDRF Web site at michiganeast.jdrf.org/event/warren-one-walk.

Most Drivers Have Shifted to Automatics

By DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) – When Marlo Dewing went shopping for a car last year, she only had one requirement: a manual transmission.

"Any car that was only available as an automatic was a deal breaker," said Dewing, 44. "I love to drive."

"I want to know that I am actually driving, that I am in control of the machine."

That made her shopping list a very short one. Only around 10 percent of vehicles made in North America now have manual transmissions, down from 35 percent in 1980.

And that number is expected to keep shrinking, according to the consulting firm IHS Automotive.

Improvements in the function and fuel economy of automatic transmissions have essentially killed the manual in the U.S., said Jack Nerad, the senior editor of Kelley Blue Book.

Some of the country's best-selling sedans – the Toyota Camry, Nissan Altima and Ford Fusion – don't even offer manual transmissions because so few buyers want them. Even some sporty cars, like the Jaguar F Type, come only with automatics.

Two years ago, Chrysler was burned when it assumed there would be higher demand for manual transmissions in its Dodge Dart compact car. The car sold slowly.

This year, when Fiat Chrysler's Alfa Romeo 4C sports car arrives in the U.S., it won't offer a manual transmission.

When a manual enthusiast questioned that decision at a company event in May, Fiat Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne

said U.S. demand for manuals is simply too limited.

"It's going to be you and four guys. That's my assessment of our market demand," he said. "I'll buy one, too, but then it's only going to be six."

Manual transmissions – which allow the driver to select the gear – were the rule until 1939, when General Motors Co. debuted the automatic transmission in its Oldsmobile brand. Initially, automatics were much more expensive and got poorer fuel economy, so drivers looking to economize tended to stick to manuals.

But in recent years, those gaps have closed, Nerad says.

"The manual transmission has become kind of a dodo bird," he said.

Manuals no longer have a fuel economy advantage. The five-speed manual transmission on the 2014 Honda Civic sedan gets 31 miles per gallon in combined city and highway driving, for example, while a Civic with Honda's continuously variable automatic transmission – which moves automatically to the gear most appropriate for the car's situation – gets 33 mpg.

The price gap does remain. A Honda Accord with an automatic transmission costs around \$800 more than a manual one, while drivers opting for an automatic transmission on a Chevrolet Corvette Stingray have to pay \$1,725 more. But that doesn't seem to have stifled demand.

Driving enthusiasts like Dewing remain manuals' biggest fans, and ensure that some brands will continue to produce them. Dewing eventually settled on a 2012 Volkswagen GTI with a six-speed manual transmission. It's a 210-horsepower hatchback that's popular with enthusiasts; Volkswagen says about half the GTIs it

sells in the U.S. are manuals.

Dewing, who has two daughters, said she'll teach them to drive on a manual. But Nerad isn't so sure. He taught one of his daughters to drive on a manual, but may not bother for his other two kids. Manuals are disappearing so quickly that they might not ever drive one, he said.

"Most advanced transmissions shift better than I would do," he said. "It's a natural progression. The Luddites out there are decrying the loss of manuals, but I'm not shedding a tear."

Macomb Official Appointed OCC Vice Chancellor

Macomb County Finance Director Peter Provenzano is the new vice chancellor for Administrative Services at Oakland Community College, effective Sept. 1.

For the past three years that Provenzano served as finance director for Macomb County, he oversaw a county budget that affected 850,000 residents, 2,500 county employees and 2,500 retirees, said Macomb County spokesperson John Cwikla.

Provenzano also served as a key member of executive leadership teams and managed budgets up to \$640 million. He is an expert in department reorganization to improve efficiency of services and was awarded Crain's Detroit Business Government CFO of the year in 2012.

OCC has a budget of \$157 million, services 27,500 students a year and employs 2,200 people across five campuses.

"I am excited to take on this challenge," Provenzano said. "I have long admired Oakland Community College as a dynamic institution."

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Harbour Report Creator James Harbour Dies

ROYAL OAK, Mich. (AP) — James E. Harbour, a retired auto executive who created a publication that became a benchmark for measuring productivity in the industry, has died.

He was 86. Harbour died Saturday, Sept. 6, at Troy Beaumont Hospital of complications from spinal surgery, his son, Ron Harbour, told The Associated Press.

General Motors CEO Mary Barra said Harbour "was a visionary when it came to manufacturing productivity."

"Jim's knowledge and passion for the manufacturing arena made the entire industry better, and by so doing, brought higher levels of product safety and quality to customers worldwide," she said in a statement.

Harbour was a native of Manchester, N.H., and served in the U.S. Navy 1945-48. He joined Ford Motor Co. in 1954 and Chrysler Corp. in 1957, before retiring in 1980 to found the company Harbour and Associates.

The consulting company created the Harbour Report, which became a widely recognized scorecard of automakers' performance at a time when U.S. companies were slammed by twin blows from Japanese competitors and a major economic downturn.

Harbour is survived by seven of his eight children, 10 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Ferrari Racing Performance Off; President Leaving

ROME (AP) — Ferrari president Luca Di Montezemolo will leave the company next month amid a disappointing season by the flagship Formula One team and before an imminent stock listing of merged parent company Fiat-Chrysler.

Montezemolo will depart on Oct. 13 following Ferrari's 60th anniversary celebration of sales in the United States, according to a Fiat-Chrysler statement. Fiat-Chrysler CEO Sergio Marchionne will also take on the Ferrari job in the immediate term.

While Ferrari is healthy economically, the F1 team has struggled in recent years and was a long way off the leaders at last weekend's home Italian Grand Prix, where there was a spat over the team's performance.

At the time, Montezemolo insisted he would stay on in the job, but Marchionne said he was "terribly upset" by the F1 team's performance, which he deemed "unacceptable."

The most successful team in F1 history, Ferrari has not won a constructors' title since 2008 and this season drivers Fernando Alonso and Raikkonen failed to win a single race. It hasn't won the driver's title since 2007.

"Our mutual desire to see Ferrari achieve its true potential on the track has led to misunderstandings, which became clearly visible over the last weekend," Marchionne said in a statement Sept. 10.

Montezemolo's departure is slated for three days before the new merged Fiat-Chrysler company is listed on the New York Stock Exchange. Fiat controls 90 percent of Ferrari.

"Ferrari will have an important role to play within the FCA group in the upcoming (listing) on Wall Street," Montezemolo said.

"This will open up a new and different phase which I feel should be spearheaded by the CEO of the group. This is the end of an era."

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GM Tech Center Starts New Bike Program for Employees

by Jim Stickford

It can be said that the cutting edge of the automotive industry is created at GM's Tech Center in Warren. So what's the latest development to take place there?

Bicycles.

On Aug. 26, employees at the Tech Center began using bicycles to get around the campus.

"The bicycle program was created in partnership with the company Zagster," said GM spokesperson Sharon Basel.

"They provide the bicycles and the software needed to make the program work. We started the pilot program in late July, and it proved to be such a success that we put the program into effect only a few weeks later."

Dave Tulauskas, director of Sustainability at GM, said he's been a proponent of something like the Tech Center bike program for some time.

"The tipping point to implementing the program," Tulauskas said, "was the fact that so many trends are now influencing the auto industry — things like the sharing economy, climate change and how the millennial generation thinks and behaves."

"We at GM are trying to attract the best possible talent to our company. We are competing with outfits like Google, and one way to compete is to position GM as a forward-thinking company."

Tulauskas said he and others at GM recognize that they don't always have all the answers. That's why they look to partners like Zagster to help them set up the bike exchange program.

On hand at the Tech Center on the first day of the new program was Timothy Ericson, co-founder and CEO of Zagster. He said the company got its start in 2007 in Philadelphia and is currently based in Boston.

"We got our start in downtown Detroit a couple of years ago with Quicken Loans and DTE Energy," Ericson said. "We're now

working with other businesses downtown. But here at the Tech Center, once people sign up and get educated on how the whole process works, I expect that the bikes will see a lot of use."

The system, Ericson said, is pretty simple. All the bikes that are located on the campus are electronically locked. Anyone who needs one to get from one part of the Tech Center campus to another goes to one of seven designated bike pickup/drop-off locations on the campus.

With his or her smartphone, the bicyclist then uses the special Zagster app to "sign" up for a bike. An electronic signal is sent to an available bicycle, and the bicyclist then uses the bike to get where he or she needs to go, and signs off when finished.

"Right now, we'll have 50 bikes at the seven locations," Ericson said. "The Tech Center is a good place for such a program. There are about 11 miles of road within the campus. There is never enough parking in dense urban areas."

"There are employees who will spend 15 or 20 minutes trying to find a parking space near where they have a meeting at the Tech Center. This should prove to be a real time-saver."

Ericson said that for now, Zagster's program is only for the Tech Center, but GM has other sites around the country where such a program could prove useful. If the Tech Center program takes off, he wouldn't be surprised to see it picked up elsewhere.

For John Waechter, an engineering group manager, the bike program is just what the doctor ordered.

"This gives us so much personal freedom," Waechter said. "Let's face it, the campus is spread out. I have meetings in buildings on the opposite side of the campus from the VEC building where my offices are all the time. Before, my choices were



From left, Dave Tulauskas, John Waechter and Timothy Ericson

to either drive my car or walk."

That often resulted in Waechter spending 10 minutes looking for a parking space. He could walk to the other building, but that might take 15 minutes. That would result in a half-hour of his working day just getting to and from meetings.

"Or I could take a shuttle," Waechter said. "Unless the shuttle came just as I got to the pickup site, that usually means spending 10 or 15 minutes just standing around and waiting. But with a bike, I can get to another building in five minutes. It is such a time-saver."

Waechter said he also likes the fact that the Zagster bikes have a wire basket in front that can carry his laptop computer. He is worried that one day he might have to stop suddenly and his laptop might pop out of the basket, which is why he suggested that they have some sort of



Bicycles sit and wait for employees who'd rather ride than walk.

bungee cord that could be used to strap in items like a laptop.

"We are required to have our own helmets," Waechter said. "Which I don't mind because in my civilian life I am a bicyclist, so I have a helmet."

"These rules mean that we don't have to strap on a sweaty helmet that someone else has

used, and I am for that. If I use the bike system as much as I think I will, I'll just buy another helmet, so I'll have one for the office and one for my home."

If nothing else, Waechter said, the bikes will help a lot of engineers who spend a lot of time behind their desks get more exercise, and that's never a bad thing.

Karmanos Partners Night Set for Sept. 20

The Barbara Ann Karmanos Cancer Institute's 21st Annual Partners Night is set for 7 p.m., Saturday, Sept. 20, at the main branch of the Detroit Public Library.

The Detroit Public Library, celebrating its 150th anniversary year, will be decked out for the 1960s' Mad Men-inspired soiree honoring Mary Kay and Keith Crain, chairman, Crain Communications, Inc., for their longtime support of Karmanos Cancer Institute, said Patricia A. Ellis, director of Media Relations for Karmanos.

The event will include a cocktail reception and strolling dinner, a brief program, super-silent auction, a raffle for a \$5,000 gift card to the Somerset Collection and live entertainment and dancing throughout the evening.

Karmanos' Partners Night, along with the Partners Golf Classic held Aug. 25, is a signature fundraiser that also honors philanthropists who support Karmanos' cancer care and science research, Ellis said.

This year's Partners events, honoring the Crains, will support the development of a cancer survivorship research program, a special initiative to help support the continuum of care for cancer survivors after their treatment has ended.

"I'm a colon cancer survivor; not once but twice and both times treated at Karmanos," said Keith Crain. "Being a survivor is a great thing."

"Today, many more people are surviving cancer due to the incredible advancements that have been made in the last few decades.

"Early detection is key so get

your colonoscopy and other life-saving cancer screenings.

"Mary Kay and I are honored to be recognized at this year's Partners. It's our hope that in our lifetime, there will be a cure for cancer. I don't know how or when, but I guarantee you it's going to happen. It will happen because of everyone's contributions."

"Karmanos did a great thing for me and its compassionate medical team and staff continue to help other cancer patients survive their disease. Please continue to support this great institution."

Partners Night guests will also be able to view and bid on a "super-silent" auction and instant auction items from their mobile devices, as well as purchase raffle tickets or make a donation, Ellis said.

"I'm honored to serve as a Partners committee member to raise funds for cancer research and to showcase the exceptional work being done at Karmanos," said KC Crain, executive vice president/director of Corporate Operations, Crain Communications, and group publisher for Automotive News Group.

"I'm also thrilled that this year's exciting Partners events are honoring my parents — my dad a two-time cancer survivor treated at Karmanos and my mom who supported my dad through his cancer journey."

"They are wonderful ambassadors of Karmanos and tireless supporters of our region. I invite everyone to join us on Sept. 20 for a fun evening benefitting a great cause."

The Partners Committee is a group of hands-on volunteers

who have raised nearly \$13.5 million through the Partners events over the past 20 years to support the Karmanos Cancer Institute's research programs.

This year's Partners Committee executive chairs are Brian Eisenberg and Jason Geisz.

The Partners group was the original vision of Anna and Harry Korman in memory of their daughter, Suzanne, who died of cancer at age 36, Ellis said.

They established a research fund to help others with cancer and to begin a legacy of research to help create more effective treatments, earlier detection methods, as well as building support for patients and their families so that others would not have to suffer as their daughter did.

"It is our pleasure to recognize Mary Kay and Keith Crain at this year's Partners for all that they've done and continue to do to raise awareness of cancer prevention and early detection, giving a voice to all those touched by this disease," said Gerold Bepko, M.D., Ph.D., president and chief executive officer of Karmanos Cancer Institute.

"Their leadership not only benefits Karmanos, encouraging funds for cancer research; it also lifts our community, showcases the wealth of talent here and demonstrates their passion to make a significant difference in the lives of others."

Partners Night Benefactor tickets are \$250 each; and Friend tickets are \$175 each. Pre-registration is required. For more information, call 313-576-8106, email laurinl@karmanos.org or visit www.karmanos.org/partners.

Edmunds.com to be 'Part Of Detroit's Renaissance'

by Jim Stickford

Long a presence in the automotive business, Edmunds.com has made the decision to be a presence in the city of Detroit.

The Internet site, which serves consumers looking to buy a new or used car, is based in Santa Monica, Calif., but has maintained offices in the metro Detroit area for the past decade. The company recently moved its local offices to downtown Detroit.

"Edmunds has been around a long time," said company CEO Ari Steinlauf. "We started out in print about 50 years ago, but transitioned to the Internet about 20 years ago. Now we're entirely on the Internet."

"We opened an office in Troy about a decade ago, and then moved to Southfield. In April of 2013, I read an article in *The New York Times* about what Dan Gilbert was doing in downtown Detroit and thought that was exciting."

The end result, Steinlauf said, was that when the company's lease in Southfield was getting ready to expire, they decided to make the move to downtown Detroit to be a part of the city's renaissance.

"I see this as part of an investment in a city that is so important to the auto industry," Steinlauf said. "To do our part, we have what we call our 'Brick by Brick' campaign."

"Hart Plaza needs some work

in some places, so we're providing bricks for the ground and people can write their own messages on them and be a part of the return of the city."

Steinlauf said that he is not only excited to be a part of Detroit's Renaissance, he's "plain excited" to be a part of the auto industry.

"This is, in my opinion, the best time ever to be in the car business," Steinlauf said. "I am excited by everything. The products are great, the market is great, the carmakers are profitable. I feel fortunate to be a part of the automotive industry at this time in history."

Steinlauf said he's also excited by what Edmunds has to offer its customers, the car buyer.

"We will have a set of new features in our mobile environment," Steinlauf said. "It will be both in Android and IOS operating systems for smart phones. We call it the 'Lot Buddy.' It helps give access on vehicle prices to shoppers who have the app on their phones or tablets. They can get an actual price on an actual VIN."

"It wasn't that long ago that a consumer walking onto a car lot would have a hard time finding out the price of a vehicle. He or she might ask what the vehicle went for and would be told a weekly or monthly payment."

Now, Steinlauf said, all the consumer has to do to get a price on a car is have his or her phone location function on.

Buick Extends Hand to 100 Communities

Buick hopes to help 100 communities across the country offset the rising costs of after-school programs and reduce local deficits with "Drive For Your Students" – a test-drive initiative that partners Buick dealerships with public high schools.

Through "Drive for Your Students," dealers and schools will work together to host grassroots test-drive events, through which Buick will donate money for each test drive taken at the event, up to \$10,000 per event to be shared among participating schools, said Molly Peck, Buick's marketing director.

"This program further demonstrates Buick's commitment to community and education, as well as the local investment that dealers are making in

their home towns," said Peck.

In addition to gaining funds for their schools, students who help host the drive events gain valuable real-world experience in helping dealers plan, coordinate and execute events.

"Schools are always seeking dynamic opportunities to support their extracurricular activities and elective programs," said Keller (Texas) Independent School District Athletic Director Bob DeJonge. "It provides an opportunity for the students to build their resume with relevant work experience and for the community to demonstrate support for the school."

The program was piloted in six communities in May, and is rolling out to 94 additional areas nationwide through 2014.

"This program offers the opportunity for Buick and its dealers to build lasting relationships in the community," said Nader Ozzie, Freeman Buick GMC in Grapevine, Texas. "It also provides members of the community with an opportunity to experience the new Buick cars and crossovers in a fun, relaxed environment."

"Drive for Your Students" joins Buick's celebration of academics and achievement, which includes the Buick Achievers Scholarship Program. To date, Buick Achievers, funded by the General Motors Foundation, has provided nearly \$28 million in scholarships to students across the U.S. Buick also is a partner of the NCAA and supports achievement in college sports.

A123 Hires Battery Expert as Chief Tech

Dr. Patrick Hurley has joined A123 Systems, a developer and manufacturer of advanced lithium-ion batteries and systems, as its new Chief Technology Officer.

Hurley has also assumed leadership responsibility for A123 Venture Technologies, which is the company's research and development unit focused on a collaborative business model for innovation in Lithium-ion battery technology.

Hurley brings to A123 both academic and industry experience in transportation applications of advanced batteries, said A123 spokesperson Jeff Kessen.

Hurley earned his Ph.D. in Inorganic Chemistry from Purdue University and completed several years of post-doctoral research at the California Institute of Technology in the beginning of his career.

While at CalTech he focused on multiple cleantech innovations, including projects on energy storage materials.

Hurley's subsequent industry experience has included technology leadership roles at Air Products and Chemicals and most recently Johnson Controls, where he was executive director of Global Core Engineering in the Power Solutions division.

As A123 builds upon its R&D foundation in Waltham, Mass., under Hurley's leadership, the company will continue to strengthen its standing as one of the industry's most accomplished researchers of battery technology, Kessen said in a statement to the media.

In addition, Hurley will have responsibility to integrate and lead the company's battery development activities which are located in the province of Hangzhou, China.

Recall Parts Not Ready? Advice Editor Has Ideas

By TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) – In July, two scary notices arrived in Amaris McGee's mailbox.

They came from GM, and each told her the gray 2005 Chevy Malibu she drives to work every day is being recalled for safety problems. But neither problem can be fixed yet because the parts aren't ready.

Like millions of others caught in GM's massive recall crisis, the 25-year-old corporate chef in Dallas can't afford to rent or buy another car. So she drives the Malibu even though the brake lights sometimes don't work. And it's possible that the transmission shift cable can break, leaving the car stuck in gear when the shifter shows it's in park.

She avoids the freeways, nervously driving two miles to work every day on side streets while she waits for a notice telling her the parts have arrived.

Almost always, automakers or U.S. safety regulators send out recall notices before parts are ready. Sometimes the companies or dealers offer free loaner cars, but most of the time they don't.

That presents car owners with a difficult question: should they keep driving and hope the problem doesn't affect them, or rent a car until the dealer gets parts, which can take months?

Adding to driver anxiety is the fact that news coverage of a recall often comes before the notices, because most automakers follow federal law and report problems to the government to avoid fines and bad publicity.

There are steps you can take to get peace of mind or get your car fixed before the parts are officially available, said Carroll Lachnit, consumer advice editor at the Edmunds.com website.

Lachnit suggests car owners check to see if their car is under recall on a new site offered by the NHTSA at vinrcl.safercar.gov/vin/. With a VIN, the site will tell you if there are unfixed recalls on your car, even if they are old. It also will tell you if the car company is waiting for parts.

If parts aren't available, Lachnit suggests clicking on links that take you to the NHTSA recall

database, and looking at the documents for symptoms of the problem, and to see if it has caused any crashes or injuries. If your car has the symptoms, it's time to contact the dealer.

"You have to kind of assess how serious the problem is to make some noise and get some resolution," Lachnit says. "They may have parts."

Most of the time, GM starts recalls with about 30 percent of the parts it needs, spokesman Alan Adler said, so parts are available to those who are having problems.

He suggests working with a dealer to get the repairs done even before notices are mailed by the company telling you to come in for repairs.

In most cases, automakers must line up companies to build replacement parts. They also must test the parts and ship them to thousands of dealers, and they have to tell mechanics how to fix things. Experts say no company, no matter how large, could quickly handle millions of parts.

"We've got this huge backlog," conceded GM's Adler. "We're working through these issues as soon as we can."

The same thing happens to other manufacturers. For example, Toyota in April recalled about 1.3 million older vehicles, including the popular RAV4 crossover, for air bag problems. At first, there were no parts available. But the company is now telling owners with air bag warning lights illuminated on their dash to take cars to dealers.

For Malibus and 2.4 million other recalled midsize cars like McGee's, Adler says 900,000 parts have been shipped to fix the brake light problem. Letters telling U.S. customers to get the cars fixed are going out now at the rate of 60,000 per day. But parts still aren't available for the transmission cable problem in McGee's car.

McGee says she'll contact her dealer about getting the car fixed before she gets a letter telling her to do so. And she's unhappy with GM because of how long it's taken to find and fix the problem. "I'd like this rectified as soon as possible," she said.

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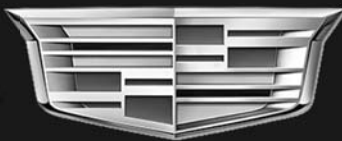
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Ford F-450: 'Best-in-Class Towing,' Says VP Raj Nair

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tire vehicle lineup, he said.

Ford previously determined F-450 pickup towing capacity using rigorous internal testing standards exclusively. Now it has added SAE J2807 test procedures, reaffirming the F-450 pickup rating. F-450 passed the additional tests with 31,200 pounds in tow, just as it passed Ford internal tests, Fosgard said.

The SAE J2807 test requires the vehicle to be loaded with about 400 pounds more weight than Ford's internal test (two passengers instead of one, and base curb weight instead of minimum curb weight), but the weight addition has no effect on F-450 towing capacity, said Fosgard, adding, "Using either standard, F-450 has best-in-class towing capacity of 31,200 pounds."

As a result of the J2807 test results, Ford is also increasing the F-450 pickup's already best-in-class gross combined weight rating from 40,000 pounds to 40,400 pounds - topping the nearest competitor by 2,500 pounds, said Fosgard.

Ford is migrating to the J2807 standard when it introduces new vehicles and will use base curb weight, rather than minimum curb weight, to determine payload ratings for all of its pickup trucks, Nair said. The change will align Ford's payload rating practices with other manufacturers to make it easier for customers to compare vehicles.

Using base curb weight, maximum payload for the 2015 F-450 pickup goes from 5,450 pounds to 5,300 pounds.

As always, actual payload ratings are determined for an individual vehicle in its as-built con-

dition at the factory. Ford F-Series Super Duty customers continue to have the flexibility to add or delete equipment to meet their specific payload needs. Each truck's unique payload rating can be found on the tire and loading label on the door frame.

Car Sales Growth In China Slowed During August

BEIJING (AP) - China's auto sales growth decelerated further in August to 8.5 percent while sales of SUVs surged.

Drivers in the world's biggest auto market by vehicle sales bought 1.5 million passenger cars in August, the China Association of Automobile Manufacturers said Sept 11. Total sales, including trucks and buses, rose 4 percent to 1.7 million vehicles.

Global automakers are looking to China to drive global sales but growth has slowed steadily as its economy cooled. Sales growth dropped from 13.9 percent in May to 9.7 percent in July.

The market share of Chinese auto brands eroded further in August under intense pressure from foreign brands that are spending heavily to appeal to local tastes. Chinese brands' share of the market declined by 1 percentage point to 37.1 percent.

Earlier, GM said sales of its brand vehicles by the company and its local partners rose 14 percent to 280,178 vehicles. The company said it was a new August record and the third-best month this year. For the first eight months of the year, sales rose 11.1 percent to 2.3 million vehicles.

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Delphi's CEO O'Neal Will Retire in March

Delphi Automotive Chief Executive Officer and President Rodney O'Neal will retire March 1, 2015.

O'Neal got his start in the automotive business in 1971, when he was a student at the General Motors Institute (now Kettering University). He later worked for GM, holding a number of engineering, production and manufacturing supervisory positions over the years in locations throughout the United States, Portugal and Canada.

O'Neal became vice president and president of Delphi's Interior Systems Division in 1997 and rose through the ranks as president of Delphi's Dynamics, Propulsion & Thermal sector in 2003.

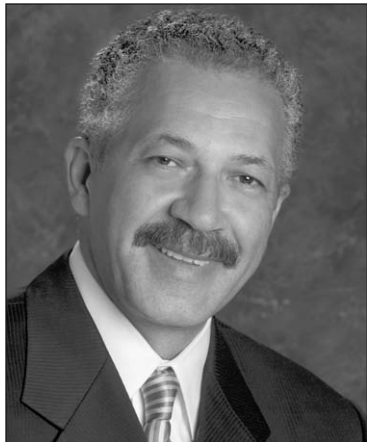
In 2005, O'Neal became president and chief operating officer of Delphi before ascending to his current position two years later.

He has a bachelor's degree from General Motors Institute and a masters degree from Stanford University.

In a statement to the press, Delphi said, "Effective Oct. 1, 2014, Kevin P. Clark, Delphi chief financial officer and executive vice president, is chief operating officer and will succeed O'Neal as CEO and president upon his retirement next year."

O'Neal, 61, will stay on in an advisory role until the end of 2015.

Mark J. Murphy, formerly president, U.S. Industrial Gases, Praxair, Inc., is appointed CFO and executive vice president, succeeding Clark, also effective Oct. 1, 2014.



Rodney O'Neal

"Rodney O'Neal has been an exceptional CEO in guiding Delphi's transformation and positioning it as an industry leader," said Jack Krol, Delphi's board chairman.

"After successfully leading the company through its Chapter 11 restructuring, Rod took Delphi public with its IPO in 2011, generating significant shareholder value.

"With Rod at the helm, Delphi's market capitalization has increased more than three-fold to \$21 billion."

O'Neal, in a statement to the press, praised his replacement.

"Delphi's strength, industry-leading portfolio, strong financials and talented leadership team all position it for continued future success," said O'Neal.

"Kevin has been a key leader in creating and implementing our business strategy, and I have every confidence he will continue to drive strong value creation. As for me, I've had over 40 demanding, eventful and amazing years. It's time."

Seniors Look for In-Car Features With High-Tech

For the lucky senior citizen who might be celebrating Grandparents' Day by pulling a new or used car into the driveway, AutoTrader's expert editors have some timely recommendations of in-vehicle features that will make the drive a little easier.

"Car culture was huge when the Baby Boomers were growing up, so it makes sense that as they get older, they're going to want to stay behind the wheel as long as possible," Brian Moody, site editor for AutoTrader.com said.

"The technology and features available in vehicles now can do a lot to make sure older drivers are comfortable and safe."

While stereotypes may persist that these older drivers may not be as interested in the latest in-car tech features as their tech-savvy children, Moody said AutoTrader research says otherwise.

In a recent study, 62 percent of Baby Boomers (aged 48-66) say technology is an important consideration when shopping for a new car, compared with 61 percent of Millennials.

Some tech features AutoTrader editors say older drivers should consider include backup camera, keyless entry, push-button start, power liftgate and an infotainment system that's easy to use.

"While older drivers can benefit from the features infotainment systems offer, like navigation and voice control, finding an interface that's intuitive and responsive is key," Moody said.

"Make sure to thoroughly test out the infotainment system in every car being considered. Ask the salesperson for a detailed demonstration, and then make sure you feel comfortable operating the system yourself before driving off the lot."

Comfort and convenience features are also must-haves for older drivers.

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Toyota Issues Recall of Tundra Pickup Trucks

DETROIT (AP) – Toyota is recalling about 140,000 Tundra full-size pickup trucks because a plastic trim piece can interfere with the side air bags.

The recall affects Crew-Max and Double Cab versions in the U.S., Mexico and Canada from the 2014 model year.

The company said in a Sept. 11 statement to the media that the trim covering the center pillars behind the front seats may have been installed incorrectly.

This problem could stop air bags from inflating to their intended shape.

Toyota said in its media statement that the company doesn't know of any crashes or injuries that may have been caused by the problem.

Dealers will inspect the trim and replace it if necessary.

The recall covers 130,000 Tundras in the U.S., 10,000 in Canada and 200 in Mexico, Toyota said in the statement.

Toyota said Tundra truck owners will be notified of the recall by mail.

Cable Company Chooses Transit for Its Technicians

Technicians for the fourth-largest cable operator in the United States – Charter Communications of Stamford, Conn. – will soon drive new 2015 Ford Transit vans.

Charter recently ordered more than 800 low-roof, regular-wheel-base Transit vans with the standard 3.7-liter V6 engine for its technicians.

These vehicles are used to transport equipment for installing and servicing Internet, TV and phone at customers' homes across 29 states.

"Charter Communications' choice of the low-roof-model Ford Transit allows its installers the ability to maneuver in tight parking spaces and garages, while offering almost 56 inches of cargo height with rear cargo doors that open up to 180 degrees for easy loading and unloading," said Kevin Koswick, director of Ford's North American Fleet, Lease and Remarketing Operations.

Charter is one of the first large fleets to order the new full-size

2015 Transit van, which went on sale in June.

After an extensive review of available full-size vans, Charter selected Ford Transit due to its superior fuel economy and cargo space, said Kathy Carrington, senior vice president of Corporate Services at Charter.

Upfitting convenience was also a factor. The new Transit is built near Kansas City, Mo., home to Charter equipment installer Auto Truck.

When the Charter team drove Transit at a March ride-and-drive event, the van's handling, tight turning radius and panoramic windshield view sealed the deal, Koswick said.

"Charter is excited to be adding the Ford 2015 Transit Van to our fleet," said Carrington. "The handling, safety features, cargo space and fuel efficiency were all contributing factors to our choice and our technicians will be well-equipped to serve our customers with these trucks."

In the United States, Transit re-



2015 Ford Transit van

places America's best-selling van for 35 years, E-Series, first sold in 1961 as Ford Econoline.

The Ford Transit was introduced in Europe in 1965, and has been the best-selling commercial van in the United Kingdom for 49 years.

The full-size Ford Transit Van is currently being sold in 118 markets on six continents.

In some configurations, the 2015 Transit offers as much as 75 percent more cargo volume than the largest E-Series, helping customers save in fuel costs and time associated with having to make a second trip, Koswick said.

Maximum payload increases

more than 600 pounds across the lineup versus comparable E-Series vans.

The new Ford Transit was designed with improved handling, steering and ride qualities, Koswick said.

A power rack-and-pinion steering setup provides "exceptionally communicative steering feel to the driver."

The front suspension consists of subframe-mounted MacPherson struts and a stabilizer bar for smoother, flatter cornering, combined with progressive-rate rear leaf springs and heavy-duty gas-charged dampers for well-controlled ride quality – regardless of load status, Koswick said.

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Brian Schober with the F-150 he road-tested for Ford

Military Test Driver Takes F-150 Through Tough Paces

Four lucky truck customers are taking their turn behind the wheel of the new F-150 to put it through some of the toughest testing to date – their own.

Beginning Aug. 29, the first of four videos in the "You Test" series showed how these customers tested the new F-150 at BuiltToughTest.com.

The truck customers were selected from more than 15,000 submissions, in which entrants described how they would test the toughness of the new F-150 pickup.

"Our four winners demonstrate how Built Ford Tough isn't simply a tagline – it's our brand commitment that F-150 gets the job done, day in and day out," said Doug Scott, Ford Truck Group marketing manager.

"The videos show real-world testing beyond testing already conducted by Ford engineers. This is what matters most – serving our customers."

Truck shoppers who are excited to see how tough the all-new F-150 is in action can watch online each of the four customers participating in the "You Test," putting a 2015 F-150 Lariat 3.5-liter EcoBoost 4x4 through its paces in different regions of North America.

The test drivers tackled such challenges as driving on military-intensive off-road trails in the desert as well as hauling rocks, towing bales of hay and transporting supplies more than 900 miles.

The first video features Brian

Schober, a systems engineer for military vehicle testing in Yuma, Ariz. Schober ran the 2015 F-150 through a series of off-road tests in the Arizona desert – some of which are used for the military vehicles he tests.

Among Schober's testing were 36 straight hours navigating a rugged 10-mile loop, which included rock crawls, sand washes and suspension challenges in triple-digit temperatures.

"I work at the U.S. Army proving grounds where I drive approximately 350 miles a day on gravel and dirt roads, hauling parts and people. I've gone through my fair share of vehicles," said Schober.

"We currently rent a 2013 F-150 and consider it a workhorse. With a new F-150 on my radar for my next vehicle, the 2015 looks like it will do the trick."

More than 550,000 F-150s with 3.5-liter EcoBoost engines have been sold since the EcoBoost was made available in the commercial marketplace starting in 2011.

Videos of the three other winners testing the all-new F-150 will be posted in the coming weeks, showcasing the truck hauling boulders in Oregon, towing bales of hay in Montana, and transporting supplies more than 900 miles on primarily gravel roads from Fairbanks, Alaska, to Inuvik in the Northwest Territories in Canada.

Those wishing to view the videos can go the Web site builttoughtest.com.

Sterling Heights Auto Supplier Has A New Partner

Key Safety Systems, Inc. (KSS) of Sterling Heights has joined forces with FountainVest Partners, along with existing shareholder Crestview Partners.

FountainVest is a leading Hong Kong-based private equity firm and through this transaction it becomes the largest shareholder in the KSS partnership.

Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) also participated in the transaction as a co-investor with FountainVest Partners. Jason Luo will continue as KSS chief executive officer and as a member of the company's board of directors.

"We are very excited to take this next step with FountainVest, a firm that is widely respected for its business acumen, commitment and performance," Luo said.

"In partnership with Crestview, KSS has become the fastest-growing global safety restraint supplier, and we are thrilled they will remain equity holders as we continue to expand our business globally.

"We truly appreciate the confidence our customers worldwide have placed in KSS, and we remain committed to serving them in an aligned and collaborative manner."

Frank Tang, co-founder and CEO of FountainVest said KSS has emerged as an industry leader, "well-recognized for its reliable technology, high quality and global manufacturing footprint."

Tang said he sees excellent growth prospects for KSS in both the rapidly expanding Chinese market and the global market.

Increased Auto Sales Create New Loan Problems

By ALEX VEIGA
AP Business Writer

As U.S. sales of cars and trucks have grown this year, so has the late-payment rate on auto loans, according to just-released figures.

The rate of U.S. auto-loan payments late by 60 days or more rose to 0.95 percent in the second quarter from 0.87 percent a year earlier, credit reporting agency TransUnion said Sept. 9.

The latest auto loan delinquency rate was down from 1 percent in the first three months of the year, however, and remains below the average for the April-June period going back to 2007, the firm said.

The increase compared with the second quarter a year ago follows strong growth in auto sales, which has fueled a rise in auto lending, including to borrowers with less-than-perfect credit.

"In fact, there are four million more auto loan accounts in the marketplace than we observed just last year," said Peter Turek, automotive vice president for TransUnion.

"This means with more auto loans in the marketplace and a delinquency rate ticking higher, we now have several thousand more delinquent accounts than at the midpoint of 2013."

All told, TransUnion recorded 62.3 million auto loan accounts in the second quarter, an increase of 7 percent from a year earlier.

As more Americans have been taking on loans to buy cars and trucks, they've also been carrying higher loan balances.

Auto loan debt per borrower grew 4.1 percent to \$17,090 in the April-June period from a year earlier.



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