

GM Tech Center Employees Dig in to Help Communities

Employees from GM's Tech Center got their hands dirty on Sept. 10 as part of the company's teamGM Cares Week efforts.

"Along with our commitment to customers, our company is dedicated to giving back and supporting the communities in which we live and work," said GM CEO Mary Barra.

"Through the philanthropic efforts of the GM Foundation and our employee volunteers, we look for opportunities to make a difference and positively impact those in need."

To that end, Tech Center employees assisted at local food banks, including Forgotten Harvest and Gleaners Food Bank, said GM spokesperson Genna Young.

"GM Global IT Operations employees at the GM Technical Center in Warren put their green thumbs to the test for a good cause last week," Young said.

"More than 20 employees grabbed garden tools and gloves to help out at the Gleaners Community Garden in Washington Township. The organic garden provides fresh vegetables to food pantries throughout southeast Michigan to feed the hungry.

"Employees pulled weeds, shoveled compost and strung lines to keep plants growing upward."

"The garden looked wonderful,

ready for future volunteers to harvest fresh vegetables to feed the hungry," said Yvette Servick, GM Global IT Operations.

Young said that both Gleaner's and Forgotten Harvest do great work all year long and that GM was glad to help them out.

TeamGM Cares Week is part of a larger effort made by GM employees to contribute to the communities in which they live and work, Young said, adding that over the past year, General Motors and the GM Foundation have had a sharp focus on strengthening communities.

Most notably, Young said, GM's North America President Mark Reuss, a board member of the GM Foundation, made possible the GM Foundation's largest grant ever – \$27.1 million to the United Way of Southeastern Michigan.

The grant created a "Network of Excellence" in seven metro Detroit high schools to increase graduation rates from approximately 50 percent to 80 percent over the next five years. The gift was the largest grant ever received by the United Way of Southeastern Michigan.

While GM employees have a long history of giving back to their communities, Young said, in 2011 the new teamGM Cares Volunteer program was formed to bolster the grant, as



GM employees Kelly Beyer, left, and Linda Tyckoski

well as help those in need.

With the company's hearts and hands on the ground, the teamGM Volunteers have participated in numerous projects to help the youth attending the seven United Way Network of Excellence Schools, including mentoring, conducting food/personal

care drives and participating in school cleanups, career days and more.

"Outside of the schools, the teamGM Cares volunteers support numerous community organizations," Young said.

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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. The educational and training programs at the college have a widespread influence on the county and the region, directly impacting the county's vitality and economic stability."

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.

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JDRF Walk Set For Tech Center On 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 diabetes 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."

Ford Motor Company will have its latest vehicles on display so people can get a look at them, Sandoval said.

"Type 1 diabetes is an autoimmune disease," Sandoval said. "No one knows what causes it, but people with the disease can have circulation problems, eye trouble, heart problems. But thanks to research, people with type 1 diabetes are living longer and healthier."

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.

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 en-

couraging 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 collection 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 interest-



Tyson Brown

ing 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.

Karmanos Partners Night Slated for Sept. 20 in Detroit

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 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."

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.

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 Bepler, 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.

Getting Young Pros Involved

NextGEN Macomb, a young professionals group in Macomb County, is inviting the public to join them at a launch party from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. on Wednesday, Sept. 24 at the Three Blind Mice Irish Pub in Mount Clemens.

The event is sponsored by Macomb County Planning and Economic Development, said Macomb County spokesperson Stephen Cassin.

This event will be the first opportunity for this ambitious group, Cassin said, to discuss the initiatives they have been working on to increase young professionals' involvement in community engagement and economic development projects within Macomb County.

Attendees, Cassin said, will hear from Macomb County Executive Mark A. Hackel, learn about the opportunities available by getting involved and have the chance to make a statement about why they make Macomb their home or to complete the

statement, "I would make Macomb my home if..."

Those interested can RSVP by e-mailing info@nextgenmacomb.org, or by calling Kevin Chandler at 248-635-7181.

In addition, the Macomb County office of Planning and Economic Development is collaborating with NextGEN Macomb to conduct a comprehensive climate survey for young professionals in Macomb County.

Survey results will gauge how young professionals feel about Macomb County as a place to live and work.

They also will be used to measure efforts to enhance perceptions and evaluate the level of interest for offering professional development opportunities through NextGEN Macomb.

Cassin said that young professionals with an interest in developing contacts within Macomb County are encouraged to complete the survey at nextgenmacomb.org/2014survey.



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

‘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, technology that is already available on many production cars on the streets of the United States right now.

As the world becomes more congested and new populations need access to personal mobility, Barra said, accidents are going to continue to be a major global concern.

A recent National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study estimated that the economic and societal impact of motor vehicle crashes in the United



V2V technology in 2017 CTS “should reduce accidents,” said Barra.

States is more than \$870 billion per year.

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

She spoke of the positive things V2V systems can do for driver safety.

“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.”

GM Has New Product for ‘15

DETROIT (AP) – Sales of small crossover SUVs are booming in the U.S., and automakers are responding quickly with new entries in the 2015 model year.

Crossover SUVs are built largely on car underpinnings, so they maneuver like a car and get gas mileage that’s almost as good. They appeal to a wide range of people from millennials to aging baby boomers looking to downsize. People love the big storage space ahead of the rear hatch, and they like the visibility and easy entrance and exit provided by the high seating position.

So far this year, crossover SUV sales are up almost 14 percent, outpacing the overall market’s 9 percent gain, according to Autodata Corp. It’s pulling buyers from other segments, too, mainly small and midsize cars.

The crossover segment is splitting in several directions as well. Honda, Chevrolet and Jeep have CUVs coming out that are built on subcompact frames. Luxury automakers also are joining the party with entries from Audi, Lincoln, Lexus, Maserati and the all-electric Tesla.

There also are multiple high-performance models and new additions to the electric car lineup.

Here’s a roundup of some of what’s new at GM for the 2015 model year:

- **ATS Coupe:** The GM luxury brand gets a coupe to go after the BMW 4-Series and Audi A5. It gets the two most powerful engines now in the sedan, a 2-liter turbocharged four-cylinder with

272 horsepower, and a 3.6-liter V6 with 321 horsepower. The ATS Coupe Starts at \$38,990, including shipping.

- **Escalade** – The big SUV with bling is revamped. It comes standard with heated and cooled front leather seats and heated second-row leather, plus a host of other luxury features. It starts at \$72,690, including shipping.

- **Camaro Z/28** – Street-legal and track-ready, a lighter version of the sports car with a 7-liter, 505 horsepower V8. The Z/28 starts at \$73,300.

- **Colorado** – Chevy returns to the midsize pickup truck market with the Colorado, aimed at outdoorsy types. It starts at \$20,995, including shipping.

- **Corvette Z06:** Racetrack-ready supercar with a supercharged 6.2-liter, 650-horsepower V-8. It’s available early next year with a starting price of \$78,995, including destination charge.

- **Silverado HD:** Heavy-duty version of the Silverado. It starts at \$32,405.

- **Suburban:** The long version of the Chevy SUV. Base price is \$48,590, including shipping.

- **Tahoe:** A revamped version of its big SUV. Prices start at \$46,885 including shipping.

- **TRAX:** An entry in the fast-growing small crossover SUV market. Price not yet released.



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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 nonprofits 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.

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.

"Thanks to the GM Foundation's ongoing support, the Conservancy 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.



Giant teddy bear enjoys the view from a Corvette on its way to cheer up young patients at cancer center.

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 Cam-

ry, 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."

GM Tech Center Employees Dig in To Help 'Give Back'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"Right here in the Detroit area, they have adopted families over the holidays, collected money and mittens for young school children, have packed food for Gleaners and Forgotten Harvest, have collected Halloween costumes and treats for Matrix Human Services, mentored robotics teams, participated in telethons, helped to clean up Belle Isle and much more."

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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 vincl.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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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.

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.

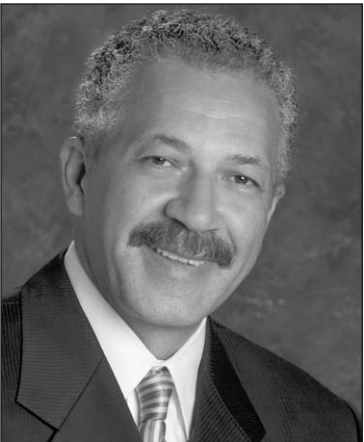
In a recent study, 62 percent of Baby Boomers (aged 48-66) say technology is an important consideration when shopping for a new car, compared with 61 percent of Millennials.

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.



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."

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