



2015 Ram 1500

Ram 1500 Wins Magazine's Half-Ton Shootout Title

The editors of *Motor Trend* last week named the Ram 1500 the winner of their 2015 half-ton truck shootout.

Three contenders were put through a broad array of testing designed to evaluate the core uses of a truck owner, said Chrysler spokesperson Nick Cappa.

In addition to the 2015 Ram 1500, the judges examined America's other two top-selling full-size trucks: the 2015 Chevrolet Silverado and the 2015 Ford F150.

To determine a winner, the

Motor Trend judges took the three competitors on a 260-mile drive through eastern California and western Arizona, Cappa said. Each truck's performance was measured in a number of exercises:

- Standard testing (without load): 0-60 mph and 1/4-mile acceleration, 60-0 mph braking, and maximum lateral grip;
- Limit handling (without load): closed-course cornering, braking and acceleration;

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GM to Invest \$200M in Orion, Pontiac Plants

General Motors will invest \$200 million in its Orion Assembly and Pontiac Metal Center plants to prepare for a future vehicle program.

Orion will receive \$160 million for tooling and equipment, and Pontiac will receive \$40 million for new dies, said Orion plant spokesperson Chris Bonelli.

These investments are part of the nearly \$300 million in Michigan-based investments that GM CEO Mary Barra referenced in a speech at the Detroit Economic Club Oct. 28.

"This announcement is a shot in the arm for these two terrific plants known for their teamwork and employee engagement," said Cathy Clegg, GM North America Manufacturing vice president. "We're committed to growing our brands and producing the highest-quality and safest vehicles for our customers."

While no new jobs will be created by these actions, Clegg said, this announcement brings the total investment in Orion Assembly and the Pontiac Metal Center to \$775 million since 2010.

Across the U.S., GM has announced facility investment of nearly \$11.4 billion since June 2009.

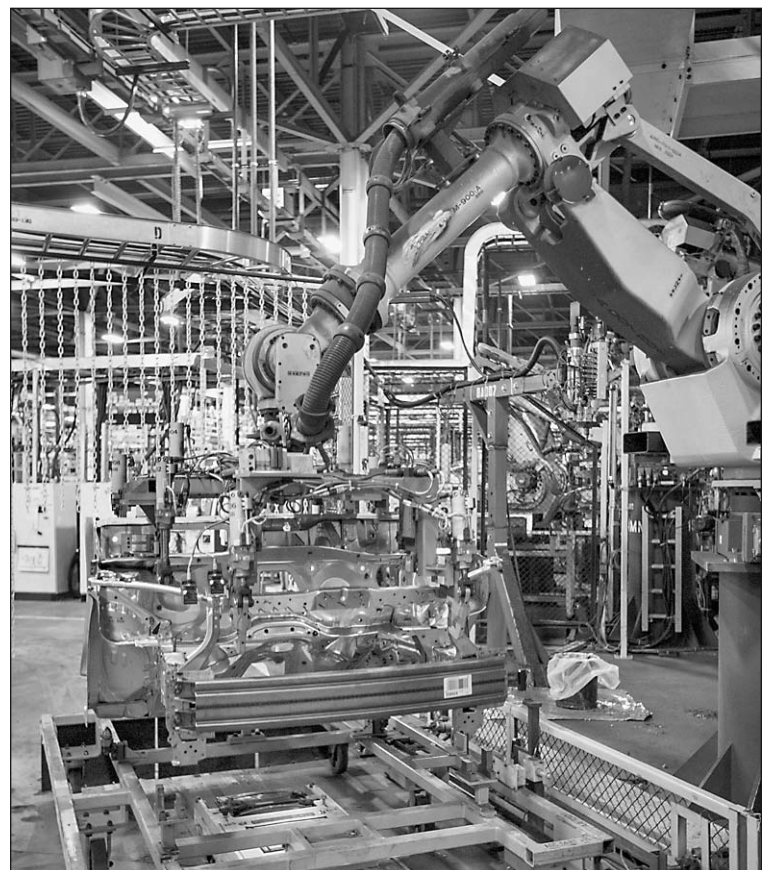
"We're not commenting at this time about when the work will be done to the plant," Bonelli said. "Nor are we commenting on what

new vehicle will be manufactured here or how or if it will affect the production of vehicles currently being made at Orion."

UAW Vice President Cindy

Estrada, who directs the union's GM Department, said, "I'm confident that our members repre-

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Automated Guided Vehicles operate at GM's Orion Assembly Plant.

Big 3 Open Hearts to Help the Needy at Thanksgiving

Chrysler Employees Donate to Food Banks

In the week before Thanksgiving, Chrysler employees across Illinois, Indiana, Michigan and Ohio took time out from building cars and trucks to donate food to local food banks to help 20,000 families in need enjoy a traditional holiday meal.

In Michigan, said Chrysler spokesperson Kevin Frazier, employee donations – everything from canned fruit and vegetables to cranberry sauce, stuffing and frozen turkeys purchased by The Chrysler Foundation – filled 35 pallets, enough food for more than 27,000 meals for families in Oakland, Macomb, Monroe, Washtenaw and Wayne Counties.

"In southeast Michigan, more than 707,000 people are food-insecure and despite a recovering economy, many working families are still having trouble making ends meet," said Gerry Brisson, president of Gleaners.

"This much-needed support from Chrysler Group's Thanksgiving Food Drive will help Gleaners ease the burden for many families this holiday season."

"It takes 60 volunteers to run the pantry each day," said Karla Gardner, community development/donor relations director of the Hope Center in Macomb.

"The support of Chrysler Group volunteers helps Hope

Center keep costs down (92 cents of every dollar donated goes to actual client programs).

"But our partnership also continues to raise awareness about the tremendous need in Macomb County."

Hope Center feeds nearly 500 households each week.

"Even in an affluent place like Oakland County," said Priscilla Perkins, chief development officer of the Lighthouse of Oakland County, "we still have more than 118,000 people living below the federal poverty level."

"The Chrysler Group's ongoing

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

GM Orion Plant Employees Step Up to Help Homeless

by Jim Stickford

Mark Twain once said that everyone talks about the weather but no one does anything about it. Tell that to the folks at GM's Orion Assembly Plant.

They took it on themselves to help out folks who get cold – really cold – when the winter weather hits the area.

Adam Lassen is Manufacturing Engineering director at the site and is also in charge of this year's Orion Christmas Coat Drive.

"We had a similar coat drive last year," Lassen said. "It was such a success that we decided to do it again this year."

The goal, Lassen said, is to help provide "slightly used" coats to people who are using the services of the Baldwin Center, a homeless shelter headquartered in Pontiac.

"The idea is for people to donate coats," Lassen said. "The drive was finished at the end of November. We also held a cotton

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Ford E-350 Joins Bed & Bread Fleet, Serves Meals to Hungry

As part of Ford Motor Company's expanded hunger relief efforts this year, the Dearborn automaker has donated a new truck to The Salvation Army's Bed & Bread Club.

The E-350, which joined the club last week, will help serve 5,000 meals a day to needy people in Detroit.

The vehicle joins the Bed & Bread fleet that provides a sandwich, fruit, beverage, soup and snack to city neighborhoods, said Ford spokesperson Todd Nissen.

The Salvation Army's Detroit Bed & Bread program is the largest one in the country. Marathon Petroleum Corporation will provide a year of free

gasoline for the new vehicle.

"We're proud to help the Salvation Army's Bed and Bread Club travel to those in need, because hunger never takes a holiday," said Jim Vella, president, Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services.

"By addressing the issue of hunger through other programs such as Ford Mobile Food Pantries, Ford Focus on Child Hunger and Meet Up and Eat Up, we are going further to create stronger communities."

The new E-350 is part of a combined investment of \$1.3 million across the U.S. in grants, vehicles and other assistance toward

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Salvation Army's new Ford E-350 delivers meals to the needy as part of the group's Bed & Bread Club.



Chrysler employee volunteers at All Saints Church in Pontiac

Chrysler Workers Help Food Drive For Those in Need

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partnership is critical to helping the 1,800 families we'll serve this holiday season.

"This partnership also enables Lighthouse of Oakland County to respond to the need of the more than 800 food-insecure families who visit our food pantry each month.

"It also helps them move from crisis to self-sufficiency."

Frazier said deliveries were also made to Faith In Action – Chelsea/Dexter and the Monroe County Opportunity Program. Both of these food banks are supported by employees at Chrysler's Chelsea Proving Grounds and Dundee Engine Plant.

"We strive to make 'doing for others' part of everyday life at Chrysler Group," said Jody Trapasso, Chrysler senior vice president for External Affairs and president of The Chrysler Foundation.

"This effort is the culmination of a food drive that will allow families in our communities to enjoy a traditional holiday meal. We are grateful to Chrysler employees and the UAW for their generosity.

"Caring for our neighbors is needed more than ever. More than 46 million Americans face hunger each year, and nearly half of those are children and seniors."

This is the fourth consecutive year that Chrysler has conducted its company-wide Thanksgiving Food Drive, Frazier said.

In that time, the company estimates that the food drive has touched more than 60,000 families across the four-state area.

Fiat Chrysler Agrees to Bring Localized Product to China

Production of a Chrysler brand vehicle in China seems to be just around the corner.

Fiat Chrysler Automobiles (FCA) and Guangzhou Automobile Industry Group Co., Ltd. (GAC) on Nov. 19 entered into a preliminary agreement that would expand cooperation between the two firms.

FCA and GAC have agreed to bring a localized Chrysler product to China, adding it to the existing Fiat brand offering, said Chrysler spokesperson Shawn Morgan.

GAC Fiat will have access to the Fiat and Chrysler brand products announced during the FCA May 2014 Investor Day.

Product announcements will be made at a future date, Morgan said.

GAC Fiat also reaffirms its commitment to a full sport-utility vehicle offering through the Jeep brand with the localized production of three new Jeep models by the end of 2016, Morgan said.

"By 2018, the Jeep brand will have one of the most complete SUV portfolios in China ranging from subcompact SUVs to full-size luxury SUVs," Morgan said.

In addition, the preliminary agreement includes the separation of commercial and industrial activities, said Morgan.

The distinct entities will provide support and management in working toward the successful launch of the approved product

plan, which will include the introduction of a second vehicle plant in Guangzhou.

A joint commercial operation will be established that will be responsible for all Sales, Marketing, Product Planning and Aftersales development of Jeep, Fiat and Chrysler brands, Morgan said.

This operation will have responsibility for both locally produced and imported products.

The industrial operations based in Changsha will continue to support both the Changsha and Guangzhou vehicle and powertrain manufacturing plants, Morgan said.

This industrial group will retain responsibility for all GAC Fiat manufacturing activities, including assembly, quality, product engineering and supply chain management, according to Morgan.

As part of the preliminary agreement, GAC and FCA will

work to start laying the foundation for the aggressive network expansion required to support the development of SUVs through Jeep and passenger cars through the Fiat and Chrysler brands.

The best-performing dealers from the two existing networks in China will form the basis of both the Jeep SUV network and the Fiat/Chrysler passenger car network, Morgan said.

Further investors will be required to support the doubling of both networks by 2018, said Morgan.

"CAG will take advantage of this opportunity to collaborate with leading auto brands from Europe and the United States to advance our globalization process, to achieve a more balanced growth, and to provide more options and better services for consumers," said Zhang Fangyou, chairman of GAC.

"China is a market of strategic

importance to FCA in the next five years," said John Kett, general manager of Fiat Chrysler Asia-Pacific and head of the FCA's Jeep Brand APAC.

"Collectively, the import brands of Chrysler, Jeep and Dodge, in addition to the localized brands of Fiat, have the group ranked as the fastest growing brands in China.

"This plan will accelerate our volume and market share growth at significant speed, and will enable us to deliver the commitment that we laid out on this year's FCA investor day by growing our sales volume in China to 760,000 by 2018."

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GM Orion Plant Employees Step Up to Help Homeless

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candy fundraising sale on Nov. 21.

“The important thing there is that all the proceeds go to the Baldwin Center to go toward purchasing winter coats as a way to supplement the coat drive.”

The sale was fun and simple, Lassen said.

Volunteers went around to friends and colleagues at the plant and sold them cotton candy they made using a special cotton candy machine.

The cotton candy was sold to workers at both shifts, Lassen said, at a price of \$2 per cone and, of course, the special value price of \$5 for three cones.

“The cotton candy was colored blue, but the flavor was raspberry,” Lassen said.

“I don’t know how that works out.

“Some people ate the candy at lunch while others bought several sticks for their families at home.

“Some people gave us \$20 for 12 cones and handed them out to their friends at the plant.”

Lassen said that when he was

setting up the coat drive, he asked if there was a need for any particular type of winter coat. He was told that the center needs coats for men, women and children – basically, coats for anyone.

“This is a joint project between the UAW and GM,” Lassen said. “The people who volunteered their time know that it’s all for a worthy cause.

“About 30 people stepped up and gave of their time to make this happen. They really went above and beyond the call of duty.”

Lassen said that even though the coat drive was officially finished by the end of November, they are, naturally, still taking donations and are still looking to raise money for the Baldwin Center.

“The cotton candy sale was just a fun way to raise money for a really worthy charity,” Lassen said.

“We hope to give them a check for more than \$1,000 when everything is said and done.

“It’s going to be a cold winter and there are people who can really use our help.”

New Ford F-150 Boasts Top Fuel Economy

By DEE-ANN DURBIN
AP Auto Writer

DEARBORN, Mich. (AP) – Ford said Nov. 21 that its new aluminum-bodied F-150 pickup will get up to 26 mpg on the highway, making it the most fuel-efficient gas-powered full-size pickup.

The Ram truck is the current leader among pickups, getting up to 25 mpg on the highway with a gas engine. The Ram gets up to 28 mpg with a diesel engine; Ford doesn’t make a diesel version of the F-150.

Fuel economy is a key selling point for the new F-150, which is arriving at dealerships this month. Ford shaved 700 pounds off the weight of the truck by switching the body from steel to lightweight aluminum, a dramatic change for the best-selling vehicle in the U.S.

Some analysts thought the truck might even top 30 mpg after Ford’s multi-billion-dollar investment to develop and produce it. The final figure met Ford’s expectations of a more modest improvement, and represents 13 percent greater fuel economy than the current F-150.

With gas now averaging \$2.84 per gallon, the aluminum F-150 will save the average buyer only \$100 to \$200 a year in fuel costs



2015 F-150

over competing gasoline models from General Motors and Chrysler, said Larry Dominique, president of the ALG auto forecasting firm.

Doug Scott, Ford’s truck marketing manager, said the majority of truck customers aren’t solely focused on fuel economy. The new F-150 beats its rivals in both towing – of up to 12,200 pounds – and payload of up to 3,300 pounds.

Dominique agrees that buyers will focus on the total package. “The payload, the towing. Those aspects of it plus a little bit better fuel economy is definitely an increased value,” he said.

Patrick Caraher, a relocation specialist at ALE Solutions in Phoenix, said he expected higher fuel economy. But he still plans to buy a new F-150 sometime in the next year.

“Losing 700 pounds on the truck is enough for me,” said Caraher, 29. “Less brake, tire and shock and suspension wear is where I take my benefits.”

The F-150 will get 26 mpg on the highway with a 2.7-liter EcoBoost engine, which Ford believes will account for 28 percent of sales of the new truck. The top highway fuel economy of the current truck is 23 mpg.

The company hopes the new truck’s advantages outweigh customer doubts about the durability of aluminum or potential repair costs for the pricier metal.

It’s a big risk. So far this year, one out of every three vehicles Ford sold in the U.S. was an F-Series pickup. It’s been America’s best-selling vehicle for 32 years.

Ram’s diesel-powered pickup gets even better fuel economy, at 28 mpg, but starts at \$30,215. Also, the price of diesel is currently 76 cents per gallon higher than gas. The F-150 starts at \$25,420 with \$495 premium for the EcoBoost engine, a popular option.

To further improve fuel economy, Product Development Chief Raj Nair says Ford is developing a 10-speed transmission to replace its current 6-speed. It’s also working on smaller but more powerful engines.

He said a diesel engine doesn’t make sense for the F-150 right now.

Ford also provided the fuel-economy breakdown for other engine types:

- The base F-150 with 3.5-liter V6 engine gets 25 mpg on the highway, or 20 mpg in combined city/highway driving. This version is expected to be 16 percent of sales of the new truck.
- The 3.5-liter EcoBoost V6 gets 24 mpg on the highway, and 20 city/highway combined. Ford expects this version to make up 28 percent of sales.
- The 5-liter V8 should get 22 mpg on the highway, and 18 mpg city/highway combined.

Ford E-350 Joins Bed & Bread Fleet, Serves the Needy

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hunger relief from Ford and Ford Motor Company Fund, the automaker’s philanthropic arm, Vella said.

The support is helping tackle hunger and homelessness in communities, providing millions of meals for people across the U.S.

Among the activities, Ford is working with the Detroit Area Agency on Aging to help provide meals to more than 6,000 homebound seniors.

This is the seventh year Ford has donated \$40,000 to support the Holiday Meals on Wheels Thanksgiving program, as well as provide additional funding for the daily meal service, Vella said.

Ford is collaborating with the Parade Company and Gleaners Community Food Bank to fight hunger by collecting donations for holiday meals from people texting EAT to 85944.

In addition, Vella said, Ford has teamed up with Quick Lane Tire & Auto Center and Feeding America for a national text-to-donate campaign in conjunction with the Quick Lane Bowl on Dec. 26 at Ford Field in Detroit.

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Ram 1500 Wins Motor Trend's Shootout Title

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

- Tow Testing with 7,000-pound trailer;
- Payload testing with 1,000 pounds;
- Fuel economy testing.

After the data was collected, judges convened to determine which truck would be the victor of *Motor Trend's* half-ton competition. The winner is chosen by directly comparing empirical results and driver impressions.

"With the votes cast, the Ram 1500 surfaced as the winner," Cappa said. "The judges were particularly impressed with the performance of the Ram 1500's EcoDiesel V6 engine as well as its eight-speed TorqueFlite transmission, a combination that boasts best-in-class 28 mpg fuel economy."

"This is a strong third-party testimonial," said Bob Hegbloom, Ram Truck CEO, "of Ram's place in the market and contributes to the justification of long hours and hard work to deliver the best trucks available."

"Just five years after becoming its own brand, Ram Truck has nearly doubled its market share and earned best-in-class titles in fuel economy, torque, payload and towing."

"The half-ton segment is a severely competitive environment and winning *Motor Trend's* half-ton shootout validates that we have the top truck in the segment."

Motor Trend's Real MPG testing proved that the V6 turbo nor V8 gas-powered engines can match the EcoDiesel's efficiency, Hegbloom said. Judges observed fuel economy of 22 mpg during 1,000-pound-loaded testing over 260 miles.

"Our comparison of the latest half-ton pickup trucks," said Scott Evans, associate editor at *Motor Trend Magazine*, "was as exhaustive as it was comprehensive, because this segment is so important and so competitive."

"We evaluated every aspect of these trucks we could and debated long and hard over their merits."

"In the end, the Ram EcoDiesel's excellent ride quality both loaded and empty, torque, engine, smooth and intelligent transmission, ease in towing, comfortable and refined interior, and best-in-test fuel economy proved the winning combination."

Flint Develops Plans for Former GM Properties

FLINT, Mich. (AP) — A new plan for a recreational trail in Flint includes building multiple arches between a former General Motors manufacturing complex known as "Chevy in the Hole" and the city's south end.

The plans are part of what's being called the Grand Traverse Greenway, *The Flint Journal* reported. The project, which has been discussed for years, involves taking a roughly 3-mile stretch of former railroad line to link together Flint's colleges, medical centers, recreation areas and two major development sites.

"The arch represents connection from one point to another, linking neighborhoods that typically view obstacles such as the interstate or busy arterial roads as barriers," according to a project report. "It is a gateway to culture, people, redevelopment of natural environments and future developments. It is a wayfinding tool, letting you know which neighborhood, community, or park you are entering."

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Steven Beahm, left, and Kevin Bell accept NMSDC award for Chrysler.

GM Honors BorgWarner

BorgWarner’s facilities in Frankfort, Ill.; Water Valley, Miss.; and Ithaca, N.Y., received 2014 Supplier Quality Excellence Awards from General Motors. Presented to only 17 percent of GM’s 2,300 suppliers in the United States and Canada, the award recognizes supplier manufacturing locations for achieving consistently high levels of quality based on 13 defined performance criteria, said BorgWarner spokesperson Erika Nielsen. This is the second award received by BorgWarner’s Frankfort facility. “At BorgWarner, we are passionate about delivering high-quality, advanced technologies to help our customers improve the performance, fuel economy and emissions of their vehicles,”

said James R. Verrier, president and CEO, BorgWarner. “I would like to congratulate our employees for their daily dedication to quality. Your hard work has resulted in over 40 years of producing reliable components for GM.” BorgWarner supplies GM with HY-VO transmission chain from Ithaca, one-way clutches for the rear-wheel-drive 6-speed automatic transmission family from Frankfort, and mini-direct acting variable force solenoids for global front-wheel-drive 6-speed automatic transmissions from Water Valley. These sites are just three of the 60 manufacturing and technical facilities that BorgWarner operates in 19 countries around the world which make and design auto components, Verrier said.

Chrysler Earns Minority Supplier Award

Chrysler has been named Corporation of the Year for 2014 by the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC). The award recognizes the company’s innovative approaches and programs to expand opportunities for minority suppliers, said Chrysler spokesperson Mike Palese. Since 1983, the company has purchased more than \$52 billion worth of products from minority-owned suppliers. The award was announced at the 2014 NMSDC Conference and Business Opportunity Fair in Orlando Nov. 5. “Chrysler Group is committed to creating a diverse and sustainable supply base through innovative programs that create new business opportunities for minority suppliers such as Matchmaker and High Focus,” said Tom Finelli, Chrysler vice president – Purchasing and Supplier Quality. “Our commitment to diversity is deeply rooted and fully engages the entire team, including our extended enterprise partners.


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for diverse spending and equips them with the tools and support to achieve their diversity targets. The diversity spend status of each supplier is monitored monthly and reviewed with the supplier quarterly. “Chrysler Group has been at the forefront of supplier diversity for decades,” said NMSDC president Joset Wright-Lacy. “We are proud to celebrate the automaker’s commitment to developing and partnering with minority suppliers with our highest honor – the Corporation of the Year award.” Chrysler continues to support several organizations that assist Tier I suppliers with achieving their minority-owned and women-owned sourcing goals, Palese said. These organizations include the NMSDC, the Canadian Aboriginal and Minority Supplier Council and the Women’s Business Enterprise National Council Association.

Chrysler Scores High Marks For Human Rights Policies

Chrysler was one of a select group of leading employers to achieve a perfect score of 100 percent on a 2015 Corporate Equality Index (CEI). The CEI report was released by the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). The annual CEI report, said Chrysler spokesperson Valerie Oehmke, rates employers on their workplace policies and benefits for the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) employees. A perfect score indicates a company provides full parity for domestic partner benefits, not only in basic medical coverage, but in dependent care, retirement and other benefits that affect the financial and medical well-being of families. Chrysler Group’s 100 percent rating also signifies coverage for transgender individuals for medically necessary care – a community the HRC notes has historically been overlooked. The HRC, the largest civil rights organization in the U.S., rated nearly 1,000 employers for the 2015 report, Oehmke said, including the entire Fortune 500. The top-rated businesses span nearly every industry and major geography of the U.S. Chrysler has achieved this benchmark nine times since the guidelines were established in 2002 and, until recent years, Chrysler was the only automaker to consistently achieve a perfect CEI rating. “Chrysler Group is very proud of our longstanding support of our LGBT employees, customers and communities,” said Georgetown Borrego Dulworth, Chrysler’s director of Talent Acquisition & Diversity. “Our consistent record of pro-

viding an inclusive work culture and benefit parity for our LGBT employees represents our core belief in the talents and potential of our people. “These are not things you do because you have to, but because they are the right things to do.” Gregory Hawkins, a Chrysler engineer who serves as president of GALA, the Gay and Lesbian Alliance at Chrysler Group, said, “Chrysler Group’s consistent record of creating and sustaining a supportive work culture continues to be a source of pride for all employees, especially the company’s LGBT employee community.” GALA is one of six Employee Resource Groups at the company that enable employees to celebrate multicultural differences and bring value to the larger community through volunteer and charitable activities, Oehmke said. The group’s objectives include promoting a positive awareness of LGBT people and issues within Chrysler Group and to ensure that the company’s products and services are desired by and tailored to diverse people. Oehmke said that, according to the report, “Corporate America has long recognized the imperative of LGBT inclusion by implementing their own LGBT-friendly policies ahead of lawmakers. “We are at the front of a new era in which major businesses are not only meeting ever-higher new bars for workplace fairness, they are exceeding them by becoming social and public policy change agents in the process. “They recognize equality is not just the right thing to do, it is sound business practice.”



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
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Visteon Rumors Abound

Visteon Corporation confirmed on Nov. 25 it is currently engaged in discussions with the Korea-based private equity firm Hahn & Company regarding a potential sale of Visteon’s ownership interest in Halla Visteon Climate Control Corp. (HVCC) to Hahn. There can be no assurance that these discussions will result in any transaction or on what terms any such transaction may occur, said company spokesperson Jim Fisher in a statement to the media. Visteon undertakes no obligation to provide further updates and does not intend to comment further regarding the discussions

or other strategic alternatives involving HVCC until such time as its board of directors has determined that disclosure is appropriate, Fisher said. The company, Fisher said, expects that HVCC, the world’s second largest provider of vehicle thermal management solutions, would continue to benefit from its well-respected management team, strong balance sheet, expanding global customer base and globally recognized technical acumen. Visteon is a global automotive supplier that designs, engineers and manufactures products for nearly every vehicle manufacturer worldwide, Fisher said.

Customer-Driven Makeover Set for 2016 Chevrolet Volt

If there's one thing Chevrolet Volt owners love about their cars, it's being able to recharge the battery easily.

Evidence of that is a U.S. Department of Energy study that shows more than 80 percent of all trips by Volt owners did not use the range extender, said GM spokesperson Michelle Malcho.

"The great thing about the Volt is that there is no range anxiety," Malcho said. "It has that gas engine that can generate the electricity needed to power the car."

Rather, Malcho said, Volt drivers have been asking for devices and systems to make the car easier to use.

For example, Malcho said, Chevrolet has made the charging system in the next-generation Volt even easier for customers to recharge the battery – and to check the charge status. The next-generation Volt debuts in January at the North American International Auto Show.

"Chevrolet used the real-world experiences of today's Volt owners to make the charging process simpler and more convenient in the next-generation Volt," said Andrew Farah, chief engineer for the Volt.

"The new Volt will give owners greater flexibility for charging it on their terms."

The new and enhanced features, Malcho said, include:

- GPS location-based charging.

Owners will now be able to set their charging preferences exclusively for their "home" charging location and the vehicle will automatically adjust to that setting when it is at that location. The car will recognize when it arrives "home," based on GPS data.

This will allow owners to pre-set their charging level (8 amps or 12 amps on 120V only) and whether they wish to charge immediately, set a departure time for each day of the week, or set a departure time and a utility rate schedule to charge only at off-peak rates.

This is good, Malcho said, because owners can input their local utility's rate schedule into their Volt to assure they're using



Sneak preview shot of 2016 Volt

the cheapest electricity rates when charging.

"They will have to program the system only once and the Volt will return to these settings every time it is at its home location," Malcho said.

- New, more intuitive charge status indicators.

The next-generation Volt makes it easier for owners to confirm their Volt is charging and gauge charge status. The new status system features a specially designed tone that indicates when charging has begun, with additional tones for delayed charging. It will even indicate if the charge port door was left open after unplugging but before entering the vehicle.

With a glance through the windshield, an updated charge status indicator light on the top of the instrument panel will show the approximate charge level through a series of flashes.

In addition, an available illuminated charge port makes it easier to plug in after dark as well as indicate approximate charge level through a series of flashes.

- Portable cord set enhancements.

A new 120V portable cord set includes a cord nearly 25 feet long, longer than the current 120V portable cord. It can be locked using a small padlock to deter unauthorized removal during charging.

Based directly on customer feedback, Malcho said, a new storage bin for the cord is now located on the left side of the Volt's rear cargo area, above the load floor, for improved accessibility.

Henry Ford Hospital, The Gallery, NAIAS Connect for Fundraising Event

Henry Ford Hospital has become a fundraising partner of The Gallery, an annual event to raise funds for various organizations.

This January, the event will be held at the MGM Grand Detroit on Sat., Jan. 10, two days prior to the North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) Press Preview.

Now in its eighth year, The Gallery is an exclusive event featuring a collection of ultra-luxury, performance and exotic vehicles, said NAIAS spokesperson Joe Rohatynski.

NAIAS chairman Scott LaRiche said the new partnership is timely as Henry Ford Hospital will celebrate its 100-year anniversary in 2015.

"Henry Ford Hospital is Detroit's premier medical institution, and has been a critical part of our community for generations," said LaRiche.

"We are pleased to welcome it as fundraising partner of The Gallery, and look forward to a successful night."

As fundraising partner, Henry Ford Hospital will benefit from a portion of the proceeds from the evening. Funds will be generated through the sale of only 300 admission tickets at \$1,000 per ticket.

"We are thrilled to be a fundraising partner of The Gallery event," said John

Popovich, Jr., M.D., Henry Ford Hospital president and chief executive officer.

"Henry Ford has been a destination for clinical excellence, education, and research for a century, and our partnership with the auto industry has been a driving force in discovery and innovation."

The Gallery, which in the previous eight years has generated more than \$10 million in vehicle sales, will feature an estimated \$6 million worth of exotic brands and vehicles in a salon setting.

The special evening also includes inspired meals prepared by celebrity Chef Wolfgang Puck and served at Ignite, MGM Grand-Detroit's sushi bar and lounge.

Guests will also be treated to a runway fashion show featuring striking attire for women and men provided by Neiman Marcus.

While The Gallery's roster of cars is still being created, Rohatynski said participating brands have previously included: Aston-Martin, Bentley, Corvette, Falcon, Ferrari, Jaguar, Lamborghini, Land Rover, Lincoln, Lingenfelter, Maserati, McLaren, Porsche, Rolls-Royce, and SRT Viper.

Tickets for The Gallery are available for purchase by calling 248-283-5126.



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Cadillac's In-Seat Back Massagers Geared to Ease Drivers' Long Trips

No time today to make it to the spa or schedule a visit with the massage therapist?
No problem.
On two 2015 models, Cadillac is offering front driver and passenger seats that can knead, roll and relax your back as you drive. An anti-fatigue option is also offered for the driver.
The idea, said GM spokesperson Eneuri Acosta, came from talking to customers.
"We're not aware of any auto manufacturer coming up with this idea before we did," Acosta said.
"We got it from customer feedback. We get a lot of our ideas that way. For example, the Escalade rear entertainment system has a remote that was designed by our engineers.
"When talking with customers, we learned that it was too complicated for young children to operate. What we came away with was that if we made the remote resemble a video game controller, the kids would be able to use it, so we did and they can."
The same thinking went into creating the Escalade's back massager system, Acosta said. Feedback said that while the seats are comfortable, drivers still get tired during long trips.
"The Escalade is often used for long family trips," Acosta said. "So we came up with the back massager for the driver. It's relaxing, yes, but we like to think of it as a real safety feature because it also keeps the driver alert and that's important during long trips."
The 22-way adjustable heated and ventilated seats now have a luxury option with a massage seat that works in the upper shoulder area, back lumbar or cushion.
"Many Americans have the common misconception that massage is just a luxurious way to relax. The benefits of massage are actually wide-ranging, especially for those that work that monotonous daily grind behind a desk or the wheel of a car," said Dr. Leena S. Guptha, board chair, National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork.
While the seat is unable to provide the same experience as a trained practitioner, it can at least offer some comfort for a driver and passenger, Guptha said.
"This feature gives customers another way to improve their drive," said Elizabeth Hayes, General Motors Engineering Group manager.
"Once a massage setting is stored, a driver simply has to push the button and engage the luxury option. It's our goal to always find ways to make getting from point A to point B a little more pleasant."
The massage seats' settings can be stored in the car's memory like the seat positions, Hayes said. With a toggle switch or activation button, both on the out-board base of the seats, the driver and front seat passenger can direct the illustration of adjustments on the infotainment screen. The desired massage and intensity can both be controlled from the screen.
Once the optimal massage is found, the driver can save the kneading, rolling or anti-fatigue setting by pressing the memory button on the door, Hayes said. Reactivation can then occur by simply pushing the button on the seat base.
The massage seat is available on the XTS Premium and Platinum Collections and on the Escalade Platinum Collection.

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Back to the Future for 1939 GM Futurliner

by DAVE KURTZ
The Star

AUBURN, Ind. (AP) – A 1939 GM Futurliner owned by the National Auto & Truck Museum is joining the new National Historic Vehicle Register.

The giant bus-like vehicle will take part with other vehicles on the register in a Cars at the Capital display May 3 and 4, 2015, on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

The Futurliner already is in the nation's capital awaiting its appearance at the Washington Auto Show Jan. 23 through Feb. 1.

When its D.C. tour is through, the vehicle will come home next spring for its first display inside the Auburn museum, *The Star* reported. Until a recent remodeling, the Futurliner was too big to fit through the museum's doors.

Museum president John Pontius said the Futurliner's return will mark the first time that a National Historic Landmark building will display a vehicle on the National Historic Vehicle Register.

Museum board member Jerry Muzzillo came up with a plan to enlarge an entrance door at the museum, and Sid and Belva Meyer of Auburn donated to move sprinkler heads to make space for the Futurliner, Pontius said. "Auburn Door took Muzzillo's idea and did a wonderful job making it work," Pontius added.

"We were excited about having it here this winter, because we're all ready for it," Pontius said about the Futurliner. "But when the chance for two shows in Washington, D.C., came along, it was a much better opportunity for the Futurliner and the museum. It brings us both attention."

Going forward, Pontius said, it will be out for the show circuit for the summers, but when it's not in a show, it will be in our museum.

Car collector Joe Bortz of



1939 GM Futurliner

Chicago donated the Futurliner to the museum in 1992. In 1998, a group of volunteers from Michigan, led by Don Mayton of Beaverdam, began a seven-year effort to restore the vehicle.

In return for their work, the museum allows the volunteers to exhibit the Futurliner at car shows across the nation in warm-weather months.

Until now, the Futurliner has taken up residence for the winters in museums across the region, including a 2011-2012 stay at the National Military History Center and Kruse Automotive and Carriage Museum south of Auburn.

Only a few vehicles have been selected for the new National Historic Vehicle Register since a January announcement of a 1964 Shelby Cobra Daytona Coupe as the first choice. Since then, publicly announced selections include a 1947 Tucker 48 prototype, a 1964 Meyers Manx dune buggy, and a 1938 Maserati 8TCF Boyle Special that won the 1939 and 1940 Indianapolis 500 races.

The Historic Vehicle Association created the register in a project with the U.S. Department of the Interior. A vehicle chosen for the register must meet at least

one of four standards:

- Ties to an important event in automotive or American history;
- Ties to significant people in automotive or American history;
- Distinctive design, engineering, craftsmanship or aesthetic value; or,

- A vehicle that was the first or last of its type produced, has rarity as a survivor of its type, or is among the most well-preserved or thoughtfully restored surviving examples.

General Motors built the museum's Futurliner and 11 more like it for touring exhibits. They traveled the nation in a caravan during 1940 and again from 1953 to 1956, carrying displays of futuristic marvels such as microwave ovens and stereophonic sound.

Each Futurliner is 33 feet long, 8 feet wide, more than 11 feet tall and weighs more than 12 tons.

Only nine Futurliners remain, and five are reported to be in total disrepair, according to reports. An automotive publication said this week that the Auburn museum's No. 10 Futurliner has been on public display more than any of the others.

GKN's Two-Speed eAxle Aids In Downsizing eMotors

The industry's first two-speed eAxle, built by GKN in August, has entered production on the BMW i8 plug-in hybrid sports car.

With North American headquarters in Auburn Hills, GKN supplies automotive driveline components and systems.

"GKN's customers aren't just looking to make their next car more efficient – they want to create new driving experiences," said GKN Automotive CEO Andrew Reynolds-Smith.

"Our expertise in driveline efficiency, torque vectoring and electric drive systems is enabling automakers to connect drivers to the road in new ways. We are developing the systems that are helping bring a new generation of electric-drive vehicles to life."

"Being the first Tier 1 to deliver a two-speed eAxle demonstrates GKN's leadership in electric drive technologies and hybrid driveline systems," said Theodor Gassmann, GKN Driveline's vice president of Product Technology eDrive Systems.

"Two-speed eAxles will help manufacturers enhance hybrid and electric drivetrains and support the trend to downsize eMotors to reduce weight and cost.

With the technology proven in a high-performance vehicle with high levels of refinement, significant savings in CO2 are possible."

Giving the electric motor an additional gear ratio improves acceleration and pure electric range, Gassmann said, benefiting both driving dynamics and CO2 emissions.

GKN's two-speed eAxle also en-

ables the motor and all its associated systems to be downsized, reducing mass and further increasing efficiency, he said.

eAxle technology enables automakers to produce "axle-split hybrids," Gassmann said. A conventional or hybridized engine provides the primary power to either the front or rear wheels, with the other axle driven by an eAxle module.

The technology responds to deliver an instant high-torque all-wheel-drive experience, a useful pure electric range or a refined, efficient parallel hybrid mode. No other hybrid architecture offers such a strong combination of efficiency, traction, dynamics and packaging, said Gassman.

Until now, electric and axle-split hybrid vehicles have used single-speed transmissions, Gassmann said.

He further explained that using a fixed ratio limits electric drives in terms of either acceleration or top speed as they must disconnect at certain speeds to prevent the motor overspinning.

GKN's two-speed eAxle is the first to enable the electric drive to boost the vehicle's performance across its entire speed range, he said.

Designing the two-speed eAxle for a high-performance sports car application placed tight packaging requirements on GKN's development team, Gassmann said.

To achieve high torque density in a package that weighs just 27kg and measures less than 325mm by 562mm by 313mm, some remarkable design decisions were made.

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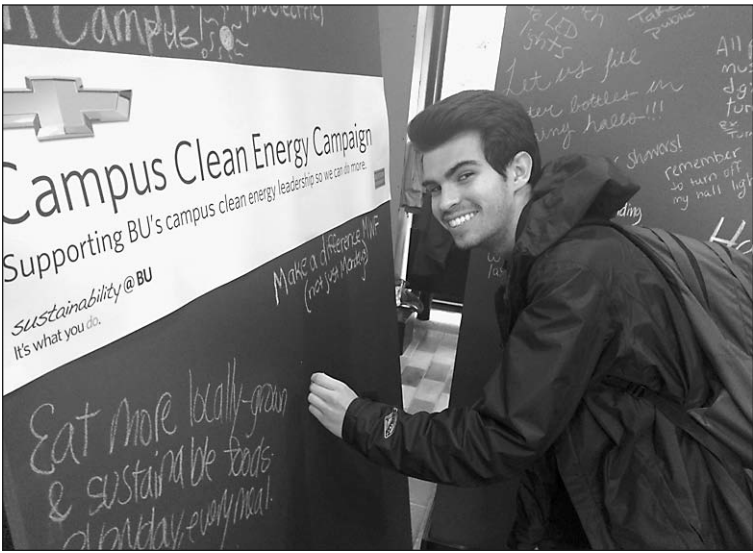
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Chevrolet Supports Colleges' Energy Fight

Call it giving the old college try. Chevrolet is purchasing carbon credits worth up to \$5 million to help 11 colleges across the U.S. pay for energy efficiency-based carbon reductions. And, Chevy is retiring the carbon credits to benefit the climate instead of using them to offset the emissions of Chevrolet vehicles or operations. As part of its initiative to reduce 8 million metric tons of carbon from being emitted – the equivalent to the annual carbon reduction benefit of a mature forest the size of Yellowstone – Chevrolet during the last four years has supported U.S. communities in aggressively reducing their carbon footprint, said GM spokesperson Sharon Basel. Campuses for the first time can access funding from the U.S. carbon market to fuel their large-scale energy efficiency efforts toward even greater progress. The colleges can effectively use carbon performance methodologies Chevrolet developed to make money via their greenhouse gas reductions that result from energy efficiency, Basel said. “As we kept inching closer to our carbon-reduction goal, we wanted to support colleges going above and beyond to help combat climate change, and open the door for other companies to contribute to such campus clean energy projects,” said Greg Martin, GM executive director of Sustainability. “This helps ensure campuses can continue to receive funding from companies’ carbon purchases long after Chevrolet completes its carbon-reduction initiative next year.” Before now, cash-strapped campuses struggled to invest in efficient building equipment or renewable energy systems to reduce their carbon load on the atmosphere, Basel said. The effort by GM helps colleges save money on utility bills and engage students on how they too can help lead a clean energy future, Basel said. Student leaders from Southern Oregon University spearheaded the securing of Chevy funding and are running an energy conservation campaign to en-

gage students in the university’s conservation efforts. Boston University student interns helped lead their campus through its certification process, and convened a broader social media conversation on the importance of clean energy. “With its groundbreaking carbon-reduction initiative, Chevy has built a clean energy legacy by showing how the voluntary carbon market can be leveraged to help finance lasting change,” said Verified Carbon Standard CEO David Antonioli. “It’s now incumbent on more forward-thinking companies to continue this important work to ensure that the campus clean energy program will one day reach every student and every campus.” For the last two years, Basel said, Chevrolet has been the largest U.S. corporate buyer of voluntary carbon credits by volume, according to nonprofit Forest Trends Ecosystem Marketplace. Of the nearly 8.2 million tons contracted from 36 projects, 69 percent have been retired. The balance is scheduled to be re-



College students suggest ways to reduce carbon footprints.

tired in the summer of 2015. Chevrolet partnered with these colleges for their clean-energy performance: Ball State University, Valencia College, Portland State University, Spelman College, University of Illinois at Chicago, University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point, Boston University, Rochester Institute of Technology, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, Grand Valley State University, and Southern Oregon University.

Ford Recalls 2004-05 Ranger Pickups with Takata Air Bags

DETROIT (AP) – The death of a pregnant Malaysian woman in a car crash involving a faulty air bag has led to another U.S. recall, as the auto industry struggles with a widening problem across the globe. Ford Motor Co. agreed to recall more 2004 and 2005 Ranger small pickup trucks after the crash in Malaysia because their air bags are similar to the one that caused the woman’s death, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration said Nov. 14. More than 12 million vehicles have been recalled worldwide because of a potentially deadly problem with air bag inflators made by Japanese auto parts supplier Takata Corp. At least five deaths and multiple injuries have been linked to the problem, which occurs when air bags inflate with too much force and blow apart metal canisters, sending shrapnel into the passenger compartment. After the July 27 crash, which killed a pregnant Malaysian woman and her unborn baby, NHTSA began looking into air bag inflators made at a now-closed Takata factory in LaGrange, Ga., south of Atlanta. Takata told the agency the plant made the single-stage inflator that went into the woman’s 2003 Honda City small car. It was not used in any U.S. vehicles, according to a NHTSA memo released last week.

But Takata said some Rangers got a similar inflator. In discussions with NHTSA, Ford agreed to recall the pickups to replace the driver’s air bags. Complicating matters, many of the same pickups already were under recall for the passenger air bags made by Takata. The Rangers are the only U.S. vehicle with inflators similar to those used by Honda in its City model, the agency said. It was unclear how many Rangers are covered by the additional recall, but NHTSA said about 25,000 still are in use in the U.S. A Ford spokeswoman said she was not aware of any air bag incidents involving Rangers. The pickups are among 26,000 vehicles that Ford added to its list of recalls for the air bag problem, bringing its total to about 85,000. NHTSA said it is investigating Takata air bags that are more than a decade old, regardless of where they were manufactured. The company also has air bag plants in Mexico and Washington state. In addition to the NHTSA investigation, Takata is being probed by the U.S. Attorney’s

Office in Manhattan and a federal grand jury in New York. Company executives are also scheduled to appear before a Senate committee on Nov. 13. All of the recalled Ford vehicles are in high-humidity areas of Florida, Hawaii, Puerto Rico or the U.S. Virgin Islands. Takata has said airborne moisture can cause the air bag propellant, ammonium nitrate, to burn too fast, shattering the metal canisters. Other Ford vehicles involved include 2005 through 2008 Mustangs, 2005 and 2006 Ford GTs. Spokeswoman Kelli Felker said the company is investigating one complaint to NHTSA of an injured Mustang driver. In an Oct. 30 complaint, the owner of a 2007 Mustang wrote that in August, the car crashed into the rear of another vehicle at 35 mph. “The air bag deployed with abrupt force and a metal fragment dislodged, causing injury to the driver’s leg, which required medical attention,” the complaint said. Car owners who file complaints with NHTSA are not identified. The series of recalls worldwide involve 10 automakers – including Toyota Motor Corp., Nissan Motor Co. and General Motors Co. – in various nations such as Japan, China and European countries. About 8 million of the recalls are in the United States. There are about 37.8 million vehicles with Takata air bags on U.S. roads, according to NHTSA documents. Takata CEO Shige-hisa Takada apologized for the problems with the air bags in a statement issued Nov. 13, saying his company was determined to prevent further problems.

Gov. Snyder Hits Shanghai Show

LANSING, Mich. (AP) – Michigan Gov. Rick Snyder headed to Shanghai, China’s largest city, as part of his weeklong investment mission. Snyder spent Nov. 22-24 meeting with executives from a leading Chinese machine tooling company and with government officials in northern China. He also led Michigan’s first official visit to Guangzhou in southern China, where he attended an auto show. Snyder joined the signing of an agreement committing the Michigan Economic Development Corp. to conduct a U.S.-China auto forum at the North American International Auto Show coming up in January 2015 and the alternating Shanghai/Beijing Auto Show.

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November Sales Hot – Weather Not So Much

New-vehicle retail sales in November are expected to reach their highest level for the month since 2001, according to a monthly sales forecast developed jointly by J.D. Power and LMC Automotive.

New-vehicle retail sales in November 2014 are projected to come in at 1.1 million units, a 5.5 percent increase on a selling-day adjusted basis, compared with November 2013 (November 2014 has one fewer selling day than last year).

The retail seasonally adjusted annualized rate (SAAR) in November is expected to reach 13.5 million units, 200,000 units stronger than in November 2013.

Retail transactions are the most accurate measure of true underlying consumer demand for new vehicles, said J.D. Power spokesperson John Tews.

"The industry continues to demonstrate strong sales growth, which is exceptional considering that November is currently on pace to record the highest average customer-facing transaction prices ever," said John Humphrey, senior vice president of the global automotive practice at J.D. Power.

Through Nov. 16, retail transaction prices are averaging \$30,874, which is \$165 more than the previous record of \$30,709 in October 2014, Humphrey said.

Combined record transaction prices with strong new-vehicle retail sales has November on pace for a record month for consumer spending on new vehicle at \$33.3 billion, which is \$1.1 billion more than the previous record for the month of November set in 2013.

"Automakers will take advantage of the Thanksgiving holiday, one of the highest-volume holiday weekends of the year," said Humphrey.

J.D. Power forecasts that more than 238,000 units will have been sold over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend, Humphrey said, which would make it the second-highest-volume holiday weekend of 2014. Labor Day weekend typically tallies the most sales of the year – this year, it was 279,000 units.

Total light-vehicle sales are projected at 1.26 million units in November 2014, up 5 percent from November 2013. November is typically a low fleet month, with November 2014 expected to come in below 15 percent of total light vehicle sales with volume of 178,000 units.

SBA Extends Its Deadline for Disaster Loans

The federal government's Small Business Administration (SBA) has extended the deadline to submit an application for a loan to help recover from the August floods. The new deadline is Monday, Dec. 15.

According to SBA spokesperson Michael Lampton, the extension is meant to allow businesses, homeowners and renters additional time to submit their SBA disaster loan applications.

These loans, if approved, have interest rates as low as 4 percent for business owners and 2.625 for private, nonprofit organizations, Lampton said.

Homeowners could receive a loan interest rate as low as 2.06 percent. Those specifically seeking SBA assistance can go online at disasterloan.sba.gov/ele, or call 1-800-877-8339.

To be considered for disaster assistance any kind from the federal government, interested parties may register online at the site disastersassistance.gov or call 1-800-659-2955 between the hours of 7 a.m. and 11 p.m. Eastern time for assistance.

As 2014 nears to a close, LMC Automotive is holding the 2014 U.S. light-vehicle retail sales forecast at 13.6 million units and total U.S. light-vehicle sales forecast at 16.4 million units, Tews said.

Humphrey said growth is currently expected to continue in 2015, but at a slower pace.

The forecast for retail sales is for 13.9 million units, and total light-vehicle sales are expected to increase to 16.8 million units, both up 2 percent from 2014.

"The 2014 close is shaping up as expected with November looking like another strong performance," said Jeff Schuster, senior vice president of forecasting at LMC Automotive.

"Looking forward, downward pressure has given way to upside momentum, with a stronger

economy, significant new model activity and low gas prices creating an opportunity for the light-vehicle market to hit 17 million units in 2015."

North American production through October is at 14.3 million units, a 5 percent increase from the same period in 2013, Humphrey said. Vehicle inventory heading into November was at a 76-day supply, up from 64 days in September.

LMC Automotive has increased the North American production forecast for 2014 to 16.9 million units from 16.8 million units, which is a 5 percent increase from the 16.2 million units in 2013, Tews said.

North American production in 2015 is expected to eclipse 17 million units, with capacity utilization continuing to run at or above the 90 percent level.

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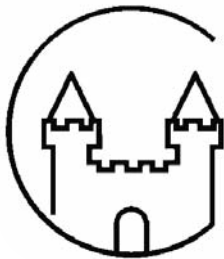
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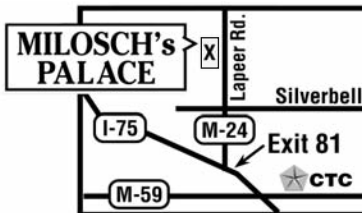
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