

GM Will Invest \$5.4 Billion with Pontiac Metal Center Slated to Get \$124 Million

by Jim Stickford

During the recent economic downturn citizens and governments as well as employees of GM showed their faith by, investing time, labor and money in the company. On April 30, GM helped repay that faith to the tune of \$5.4 billion in new investments over three years in various GM sites around the country.

Alan Batey, GM North American president, made the announcement at the company's Pontiac Metal Center site, where he said that as part of the first phase of the process the facility will receive \$124 million in investments.

Two other facilities in Michigan will receive additional investments as well, Batey said. GM's Lansing Delta Township site will receive \$520 million for tooling and equipment, and the Warren Pre-Productions Operations site will get \$139.5 million for a new body shop and stamping facility upgrades.

All told, the first phase of GM's investment plans calls for \$783.5 million to be invested at the three Michigan locations. He said that GM will announce what other sites will be upgraded at a later date.

"The announcement naming these three sites is just what we're talking about today," Batey said. "We will stagger our announcements on what other sites are getting money in the future.

We want to be able to explain what we are doing and we've found that announcing everything in one go is not the best

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



Alan Batey announces upcoming investments in Michigan.



2015 Renegade

2015 Jeep and Ram Clean Up At NWAPA Annual 'Mudfest'

by Jim Stickford

Fiat Chrysler's Jeep and Ram brands aren't afraid to get dirty and as a result cleaned up at the 21st annual "Mudfest" competition hosted by the Northwest Automotive Press Association (NWAPA), with each Fiat Chrysler vehicle entered winning its respective category.

In addition, the new 2015 Jeep Renegade took home top honors, being voted "Northwest Outdoor Activity Vehicle of the Year" by automotive journalist members of NWAPA in attendance, said Fiat Chrysler spokesman Nick Cappa.

This was my first mudfest,

Cappa said. They developed a course that "required drivers to thread the needle" with large pickup by driving the vehicle through multiple sections with trees narrowly spaced.

"It was a great little course," Cappa said. "There were a number of mudholes, some up to depths of 30 inches. That required not just the capability of the truck, but some skill from the drivers. Both the Jeeps and Ram trucks have impressive water-fording capabilities."

"Following two days of extensive testing, I think it's clear that Jeep has something special with

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

Detroit's Automakers See Stronger April Car Sales

DETROIT (AP) – General Motors, Ford and Fiat Chrysler all reported U.S. sales gains last month as Americans continued to choose small and midsize SUVs and pickup trucks over cars.

Several of the companies reported their best April sales in years, led by the SUVs.

The sales were mostly in line with industry analysts' expectations for about a 6 percent overall increase. All automakers were scheduled to report sales on Friday.

General Motors, the top-selling automaker in the U.S., posted a 5.9 percent increase led by small and midsize SUVs. The Detroit company says it sold just over 269,000 cars and trucks last month.

The automaker was led by the Chevrolet Equinox midsize SUV with sales up 42 percent to nearly 29,000. Sales of the Buick Encore small SUV rose 29 percent

to nearly 5,600.

GM's top-seller, the Chevrolet Silverado pickup, posted nearly an 8 percent sales gain to almost 46,000.

Fiat Chrysler U.S. sales rose about 6 percent, led by Jeep brand small and midsize SUVs. Fiat Chrysler said it sold just over 189,000 cars and trucks for its best April since 2007. The Jeep brand posted its best monthly sales at nearly 72,000, up 20 percent from a year ago.

The Cherokee compact SUV led the way with a 27 percent increase to just over 19,000, while the brand sold more than 4,200 new Renegade subcompact SUVs in their first full month at dealerships. Sales of the Ram pickup, Fiat Chrysler's top-selling vehicle, rose only 3 percent to just under 38,000, but that was still the best April ever for the trucks.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3



2016 CT6

Cadillac CT6 Goes 'Green' with PHEV Tech

In a move to make the Cadillac CT6 truly a world car, GM declared at the Shanghai Auto Show that it will add an available Plug-In Hybrid Electric (PHEV) propulsion system to sedan when it comes out later this year.

The new PHEV system is expected to more than double the fuel economy of the conventional powertrain offerings.

The CT6 PHEV takes advantage of the car's advanced lightweight structure to create a unique formula for the sedan, said GM spokesman Donny Nordlicht.

"The first-ever CT6 is a technological showcase throughout, making it an ideal platform for Cadillac to offer its first plug-in hybrid," said Cadillac president Johan de Nysschen. "In the CT6, Cadillac presents a new formula for prestige luxury. The ad-

vanced Plug-In Hybrid system is a key addition, providing a combination of exceptional fuel economy, crisp acceleration and strong electric-driving range."

The CT6 Plug-In Hybrid system is designed to provide all-electric driving for most daily commutes, while maximizing fuel efficiency by providing blended power from the engine and battery at higher speeds and higher loads, even when energy is stored in the battery, de Nysschen said.

The CT6 PHEV leverages General Motors' proven battery technology, de Nysschen said. An 18.4 kWh lithium-ion battery pack is located between the rear seat and the trunk. The battery system is comprised of 192 prismatic pouch cells, which use the latest generation cell chemistry found in other GM plug-in vehicles.

With industry-leading quality levels of fewer than two problems per million battery cells produced, more than 20 million battery cells have been made for more than 73,000 GM plug-ins on the road today, de Nysschen said. The CT6 PHEV battery system will use the company's proven active thermal control system that maintains electric range over the battery system's life.

The battery system can be charged using a 120V or 240V charger. Range estimates will be provided closer to U.S. launch of the PHEV option.

All-electric launch performance is one of the key purchase considerations for PHEV and EV owners, Nordlicht said. The Cadillac CT6 PHEV combines an

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6



2015 Cherokee



TACOM's commanding general Gwen Bingham at the NDIA show.

‘The Message of the Day Is Partnership’ – Gen. Bingham

by Jim Stickford

One thing the defense industry has in common with the auto industry is that it is cyclical.

“I’ve been in the defense industry for 40 years,” said Jim Ruma, who serves on the board of directors of the Michigan chapter of the National Defense Industrial Association (NDIA). “I started out with Chrysler Defense before it was sold to General Dynamics. And one thing I saw, and I believe still holds true today, is that when the defense industry was enjoying good times, the auto industry was experiencing troubles. And when the auto industry was flush, the defense industry was in a down cycle.”

This observation is important, Ruma said, because southeast Michigan is not only home to the U.S. auto industry, it has a vibrant presence in the military industrial complex as well.

And what this cycle means for the area, Ruma said, is that when the auto industry is up, engineers and manufacturers leave their old jobs in the military industry to move to the car side of things. And when cars are down, they go back to the military side of things.

“What I want to emphasize is that companies can weather these changes better by being prepared for them,” Ruma said. “So small and medium-sized companies that make parts for the military should be prepared to deal with this reality. It’s tough.”

Which is why Ruma works with organizations like the NDIA and Michigan Business Connect. By helping people develop networks, businesses in Michigan can make the transition between public and private work. The Michigan chapter of the NDIA held its annual Defense Expo in April at Macomb Community College’s Sports Expo Center.

This expo, said NDIA spokesman Paul Curtis, allows local defense contractors to show everyone at TACOM and TARDEC just what they can do.

“Companies can show off their prototypes and TACOM and

TARDEC people can talk with them,” Curtis said. “This is important because TACOM and TARDEC are large organizations with many people who perform many different functions. Having all the contractors in one place at one time gives the people who work at these different functions the chance to answer questions.

Major General Gwen Bingham, who is in charge of TACOM in Warren, also attended the NDIA show.

“The message of the day is partnership,” Bingham said. “This type of forum brings us – the Army and contractors – together. It’s a powerful to be able to do what I like to call the three Cs – communicate, coordinate and collaborate at an event like this and build on relationships.”

Bingham said that she is the senior commander at all TACOM locations.

“Being that spread out, there’s no way we could do everything inside our gates without all the help we get from our contractors outside the gates,” Bingham said.

Right now, given the current situation – the U.S. is in the process of drawing down from two wars – contractors that can help the Army sustain its forces around the world. That effort could be in danger if Congress has another sequestration in 2016.

“We have a saying ‘we never want to see one of our soldiers in a fair fight,’” Bingham said. “We make sure that never happens by making sure our soldiers get every piece of equipment they need. A sequestration could interrupt that.”

Culver’s Weekly Car Show Ready to Go

by Jim Stickford

Warm Spring weather is finally here, and that means that it’s cruiser time at Culver’s restaurant on M-24, just north of the Palace.

Culver’s owner Joe Zimmer said that 2015 marks the seventh year in a row that the restaurant has sponsored a cruiser night.

“Beginning on the first Tuesday in May, and this year it’s May 5, we host a car night here,” Zimmer said. “Cruisers, or as I like to call them, classic car aficionados, come here around 4 p.m. every Tuesday. We have a professional

DJ, and once a month, a live band.”

Basically, Zimmer said, Culver’s has its own car show every week in its parking lot and empty field next to the restaurant. Last year Zimmer counted 384 cruisers at one night’s show.

There’s no charge for having a car on display, Zimmer said. Those attending also get to enjoy a 15 percent discount on Culver’s food.

“We also hold a 50/50 raffle,” Zimmer said. “I have to thank its sponsor AutoZone for providing the gifts. We also give a \$25 gift certificate to the winner of each week’s ‘best cruiser’ contest. The winner is selected by myself, the

DJ and the photographer who attends the event.”

In addition to holding its cruise night every Tuesday, Zimmer said they hosting their fourth annual “poker run” this year on June 20.

“It’s a fun event,” Zimmer said. “June 20 is the day before Father’s Day. Participants take their cruisers and visit 12 different locations along M-24 North between the restaurant and Metamora. The cruiser gets a playing card at every stop. Upon his or her return, the cruiser tries to make the best poker hand possible.”

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Jim Stickford, news

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Chrysler Adds 3-D Printing To Help in Axle Testing

The things they can do with modern technology is giving Fiat Chrysler total transparency when developing ways to measure oil flow inside a vehicle.

Fiat Chrysler is using 3-D printing to open a unique window on the world of axle development. Conventional methods of evaluating oil flow inside axles and pinion carriers involve cutting windows into the components and then observing the fluid's movement using a dynamometer, said Fiat Chrysler spokesman Eric Mayne. But with movement, oil turns milky and blocks the view afforded by two-dimensional windows.

So Fiat Chrysler engineers decided to add a third dimension to the process by printing see-through plastic components exclusively for test purposes. This new technology allows correlation to virtual analysis of fluid flow.

As a result, the company has a clearer view of axle durability and efficiency – and the road ahead, Mayne said.

"Efficient axles are critical to

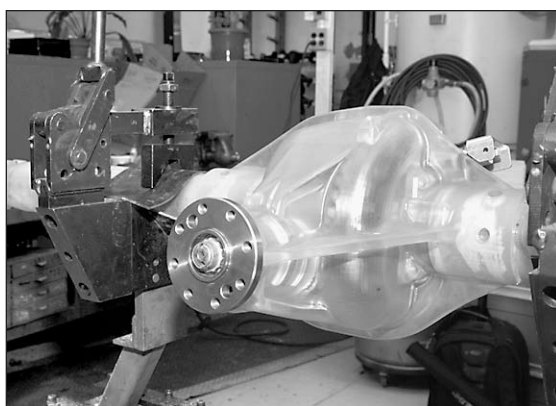
our powertrain strategy," says Jeffrey Lux, vice president-Transmission Powertrain. "For the customer, they offer an economical way to improve total powertrain efficiency.

"Accordingly, we've introduced six new axle families since the foundation for FCA US was established in 2009."

The unique test is one of thousands performed daily at the Chrysler Technology Center, also known as CTC, located at the company's U.S. headquarters. It is the auto industry's only headquarters building where a vehicle design can go from a napkin sketch to production prototype to advertising campaign – and everything in between – under one roof.

"CTC is a key competitive advantage for FCA US," says John vice president – Product Development. "We have more than 14,000 people under one roof, including 7,900 engineers. That speeds the collaborative process, which is the lifeblood of our business."

CTC's 5.4 million square feet of



Chrysler
3D Testing

floor space makes it the largest headquarters of any kind in North America, except for the Pentagon. Among its features:

- CTC's aerodynamics testing facility generates the highest wind speeds (160+ mph) of any domestic OEM's wind tunnel.
- Its 129 dynamometer cells

run 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- The facility has been running 24/7 since it opened in 1991.
- CTC's current employment numbers (14,000+) represent its historic peak.
- The site produces no landfill waste.

Auto Sales See Nice Bump For Detroit OEMs

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Ford Motor Co. posted a 5 percent gain for its best April in nine years. Ford sold more than 222,000 cars and trucks last month, led by small and midsize SUVs.

The revamped Ford Edge midsize SUV posted its best April sales ever at just over 13,000, up 78 percent from a year ago. Ford Escape small SUV sales were up nearly 5 percent to almost 26,000. Sales of F-150, Ford's top-selling vehicle, fell 1 percent as the company continued to ramp up production of a new model with an aluminum body.

CTS-V Here This Summer

Cadillac said that U.S. dealers will begin accepting orders for the next-generation 2016 CTS-V, the new high-performance sedan that launches in late summer.

The 640-hp CTS-V is the second of two all-new V-Series models to come to market in 2015, following the smaller ATS-V coupe and sedan, which launches in late spring.

Cadillac's new 2016 V-Series models represent a significant expansion of the brand's elite, high-performance line, said GM spokesman David Caldwell. Not only are the new V-Series cars elevated in terms of performance, they now reach a broader spectrum of drivers by presenting two distinct personalities, size categories and price points.

With a top speed of 200 mph and 0-60 performance in 3.7 seconds, the CTS-V is the most powerful car in Cadillac's 112-year history, Caldwell said. The 2016 CTS-V is priced from \$83,995. Customers can place orders now with dealers and view additional product information at Cadillac.com.

"V-Series represents the pinnacle of Cadillac, a brand that now

makes drivers' cars at the highest level," said Johan de Nysschen, Cadillac president. "The new CTS-V is essentially two cars in one: a luxury sedan with sophisticated road manners and a track-capable sports car with awe-inspiring performance. This type of car is exclusive, the domain of the few who can access this level of incredible capability. V-Series matches or overtakes the finest cars in this elite class, while being more accessible."

Features include segment-exclusive, third-generation Magnetic Ride Control, the world's fastest reacting suspension technology, Caldwell said. That is just one of many standard features and engineering enhancements offered in the 2016 CTS-V.

Equipped with a 6.2L supercharged V8 and an eight-speed automatic transmission that offers full manual control via steering wheel paddles, the CTS-V has more horsepower (640 hp) and more torque (630 lb-ft) than the Mercedes-Benz 5.5L biturbo V8 and the BMW M-series 4.4L Twin-Power V8.

The smaller ATS-V launch will precede the CTS-V, Caldwell said.

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Jeep, Ram Show Path to Success Gets Muddy

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

the new Renegade Trailhawk," said Ryan Douthit, co-chair of the event. "Don't let its size fool you: this is one capable little machine. Even though it did extremely well in our sealed-surface slalom and braking tests, it was the smallest Jeep's remarkable off-road abilities that really impressed our members."

The 2015 Jeep Renegade was also named the winner of the Compact Utility class, and the 2015 Jeep Cherokee was the winner of the Family Utility class.

"We weren't surprised at the success of the Renegade with these writers," said Fiat Chrysler spokeswoman Angela Bianchi. "I is, after all a Jeep, and high performance and overall excellence is something that people have come to expect with that brand. And we think the Renegade really delivers and lives up to Jeep's reputation."

The 2015 Ram 1500 EcoDiesel won the Pickups category, while the 2015 Ram Power Wagon won in the Extreme Capability class.

"This annual competition sets the bar for outdoor activity vehicle buyers in not only the Northwest, but the entire country," said Nik Miles, president of NWA-PA. "The journalists push vehicles to their limits; this competition is not for the meek and faint of heart. FCA came to the table ready for a tough fight and they played rough and tough, driving away with a trunk full of trophies."

More than 20 NWAPA auto journalists spent two days testing vehicles on paved and off-road routes, Cappa said. They tested 27 vehicles from 21 OEMs to pick winners in six categories: compact utility, family utility, premium compact utility, premium standard utility, pickups and extreme capability vehicles. The overall winner, the 2015 Jeep Renegade, was selected from the class winners.

"What is really telling about what the NWAPA did was that they looked at both 'outdoor' and 'family' vehicles," Bianchi said. "Our success with the NWA-PA shows the strength of both the Jeep and Ram brands in meeting the different needs of today's drivers."

Charger Hemi Leads the Way At NHRA Race

Don Schumacher Racing (DSR) driver Ron Capps earned his second national title victory of the year with a trip to the winner's circle at the National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) SpringNationals near Houston on a day recognized by Mopar fans as Hemi Day (4/26) named after the legendary 426 Hemi engine which helped power the new 2015 Mopar Dodge Charger R/T to its fifth win in six events since making its debut this season.

"I'm very pleased to see how well the Don Schumacher Racing team has embraced the new 2015 Mopar Dodge Charger R/T Funny Car and taken it to the winner's circle for a fifth time this season with a victory by Ron Capps at the SpringNationals," said Pietro Gorlier, President and CEO - Mopar Brand Service, Parts and Customer Care. "Everyone at Mopar is looking forward to seeing this team and the new Mopar contend for many more wins this year and work to defend the championship."

Seeded third, Capps faced his DSR teammate and No.1 qualifier Jack Beckman for the all-Mopar final elimination.

Picture may not reflect actual vehicle. * The Chrysler Group LLC Employee Advantage Purchase program sale prices and lease payments quoted. Just add tax, title, doc fee and destination charge. ** 24, 27, 30, 36 month Chrysler Group LLC employee leases. The amount due on all leases require amount due plus monthly tax, cap cost reduction tax, first payment, title, plate, doc fee and destination charge. Security deposit: is waived on all lease payments. Lease payments are 10,000 miles per year, 20 cents per mile thru Ally or 25 cents thru Chrysler Capital for excess mileage. Customer must qualify for 1 or S tier credit approval. Payments subject to change due to lower approved credit tier. Banks may require to prove income and residency for credit approval. Customer is responsible for excess wear and tear. Total deferred price is the sum of the purchase price, plus doc fee, plate fee, sales tax, and accrued finance charges over the term of the lease. All rebates and program monies assigned back to dealer. All prices and lease payments are based off Chrysler Group LLC incentives thru the Great Lakes Business Center. Rebates on retail consumer cash lease cash, lease loyalty, military, trade assist cash, finance bonus cash and all other Great Lakes offers will be applied. The dealer invoice amount is not a net factory price to dealer. Customers may not qualify for all offers, incentives, discounts or financing offers. See dealer for qualifications and complete details. Excludes Huvaere new car cash coupon has been applied to all sale and lease payments in this ad. 11 Chrysler Group LLC Employee Advantage 84 month buy at 3.49% A.P.R. with approved credit at tier 1. Vehicle sale prices include Chrysler Capital bonus cash-must finance thru Chrysler Capital. 2015 lease payment includes mid-size segment conquest cash. *Sale prices include lessee loyalty retail bonus cash, customer must qualify.

GM Will Invest \$124 Million In Pontiac Metal Center

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

way to do that.”

Cathy Clegg, vice president of GM North America Manufacturing, was also at Pontiac Metal. She said that she got her start as a stamper, so being able to make an announcement of such importance at the Pontiac facility was a joy for her.

“The common thread among our investments is the focus on product improvements that benefit customers,” Clegg said. “Together, with our UAW partners, we’re working hard to exceed consumers’ ever-increasing quality expectations.”

Clegg said that all major body panel dies are pre-tested at the Pontiac facility under regular production conditions, enabling stamping plants to produce quality parts in a shorter time span.

The Warren Pre-Production facility, Clegg said, is one of five that GM has around the world. It is where GM develops the most efficient manufacturing protocols for building its various vehicles. Once these protocols have been tested and proven, then people from the particular plant in question come, learn the techniques and take them back to their home site.

Basically, Clegg said, Warren Pre-Production finds problems before they become problems.

Lansing Delta is where GM assembles the Chevrolet Traverse, the GMC Acadia and the Buick Enclave.

Clegg said the order in which GM picks sites for investment is based on the company’s needs as it launches new products.

“The prep work on the three Michigan facilities has already started,” Clegg said. “The work

won’t be completed on late next year. No sites will be closed during the process. We’ll run at full operation.”

Batey said that in the past GM didn’t make such investments during bad economic times.

“It’s no secret that the auto business is cyclical,” Batey said. “It’s important to have a balance sheet that allows a company to invest. Having a ‘fortress’ balance sheet means that a company like GM can invest in product during both good and bad times. We want our development to be on time. In the past we delayed investing in sites and in new product to save money during down cycles. Fortunately, we are in a position where we have the cash to invest during lean times.”

Belle Isle Grand Prix Looking for Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to help run the upcoming Chevrolet Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix.

The event, which takes place at Belle Isle over the course of several days at the end of May, needs volunteers to help out with customer relations, food services, chalet services, information booths, track services, ticket taking, transportation and delivery services and more, said event spokesman Merrill Cain.

“Without question, our volunteers at the Chevrolet Detroit Belle Isle Grand Prix are the best in the business,” said race chair Bud Denker.

To learn more about the volunteer requirements and to sign up, go to www.DetroitGP.com, Cain said.

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Cadillac CT6 Goes 'Green' With PHEV Technology

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

all-new rear wheel electric variable transmission (EVT) with exclusively designed motors to provide smooth, spirited acceleration.

The two-motor EVT also uses three planetary gears and is mated to a 2.0L turbo 4-cylinder engine with spark-ignited direct injection and variable valve technology. The use of a two-motor system provides smooth and seamless power through the entire driving range. The combined system is capable of producing total system power of 335 hp and 432 lb-ft of torque.

"The CT6 PHEV will deliver exceptional smooth, responsive acceleration that Cadillac and luxury sedan owners demand," said Travis Hester, Cadillac CT6 executive chief engineer. "We have managed to achieve superior drive quality when compared to our PHEV competitors due to our exclusively designed EVT."

Cadillac expects the fuel economy of the CT6 PHEV to be more than double that of the car's conventional engine offerings, Nordlicht said, as measured by miles per gallon equivalent. Standards for measuring vehicle fuel economy differ between China and other global regions. Full details on the CT6 PHEV efficiency in the U.S. and other markets outside China will be released closer to the car's introduction in those markets.

The CT6 PHEV will feature iBooster and Electronic Stability Program tailored for hybrid electric vehicle regenerative blended braking to provide maximum energy recovery combined with reduced stopping distance and improved fuel economy over tradi-

tional regenerative braking systems.

The iBooster and ESP-hev technology balance the use of the CT6 electric motors to act as generators to slow the vehicle and capture as much kinetic energy as possible during low-demand scenarios, Nordlicht said, while blending the traditional hydraulic brakes with the motors in high-demand scenarios.

As expected from a driver's car like the CT6, the system provides improved brake pedal feel and enables increased opportunity for engine stop-start operation.

CT6 PHEV drivers will be able to select among three distinct operating modes: Normal, Sport and Hold.

- **Normal:** Designed for everyday commuting. Provides ideal balance of comfort, performance and maximized EV range and fuel economy.

- **Sport:** Provides more aggressive pedal mapping for improved off-the-line feel and a stiffer steering response.

- **Hold:** Allows owners to select when the CT6 PHEV uses its engine, reserving the remaining battery charge for later use. This feature helps enhance efficiency because owners who mix city and highway driving can save the battery charge for city travel.

- The CT6 PHEV will have Regen on Demand. This allows the driver to temporarily regenerate energy from vehicle momentum into electricity and store in the battery pack for later use.

Regen on Demand supports a more-engaging driving experience by slowing the vehicle when entering a turn to better position it on the exit, Nordlicht said, much like downshifting with a manual transmission.

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Ally Financial Sees Strong 1Q Profits

DETROIT (AP) – Ally Financial, the former lending arm of General Motors, said its quarterly profit more than doubled, thanks mainly its sale of a stake in an auto-loan company in China.

The results beat Wall Street's expectations, and drove the lender's stock up 49 cents, or 2 percent, to \$20.80 in early trading April 27.

The Detroit-based lender reported first-quarter earnings of \$576 million, or \$1.06 per share. That's up from \$227 million, 33 cents per share, in the same period a year earlier.

The sale of Ally's 40 percent stake in a joint venture in China at the start of the year contributed nearly \$400 million to quarterly profit.

First-quarter earnings, adjusted for non-recurring items, came to 52 cents per share, handily surpassed financial analysts' expectations. The average estimate of eight analysts surveyed by Zacks Investment Research was for earnings of 42 cents per share.

New car loans hit \$9.8 billion in the quarter, a 7 percent increase from the same period of last year. Deposits at Ally Bank reached \$50.6 billion, up 12 percent.

Total revenue was \$1.09 billion in the period, down from \$1.14 billion the year before and also short of analysts' forecasts. Analysts surveyed by Zacks expected \$1.17 billion.

Shares in Ally Financial Inc. have fallen 14 percent since the beginning of the year. The stock has declined 17 percent in the last 12 months.

Corvette to Lead Way in this Year's Indy 500 Race

Five-time Brickyard 400 winner and four-time NASCAR Sprint Cup champion Jeff Gordon will drive a Corvette Z06 pace car for the 99th running of the Indianapolis 500 mile race, May 24 at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, said GM spokesman Randy Fox.

It is the 13th time a Corvette has served as the official pace car, Fox said, dating to 1978, and the 26th time a Chevrolet has led the pack for "The Greatest Spectacle in Racing." Corvette has served as pace car more than any other vehicle in the race's history.

Gordon, who grew up in nearby Pittsboro, Ind., is no stranger to the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. In 1994 he won the inaugural Brickyard 400 – the first-ever NASCAR race at the Brickyard, and has visited the winner's circle there four more times. That makes him one of only two five-time winners at Indy in any series. Michael Schumacher won five Formula One races there.

"It's great to have Jeff Gordon serve as this year's pace car driver," said Jim Campbell, Chevrolet U.S. vice president of performance vehicles and motorsports. "He is a true champion who has earned the respect and admiration of competitors and race fans alike. It will be very special to have Jeff lead the Indy 500 field to the green flag, behind the wheel of the most powerful and capable production car ever from Chevrolet – on a day he'll also be competing in the Coca Cola 600 NASCAR race at Charlotte Motor Speedway."

"Indy is hallowed ground for racers like me and I couldn't be more thrilled to drive the Corvette Z06 pace car around the track that helped drive my success over the years," Gordon said.

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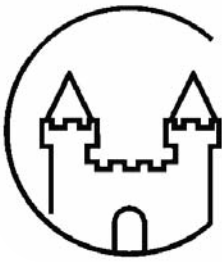
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