

MCC's president James O. Sawyer speaking at his inauguration.

MCC Holds an Inauguration For School's New President

by Jim Stickford

Macomb Community College's (MCC) officially inaugurated James O. Sawyer IV, Ed.D. as its as the Sixth President of Macomb Community College on Feb. 2.

Sawyer said that he started his three-year term last July, but school tradition has the inauguration ceremony held about six months after the new president assumes his position.

Sawyer started his inauguration address by saying "it is a

testament to the amazing impact of Macomb Community College that we are hosting such a broad cross section of the community, including Macomb Community College's current board of trustees; former board members; university and college delegates; Macomb students, faculty and staff; elected officials; community and business leaders; and friends of the college."

In his address, Sawyer said that he's lived in Macomb County

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Ford's 2019 Transit Connect Wagon debuted at the Chicago Auto Show.

Ford Unveils New Transit Connect Wagon for Public

Who said vans can't be cool? Not the folks at Ford.

The company has reinvented the van for Baby Boomers whose idea of rocking doesn't involve a chair, said Ford spokeswoman Dawn McKenzie.

Ford last week unveiled the redesigned Transit Connect Wagon at the Chicago Auto Show. The last Transit Connect Wagon won over Boomers-born from 1946 to 1964 that grew up driving vans with its unique combination of affordable, fun and easy-to-use people mover attributes and cargo hauling capabilities, McKenzie said.

At 111 million strong and holding 63 percent of American financial assets, the 50+ demographic is the number one consumer demographic in the United States – far exceeding Gen X's 61 million and Millennials' 75 million, McKenzie said. And one in three Boomers plans to purchase a car

in the next three years, according to AARP.

One such active Baby Boomer is Kevin Brown, age 63, of Nassau Bay, Texas. McKenzie said he is the kind of "active Boomer" who loves the Transit Connect Wagon. Brown grew up driving vans in the 1970s and now, this Gulf Coast surfer and grandfather of nine drives a 2014 Ford Transit Connect Wagon for his work as an illustrator and custom T-shirt printer.

"If I'm not shuttling family to the beach, I'm working," Brown said. "My Transit Connect lets me pull double duty."

With room for five to seven passengers and offering easy conversion to cargo duty, the 2019 Ford Transit Connect Wagon was designed to take care of business with a versatility and maneuverability that make

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General Motors Reports a Profitable 2017, UAW Employees Getting a \$12,000 Bonus

by TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) – If auto loan interest rates rise as expected this year, General Motors and others are likely to make more subsidized loans, including zero-percent financing, to keep car sales flowing.

CFO Chuck Stevens told reporters Feb. 6 after GM released its full-year and fourth-quarter earnings that generally, auto company finance arms try to make up for rising rates with subsidies.

GM expects rates will increase 0.75 percent this year as the Federal Reserve acts to stave off inflation. As many as three quarter-point hikes are expected. Auto loan rates now run around 3 percent to 4 percent for buyers with good credit.

Across the industry, subsidized loans make up a relatively low percentage of incentive spending now because financing rates remain so low, Stevens said. But as rates rise, companies likely will move dollars from other sales incentives to keep loan rates low, he said.

"Leasing and cash-based incentives are kind of predominant now," Stevens said. "As interest

rates increase, there will be more subvented financing. Then you'll reduce other parts of the toolbox."

A quarter-point rate increase pushes up a typical monthly car payment by only \$3, Stevens said. GM expects 2018 to be another strong year for sales because wages are growing, gas prices are low and consumers will have more disposable income due to tax cuts, Stevens said.

He made the comments Feb. 6, just after GM reported a \$3.9 bil-

lion net loss for 2017 driven largely by a \$7.3 billion accounting charge. Excluding one-time items, GM made \$9.9 billion, or \$6.62 per share, the greatest since leaving bankruptcy in 2009.

The earnings beat Wall Street estimates. Analysts polled by FactSet expected \$6.33 per share. Full-year revenue was \$145.6 billion, which also topped expectations.

GM said the rewrite of the U.S. tax code forced it to write down

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GM CEO Mary Barra speaking at a 2017 stockholder's meeting.

FCA Bet Big on Super Bowl Commercials

FCA set the stage for the arrival of its three newest and highly anticipated vehicles – the new 2018 Jeep Wrangler, the new 2019 Ram 1500 and the new 2019 Jeep Cherokee – on Sunday night during the Super Bowl LII telecast.

The company debuted a record five spots during the Super Bowl, said FCA spokeswoman Diane Morgan.

"The launches of the all-new Jeep Wrangler and Ram 1500 and the new Jeep Cherokee represent the collective efforts of the men and women at FCA who instinctively recognize their responsibility to these authentic brands," said Sergio Marchionne, CEO, FCA. "These vehicles, and these commercials, reflect our continued commitment to each brand and serve as a validation to our actions to realign our industrial output in the United States to meet customer demand."

Jeep Brand's "Jeep Jurassic" was a 60-second spot aired during the third quarter, Morgan said.

The 60-second "Jurassic World" commercial paid homage to the iconic scene in "Jurassic Park," in which Dr. Ian Malcom (Jeff Goldblum) escapes danger while in the back of a Jeep Wrangler – as he is being chased by a rampaging Tyrannosaurus Rex.

The video was directed by "Jurassic World" director Colin Trevorrow, who returned as co-writer and executive producer of "Jurassic World: Fallen Kingdom," arriving in U.S. theaters on June 22.

Jeep Brand's "Anti-Manifesto" 30-second commercial aired during the fourth quarter and was meant to speak of the "endless automakers that make declarations or promises of what their

brand or vehicles deliver", Morgan said.

The Jeep brand commercial took the approach that only it can unquestionably deliver while introducing the new 2018 Wrangler, Morgans aid. The brand instead chooses to show the world that there is only one vehicle that needs no words to demonstrate the true meaning of "Manifesto."

Jeep Brand's "The Road" a 30-second spot that aired during the second quarter introduced the new 2019 Jeep Cherokee. It declared that the vehicle is the most capable mid-size sport-utility vehicle – now boasting a new, authentic and more premium design, with superior on-road performance with unmatched Jeep 4x4 capability, Morgan said.

Ram Truck Brand's "Built to Serve" was a 60-second spot aired during the second quarter, Morgan said. It was meant to show the core belief of the Ram Truck brand, and Ram truck owners, that true greatness is

achieved by helping others. It features the new 2019 Ram 1500.

The heart of the 60-second spot was a speech that Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered exactly 50 years ago to the day, Feb. 4, 1968, that illustrates this value perfectly.

The commercial was not without controversy. *The Associated Press* reported it was criticized by viewers and ad experts alike for forging too tenuous a connection with the civil rights hero.

On Twitter, according to AP, most people expressed the idea that using King's speech to "sell trucks" crossed a line between a heartfelt message and exploiting emotions just to push a vehicle.

The commercial was meant to show that Ram Truck brand believes in Dr. King's notion that "everybody can be great because everybody can serve," and Ram owners demonstrate this commitment every day in lending helping hands to their families,

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This 2019 Wrangler was used in the "Anti-Manifesto" commercial.

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FCA Bets Big With Super Bowl Spots

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

friends and communities, Morgan said.

The spot was comprised of 26 powerful images of those serving others, with Dr. King's commanding voice calling for all of us to serve.

Ram Truck Brand's "Icelandic Vikings | We Will Rock You" was the 60-second commercial that aired during the first quarter of the game.

It featured "Icelandic Vikings" and was covered by the famous rock song "We Will Rock You" was meant humorously pays tribute to the setting of this year's big game, Minneapolis, Morgan said.

The Ram Truck brand fittingly enlists the help of Icelandic Vikings, thought to be some of the first European settlers in Minnesota, to showcase the new 2019 Ram 1500 Limited – a truck built to “take on anything that might come its way” Morgan said.

MCC Holds an Inauguration For School's New President

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since 1976 and has great love for the community.

"There is something special about the people that live in Macomb County," Sawyer said. "We are not afraid of – and in fact – embrace hard work. We are focused on maintaining our commitments, supporting our families and building our communities."

Sawyer said that he was originally uncomfortable with the idea of an inauguration, but came to realize that the event was as much about honoring the school and the people who make it great.

"Education has always been important. But today's reality is that education is an essential factor in moving our residents and community along the path to economic vitality," Sawyer said. "As a result, we must engage with and effectively support the post-secondary credential completion of a greater percentage of our residents than ever before. Credential attainment is not only important for personal growth and success, a highly skilled workforce as evidenced by credentials earned by community members is important for business attraction and economic development."

Sawyer said that as the school's new president he wants to make sure that he honors the 180,000 alumni who have taken at least 40 credits at the school since its inception in 1954.

"What's important for a community college is to be respected within the community they serve and that the school responds to the community's needs," Sawyer said. "It's our job to provide job training and education for two years that can be transferred to other colleges for bachelor's de-

grees. We have strong partnerships with Wayne State University and Oakland University."

Sawyer said in an interview after the inauguration that the school is always trying to get out the message that community colleges offer the education that people need in today's job market at a price people can afford.

And by letting the public at large know about what MCC can offer, the school becomes a true resource, not just for the students who take classes there, but to local businesses and companies that are always looking for trained and educated employees, Sawyer said.

"We take pride in how affordable our classes are to the people of Macomb County," Sawyer said. "If you're from outside the county you pay more, but we are

Ford's Transit Connect Van For Boomers

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

everyday use easy, McKenzie said.

The wagon features a new gas and diesel engines and a suite of driver-assist technologies, including standard Automatic Emergency Braking. The feature is included with Pre-Collision Assist with Pedestrian Detection – a segment-exclusive.

"Baby Boomers have always embraced life's adventures and to them age is just another experience to master," said Mark LaNeve, Ford vice president, U.S. Marketing, Sales and Service. "From being easy to get in and out of, plus flexible seating and cargo space, Transit Connect Wagon makes it convenient for Boomers to keep enjoying family time or explore new hobbies and careers."

The new Transit Connect Wag-

open to anyone who wishes to attend."

More than 70 percent of MCC's students attend part time because they have other obligations which may involve supporting a family, and a significant number of them face barriers and obstacles outside the classroom that can curtail their ability to attend school, Sawyer said.

"I'm committed to continue working with Macomb's talented faculty and staff in developing meaningful resources and support to help students overcome these barriers that sometimes interfere with their goals," Sway said.

The school has made a good start in enhancing student success, including integrating a guided path ways approach that helps students make good choices.

es about a program early in their college career and provides a clear road map of courses and offers ongoing support, as well as establishing Reading and Writing Studios that help students at all levels effectively address these foundational skills that are critical to academic success and to be a engaged citizen.

The school is also working on deepening existing relationships with the local K-12 and university partners to enhance educational pathways that allow our residents to reach their educational goals efficiently by minimizing duplication and loss of credits, Sawyer said. The college is part of an education continuum and it is essential all educators at all levels work together for the good of our students, the community and society in general.

on features new driver-assist features, including standard Automatic Emergency Braking, Lane-keep Assist, and Adaptive Cruise Control, LaNave said. To help avoid lane drift while driving, available Lane Keeping System vibrates the steering wheel and can apply extra steering wheel torque to help you keep the vehicle centered on the road.

It is available in two wheelbases to accommodate five or seven passengers and in three trim levels, XL, XLT and Titanium, Transit Connect Wagon can be built to meet the needs of any customer, LaNeve said. A spacious, flexible interior makes loading cargo easier. Dual sliding side doors provide added convenience, and available roof rails extend its versatility with any number of accessories that can be fitted to the roof to haul bikes, kayaks, stand-up paddle boards or luggage.

economy rating of at least 30 mpg highway. The diesel engine is paired with an all-new 8-speed automatic transmission.

A new 2.0-liter four-cylinder gasoline engine with direct injection comes with Auto Start-Stop as standard equipment. It too comes mated to the all-new 8-speed automatic.

LaNeve said the Transit Connect Wagon is expected to be one of the most affordable seven-passenger vehicles in the United States.

The long-wheelbase model has more interior cargo volume behind the first row than the 2018 Chevrolet Tahoe, making the task of getting oversized items home a snap.

And with a turning radius of just 38.3 feet for the short-wheel-base van, getting around busy streets is easy.

For those who need to tow a trailer, Transit Connect Wagon is expected to offer unsurpassed towing capability of 2,000 pounds when paired with the available trailer tow package. The 2019 Ford Transit Connect Wagon goes on sale this fall.



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GM Sees Strong Profits in Year 2017

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accumulated losses that it uses to avoid income taxes. Assets fell from \$33.6 billion, to \$24 billion. Since the corporate tax rate dropped from 35 percent, to 21 percent, the losses are worth less.

Stevens said GM still won't pay much in U.S. corporate taxes until after 2022 or 2023.

GM also announced that about 50,000 union factory workers will get \$11,750 profit-sharing checks this month, based on a full-year pretax North American profit of \$11.9 billion.

For the fourth quarter, GM posted a \$5.2 billion net loss due to the accounting charge. Without charges, the company made \$2.4 billion, or \$1.65 per share, soundly beating analyst estimates of \$1.39.

Company executives also told analysts they are in talks with minority stakeholders and its union in South Korea, which may be the next market that GM exits.

CEO Mary Barra said General Motors has to get improved cost performance.

Executives also said GM expects to increase spending on transportation as a service, including autonomous vehicles, to \$1 billion this year. It now has about 100 electric self-driving cars operating.

Executives told reporters that GM is on track to reach its goal of \$6.5 billion in annual cost efficiencies this year compared with 2014 and that the company was able to achieve a 10.7 percent pretax profit margin in North America despite sales to dealers and fleet buyers falling over 11 percent.

It did so with higher prices mainly for revamped SUVs that entered General Motors' lineup in 2017.

GM Table Tennis Tournament Builds Teams

GM has five campuses across the metro Detroit area – world headquarters in downtown Detroit, the Tech Center in Warren, the proving ground in Milford, Global Propulsion Systems in Pontiac and Customer Care and After Sale in Grand Blanc.

So how does a company geographically spread out encourage team building? Simple, hold a table tennis tournament.

Which is exactly what happened on Feb. 9, at GM's Global Propulsions Systems site in Pontiac.

The event, called the GM Multi-Campus Table Tennis Tournament, was held for the second year, said Scott Barone, team leader at Customer Care and After Sales. He helped organize the company-wide tournaments.

Despite the snowy weather, the tournament took place, Read said. The winner this was was the team from Milford. The Warren Tech Center took second, Pontiac Global Propulsion took third, RenCen fourth and Grand Blanc fifth.

"A couple of years ago, we held a fun little table tennis tournament in Pontiac, where a couple of table tennis tables are out for people to play on during their lunch breaks," Barone said. "Everyone who participated had a lot of fun. It was then decided to expand the tournament to all five campuses around metro Detroit."

The first tournament had more than 100 people sign up to participate, Barone said, in the first 24 hours.

"There was a lot of excitement when people heard about the tournament," Barone said. "Both from people who wanted to be

players and from management, because they saw the tournament as a great team-building exercise. Last year the Milford team won."

Barone said it's a "table tennis" tournament, not a ping pong tournament for a specific reason.

"Interesting fact," Barone said. "Back in the old days, Sears sold a table tennis package under the name of 'Ping Pong' and that caught on with the public and became interchangeable with the term table tennis. But the proper name of the game is table tennis."

This year, 345 people signed up to play. Each campus sent six people to the final tournament, Barone said. Players one through four from each campus played players one through four from the other campuses. Players five and six play as a team in doubles matches against players five and six from the other campuses.

Through a round robin system, the final campus winners are chosen.

The top six players were chosen via individual campuses pre-tournaments, Barone said. Some campuses didn't have their own table tennis tables, so he and others "schleped" tables from their campuses to the other campuses as needed. In fact, he even lent a couple of his personal tables to the cause.

Barone said he has gotten involved with the tournament because of his 30-year love of the game. He builds his own paddles using parts from the Butterfly table tennis equipment manufacturer.

"I personally like to use what is called the 'hand shake' grip," Barone said. "That's where you



Dennis Cobb Sr., left, battles Ed Lee at GM Global Propulsion Systems.

grip that paddle handle the same way you would grip a person's hand when shaking it. The other popular grip is known as the 'pen holder' grip. That's where you grip the paddle blade and handle the way one grips a pen."

Table tennis is a game played across the globe, said GM spokesman Tom Read. That makes it perfect for a company like GM, which employs people who come from around the world at its Michigan facilities.

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GM Debates Feds on Takata-Related Recall

by TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) – For the third time in the past three years, General Motors has asked the U.S. government for permission to avoid recalls of potentially deadly Takata air bag inflators.

The company disclosed its third petition to escape the recalls on Feb. 6 in a filing with securities regulators. The financial stakes are high. If the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration lets GM out of the recalls, the company says it could save \$1 billion and avoid recalling up to 6.8 million full-size pickup trucks and SUVs from the 2007 to 2011 model years.

Takata inflators can explode with too much force and hurl shrapnel into drivers and passengers. At least 22 people have been killed worldwide and more than 180 injured. The problem forced the Japanese company into bankruptcy protection and touched off the largest series of automotive recalls in U.S. history. Takata has agreed to recall up to 69 million inflators in the U.S. and 100 million worldwide.

Takata uses the chemical ammonium nitrate to create a small explosion and inflate air bags. But high humidity and hot temperatures can cause the chemical to deteriorate and burn too fast, blowing apart metal canisters designed to contain the explosion.

In its annual report posted by the Securities and Exchange Commission, GM said it filed recall paperwork and a petition to avoid the recalls with NHTSA on Jan. 9.

In the filing, GM says the front-passenger inflators were custom-made for its trucks by Takata with bigger vents and stronger steel end caps than other infla-

tors. No truck inflators have blown apart on roads or in extensive laboratory testing, the company says.

GM disclosed that it hasn't set aside money for the recalls, and if required to do them, "we estimate a reasonably possible impact to GM of approximately \$1.0 billion," the filing says. The company is in discussions with regulators outside the U.S. and continues to gather evidence and share its findings, according to the filing.

As part of a consent agreement with NHTSA in May of 2016, Takata agreed to recall all of its inflators that use explosive ammonium nitrate as a propellant but don't have a moisture-absorbing chemical in them. The recalls are being phased in through 2020, with older vehicles in southern states getting top priority. Takata has filed recall paperwork for 2016, 2017 and this year declaring the inflators defective, including those made for GM trucks.

GM filed petitions seeking to avoid the recalls in November of 2016 and in January of 2017, but NHTSA has yet to rule on them. Until it makes a decision, GM is not required to recall the trucks and SUVs. The agency gave GM until Aug. 31, 2017 to do research on the inflators.

The company has said it will design replacement inflators so it's ready if NHTSA decides the recalls have to be done.

NHTSA, the government's highway safety watchdog agency, said in a statement that it "is reviewing all of the relevant data and information regarding the pending GM petitions and will issue a decision as soon as possible."

Curtis White, of Elizabethtown, Ken., near Louisville, who owns a 2007 Chevrolet Suburban SUV, called GM's actions a "corporate

cover-up." The inflator on White's SUV was recalled in 2016, but his dealer tells him nothing can be done to fix it. "They do everything they can to avoid doing anything to help people," the 71-year-old retiree said.

Since the Suburban is his only vehicle, White says he has to let people ride in the front passenger seat. "It's still scary," he said. He's also upset with NHTSA because it hasn't made a decision. "I don't think the government does anything with any sense of urgency at all," White said on Wednesday.

Ford and Mazda also have petitioned NHTSA to escape from recalls involving about 3 million vehicles, mostly made by Ford, but no ruling has been made yet.

As of Jan. 5, automakers had recalled 40.1 million inflators, according to NHTSA's website. Of those, only about 53 percent had been replaced, despite the risk of injury or death. Problems with the inflators date to 2001.

The GM recalls cover two of its top-selling models, the Chevrolet Silverado and GMC Sierra pickup trucks. Also included are big SUVs such as the Chevrolet Tahoe, GMC Yukon and Cadillac Escalade.

GM spokesman Tom Wilkinson would not comment on Feb. 7, deferring to paperwork the company has filed with NHTSA.

GM hired Orbital ATK, a Virginia rocket science firm that determined the cause of Takata's air bag explosions, to test its truck inflators. As of December, Orbital ATK had checked 648 GM inflators by simulating heat and humidity cycles, finding that they would perform as designed for 30 years, according to GM. The automaker said that in 4,907 more inflators tested in labs and in 63,000 air bag deployments on real roads, none of the truck and SUV inflators malfunctioned.

GM also said its trucks have solar-absorbing glass that holds down cabin temperatures, keeping the inflators cooler and reducing hot-and-cold cycles that cause the ammonium nitrate to deteriorate.

Honda Reports Strong Profits For Year 2017

TOKYO (AP) – Honda Motor Co.'s profit for the fiscal third quarter more than tripled from what it earned last year as its sales grew and profits got a perk from a U.S. tax cut, the Japanese automaker said Feb. 2.

Tokyo-based Honda reported October-December profit totaling 570.2 billion yen (\$5.2 billion), up from 168.8 billion yen the previous year.

Quarterly sales grew 13 percent to 3.96 trillion yen (\$36 billion). Honda lifted its annual forecast through March to 1 trillion yen (\$9 billion), up from 616.5 billion yen the previous fiscal year on continued sales growth and a favorable exchange rate. Honda previously projected fiscal year profit of 585 billion yen (\$5.3 billion).

Honda's results have been hammered by costs related to a massive recall of air bags made by Takata Corp.

Takata has been forced into bankruptcy. Although almost all the global automakers were affected by the Takata recalls, Honda had been among its biggest customers.

The worldwide death toll linked to the defective Takata air bags rose to 22 in January. Honda Malaysia said a person in that country died New Year's Day from a crash of a vehicle that had a faulty Takata air-bag inflator. The Honda vehicle had been sold and so the recall was not completed, the company said.



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The FT 400 was developed in collaboration with Ignites Research, a subsidiary of the FT that provides specialized content on asset management. To qualify for the list, advisers had to have 10 years of experience and at least \$300 million in assets under management (AUM) and no more than 60% of the AUM with institutional clients. The FT reaches out to some of the largest brokerages in the U.S. and asks them to provide a list of advisors who meet the minimum criteria outlined above. These advisors are then invited to apply for the ranking. Only advisors who submit an online application can be considered for the ranking. In 2016, roughly 980 applications were received and 400 were selected to the final list. The 400 qualified advisers were then scored on six attributes: AUM, AUM growth rate, compliance record, years of experience, industry certifications, and online accessibility. AUM is the top factor, accounting for roughly 60-70 percent of the applicant's score. Additionally, to provide a diversity of advisors, the FT placed a cap on the number of advisors from any one state that's roughly correlated to the distribution of millionaires across the U.S. The ranking may not be representative of any one client's experience, is not an endorsement, and is not indicative of advisor's future performance. Neither Raymond James nor any of its Financial Advisors pay a fee in exchange for this award/rating. The FT is not affiliated with Raymond James. space Neither Raymond James Financial Services nor any Raymond James Financial Advisor renders advice on tax issues, these matters should be discussed with the appropriate professional.

FCA Charity Hockey Event Coming to LCA

by Jim Stickford

It's another cold Michigan winter, and that means it's time for the annual United Way Hockey Challenge Battle of the Brands put on by FCA.

This will be the sixth annual hockey challenge, said FCA spokeswoman Val Oehmke. Money raised by the sale of tickets goes to the United Way of South-eastern Michigan.

In past years the tournament was held at Comerica Park and the Joe Louis Arena. This year it is scheduled to be played at Little Caesars Arena in Detroit on Saturday, Feb. 17, beginning at 11 a.m.

Adam Hillock, HR manager at the Toledo Assembly Complex in Toledo, Ohio, playing left wing for Team Ram.

All in all, Hillock said, there are eight teams playing on Feb. 17. They are Team Jeep, Team Ram, Team Maserati, Team Mopar, Team Demons, Team Hellcat, Team SRT Dodge and Team Alfa Romeo.

The first match is Team Jeep against Team Ram, Oehmke said. Team Maserati will be play Team Mopar, while Team Demons plays Team Hellcats and Team SRT Dodge will play Team Alfa Romeo.

Between matches there will be open skating periods where family and friends of players can take to the ice and skate.

Hillock said it's always exciting when people get to skate at rinks where NHL hockey is played.

Hillock and his brother Brett, also an FCA employee who works at senior manager for Quality Control for Assembly Stamping, are on Team Jeep. The brothers grew up outside Windsor, Ontario, in a town called Belle River.

"We lived near Detroit, but were not Red Wings fans," Adam Hillock said. "We liked the Tigers, but when it came to Hockey, we rooted for the Toronto Maple Leafs. Growing up in Canada meant watching the show 'Hockey Night in Canada' every Saturday night."

Brett Hillock has been working for FCA since 1999. Then it the company was part of Mercedes. Since then, it's been owned by a hedge fund and now Fiat Chrysler Auto. He got his start working in the factories, first at the Windsor plant, then the Brampton plant, then Jefferson North, and finally Warren Truck. He is now in management.

"I first played in the challenge several years ago, in 2014, that was the year when the Maple Leafs played the Wings in the Outdoor Winter Game held at Comerica Park," Brett Hillock said. "I am a goalie and had concussion problems, so didn't play for a while, but when the challenge was held last year at the Joe Louis Arena, I played, and will play this year at Little Caesars Arena (LCA)."

Adam Hillock said that one thing that amazed him when he first played last year at the Joe



FCA's 'Battle of the Brands' hockey event is fun and helps United Way.

Louis Arena was how humble the facilities were.

He said the arena was actually one of the most plain in terms of the locker room, when compared to other pro hockey arenas. Describing it as "bare bones", Hillock said he felt he was in the old movie "Youngblood" which was about a minor league hockey player.

"We're excited to play at LCA because from what we have heard, it's very modern and very up-to-date," Hillock said. "Part of the fun of participating in the challenge is that when we go into the locker rooms, our team jerseys are placed in a cubicle the same way the pros' jerseys are when they play at LCA, and there will be a tub filled with ice and Gatorade, just like the pros as well."

Brett Hillock said that with the exception of FCA's plants in Mexico, the company's facilities are based in areas where hockey is a sport played by many.

"We get to meet people who work at the company that we'd never have had the chance to meet before," Brett Hillock said. "And our family and friends have the chance to enjoy skating on a real pro hockey arena's rink. You see the look on their faces and it's just a joy to be around."

Adam Hillock said that another reason it's fun to play in the chal-

lenge is that there are always ex-Red Wing players who join in on the fun. This year players will have the chance to meet and skate with Darren McCarty, who played for the Red Wings in the 1990s and 2000s – the years in which the Wings won four Stanley Cup championships.

Teams practicing together isn't that difficult, Adam Hillock said, because the managers and assistant managers have connections with local rinks. That allows them to reserve ice time.

And, Brett Hillock said, while everyone has a good time, it's also important to remember that the money raised through the sale of tickets goes to the United Way, a truly worthy cause.

"I've worked in a number of plants in the U.S. and Canada and I saw first hand how the United Way does work in the communities where our plants are located. This is a truly good cause and that fact shouldn't be forgotten amidst all the fun we have every year."

Oehmke said tickets are \$15 a piece, with children under five getting in for free. Three packs of tickets go for \$35, four packs cost \$45, five packs are \$50 and six packs are \$60. There will be two open skating sessions where the public can take to the rink, Oehmke said. One at 1:45 p.m. and another at 5 p.m.

Tesla Company Launches Auto Into Outer Space

CAPE CANAVERAL, Fla. (AP) – SpaceX's big new rocket blasted off Feb. 6 on its first test flight, carrying a red sports car aiming for an endless road trip past Mars.

The Falcon Heavy rose from the same launch pad used by NASA nearly 50 years ago to send men to the moon. With liftoff, the Heavy became the most powerful rocket in use today, doubling the liftoff punch of its closest competitor.

The three boosters and 27 engines roared to life at Kennedy Space Center, as thousands jammed surrounding beaches, bridges and roads to watch the rocket soar, delayed more than two hours by high wind.

Two of the boosters were recycled and programmed to return for a simultaneous touchdown at Cape Canaveral, while the third, brand new, set its sights on an ocean platform some 300 miles offshore.

SpaceX chief executive Elon Musk owns the rocketing Tesla Roadster, which is shooting for a solar orbit that will reach all the way to Mars. As head of the electric carmaker Tesla, he combined his passions to add a dramatic flair to the Heavy's long-awaited inaugural flight. Typical

ballast for a rocket debut: concrete or steel slabs, or experiments.

On the eve of the flight, Musk told reporters the company had done all it could to maximize success and he was at peace with whatever happens: success, "one big boom" or some other calamity. The longer the flight, he noted, the more the company would learn from the heavily instrumented rocket.

Musk has plenty of experience with rocket accidents, from his original Falcon 1 test flights to his follow-up Falcon 9s, one of which exploded on a nearby pad during a 2016 ignition test. The Falcon Heavy is a combination of three Falcon 9s, the rocket that the company uses to ship supplies to the International Space Station and lift satellites. SpaceX is reusing first-stage boosters to save on launch costs.

The Heavy is intended for massive satellites, like those used by the U.S. military and major-league communication companies. Even before the test flight, customers were signed up.

Given the high stakes and high drama, Feb. 6's launch attracted huge crowds not seen since NASA's last space shuttle flight seven years ago.

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VW Suspends Top Executive Over Monkey Test Scandal

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) – Automaker Volkswagen has suspended a top executive in response to widespread public criticism over experiments in which monkeys were exposed to diesel exhaust.

The company said in a statement Jan. 30 that Thomas Steg, head of government relations and sustainability, was stepping away from his duties at his own request.

The statement said the company was “drawing the first consequences” as it investigates the activities of EUGT, the entity backed by Volkswagen and other carmakers that commissioned the monkey experiment.

Steg had said in an interview published in the newspaper *Bild* that he had known about the experiment but did not inform the company’s then-CEO, Martin Winterkorn. Steg said he rejected an initial proposal to use human volunteers and said that even after animals were substituted the experiment “should not have taken place.”

The move follows a report in *The New York Times* that the now-disbanded EUGT commissioned the 2014 monkey test at the Lovelace Respiratory Institute in Albuquerque, N.M., to measure how VW’s diesel technology was succeeding in controlling harmful emissions.

Diluted exhaust gases from a late-model Volkswagen vehicle were fed into chambers where the monkeys were exposed for four hours. Then lung fluid samples were taken from the sedated monkeys, which were not killed in the experiment. The study didn’t deliver a definitive result.

The test was done with a vehicle that used illegal software to cheat on emissions tests, turning controls off when the vehicle was not being tested. That practice was exposed in 2015, leading to Winterkorn’s resignation.

The Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute said in a statement that the tests were designed by EUGT and the lab itself was initially not aware the vehicle had been rigged. It said it complied with regulations for the treatment of lab animals and was committed to their humane and ethical treatment.

The labs president and CEO, Robert W. Rubin, said in a statement that when the lab later learned that the vehicle engine had been modified to produce less pollution “we determined the study was compromised” and did not meet the standards for publication.

“We understood that the EUGT organization was financially supported by automobile manufacturers, but we believed the goal of the study was to advance the scientific understanding of the effects of diesel fumes on our lungs, including the effects of new vehicle technologies that are designed to produce less pollution,” he said.

VW’s current CEO, Matthias Mueller, said in a statement that “we are investigating in detail the work of EUGT, which was dissolved in 2017, and drawing the necessary conclusions.” He said Steg “has said he takes full responsibility, and I respect that.”

VW said the probe would be carried out “at top speed.” Board Chairman Hans Dieter Poetsch said the board’s executive committee expected to hear the status of the investigation by mid-February week, the *dpa* news agency reported.

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Adient will be honored at the WBENC Summit & Salute to Women's Business Enterprises March 20-22, in Dallas, Dodero said.

“With his extensive operations, engineering, portfolio management and leadership background, Jeff brings the unique skillset required to foster the

In that position, he had full operational responsibility for the company's more than 100 terminals and depots, as well as managed its transition from a holding company into an operating company. While at APM Terminals, he held many board positions with APM regional companies.

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Ram's 2018 Super Bowl Commercial Raises Controversy

by COREY WILLIAMS, TOM KRISHER and ALEXANDRA OLSON
Associated Press

DETROIT (AP) – In the 60-second spot aired during the Super Bowl, viewers see images of the rugged Ram pickup along with people working, helping others or hugging loved ones.

The images are set against audio of “The Drum Major Instinct” sermon delivered by Martin Luther King Jr. at the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta exactly 50 years ago, in which he says that in order to be “great” and to serve the greater good, “you only need a heart full of grace, a soul generated by love.”

Missing from the Ram ad are the slain civil rights leader’s words in the same speech guarding against commercialism: “In order to make your neighbors envious, you must drive this type of car ... And you know, before you know it, you’re just buying that stuff. That’s the way advertisers do it.”

The irony is not lost on the throngs of critics who took to social media to question how Fiat Chrysler could use King’s sermon to sell trucks.

“It should have been used for something more important – the things that are going on in America now,” said Samantha Williams, 26, while visiting the Martin Luther King Jr. Historic Site in Atlanta.

An FCA spokeswoman said the company intended to inspire people with King’s words that everyone can be great by serving others. FCA, she said, knows that Ram truck owners often volunteer to use trucks for charitable work, and the ad was intended to reinforce their service.

“It was selling the message of serving in your community, that was the message,” she said.



Ram faced criticism for its recent Super Bowl commercial.

Unfortunately for FCA, not everyone got that message.

Chris Allieri, founder of the New York-based public relations agency Mulberry & Astor, said corporations often use the Super Bowl to showcase their corporate ethos – but Fiat Chrysler went too far.

“Let’s not fool ourselves ... this is about branding and seeking products,” Allieri said. “In an attempt to unite us, in increasingly divisive times, behind the words of a great American, it fell flat because it seems to co-opt and trivialize his monumental words to that of ad copy.”

Allieri said it was difficult for him to imagine any scenario where using King’s legacy to sell products would not cause a backlash.

“Dr. King’s words should never be confused with ad copy. To me it really misses the mark,” Allieri said. “If you are a marketer, using the words of Dr. King to sell your products is a hard no. There is no way I could see defending this.”

FCA’s spokeswoman said the

company’s advertising agency approached the King estate to get licensing to use words from “The Drum Major Instinct” sermon and was referred to Intellectual Properties Management Inc., which manages King’s estate. Both his estate and the management firm were involved in every step of the ad, she said.

“The message of our spot and the quotes that were used were all about service and serving,” the spokeswoman said. “That’s something the estate felt comfortable with granting permission for us to use.”

A similar debate was sparked nearly two decades ago when Telecom Alcatel used King’s “I Have a Dream” speech in an ad that was also approved by IPM. That ad shows King giving his most famous speech to an empty Mall in Washington D.C. to illustrate the idea that “before you can touch, you must first connect.”

Eric Tidwell, managing director of IPM, confirmed that it granted FCA permission and said in an email that the overall message of Ram Truck’s “Built To

Serve” ad embodies King’s philosophy on serving others.

Business records filed with the Georgia secretary of state’s office show that Dexter Scott King, one of the late King’s children, is chief executive of IPM. It wasn’t immediately clear Monday whether the younger King would have had to sign off on the use of his father’s sermon or whether someone else within one of those companies would have been authorized to do so.

Dexter Scott King and his siblings Bernice King and Martin Luther King III are the sole shareholders and directors of the Estate of Martin Luther King Jr., Inc. Dexter is the estate’s chief executive, records show.

The Martin Luther King Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change, known as The King Center, was founded by Martin Luther King Jr.’s wife, Coretta Scott King, to carry on her husband’s legacy. Bernice King is now the CEO of the center, located in Atlanta.

On Twitter, the King Center distanced itself from the Ram ad by noting that neither the center nor Bernice King “is the entity that approves the use of #MLK’s words or imagery for use in merchandise, entertainment (movies, music, artwork, etc) or advertisement, including tonight’s @Dodge #SuperBowl commercial.” It also retweeted a YouTube clip of the civil rights leader’s full sermon.

University of Detroit Mercy marketing professor Michael Bernacchi disagrees with how the Ram truck ad is being interpreted.

“To suggest it was to sell automobiles is just crazy,” he said. “That wasn’t the purpose of the ad. I think that’s important. We have to doff our cap to that ad and to the brand for doing it.”

Despite the uproar, the ad has become exactly what any compa-

ny wishes after spending millions of dollars to get it aired – a talker.

Wayne Gibson, 51, founder of a Los Angeles nonprofit that works with troubled youth, said his take from the commercial was that the automaker was saying “we’re going to try to start serving and helping people and indoctrinate Dr. King’s philosophy.”

“You don’t connect Dr. King with selling a product,” Gibson said. “It’s logical to think these people are trying to do something different than the regularly automakers.”

Meanwhile, the Drum Major Institute, a nonprofit think tank and social activist group, put out a statement reminding the public of what King’s original sermon was all about.

Widow of UAW Official Makes Guilty Plea

DETROIT (AP) – The wife of a late union official has pleaded guilty to a tax crime in a federal corruption investigation at a training center run by Fiat Chrysler and the United Auto Workers.

Monica Morgan pleaded guilty Feb. 6 and faces up to 27 months in prison. She owes \$191,000 in restitution.

Morgan was married to General Holiefield, who was a UAW vice president before his death in 2015. Former Fiat Chrysler labor negotiator Al Iacobelli admits he spent more than \$1.5 million in cash and gifts on high-ranking UAW members, including Holiefield.

A \$262,000 mortgage on Holiefield’s home was paid off with training center money that came from Fiat Chrysler.

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BUICK

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INCENTIVES INCLUDED: GM EMPLOYEE PRICE, GM LEASE LOYALTY

36 months

10,000 miles year

\$643 total due at signing (includes first month payment)

BUICK

2018 GMC Terrain

SLE FWD Lease Offer

MSRP: \$29,370

\$237

per month

TRANSPARENT PRICING

INCLUDES: ALL TAXES & FEES, NO SECURITY DEPOSIT

INCENTIVES INCLUDED: GM EMPLOYEE PRICE, GM LEASE LOYALTY

36 months

10,000 miles year

\$579 total due at signing (includes first month payment)

GMC

2018 GMC Acadia

SLE FWD Lease Offer

MSRP: \$34,000

\$255

per month

TRANSPARENT PRICING

INCLUDES: ALL TAXES & FEES, NO SECURITY DEPOSIT

INCENTIVES INCLUDED: GM EMPLOYEE PRICE, GM LEASE LOYALTY

36 months

10,000 miles year

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GMC

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SP71497

Old Car Fan Gets Back into Driving Rockets

RENO, Nev. (AP) – Ed Shadle’s first race was a soapbox derby in Puyallup, Washington, in 1955.

Now, more than 60 years later, Shadle, 76, is preparing for what might be the biggest race of his life in Nevada’s Diamond Valley.

Shadle’s plan is to pilot a jet-powered car across an isolated, desert playa at more than 763 miles per hour.

It would be fast enough to break the world’s land-speed record, set 20 years ago on the playa in Nevada’s Black Rock desert.

Even more impressive?

It would mark Shadle’s comeback from a lung cancer diagnosis that threatened to put an end to his racing career – and his life.

“I’m not in remission, but it isn’t dragging me down,” he said.

Shadle said he was diagnosed with stage four cancer in June and has since undergone 33 radiation treatments and 18 chemotherapy sessions.

And he’s done so while continuing to manage preparation and logistical planning for the pending speed record attempt.

The preparation and perseverance is expected to pay off later this year when Shadle’s North American Eagle team arrives in Nevada. Two other teams, one British and one Australian, also have eyes on the record.

“Technologically it is really challenging,” Shadle said. “Most of us gearheads and geeks, that is what gets us off, meeting that challenge.”

THE TEAM

Shadle, a former IBM engineer who served in the Air Force doing communications and critical maintenance work, is a lifelong racer and tinkerer.

He’s also participated in Civil Air Patrol, raced on the Bonneville Salt Flats, and generally

spent his life scratching his itch to build things and go fast.

Shadle isn’t the only member of the North American Eagle team with big dreams and garage mechanic roots.

The team is composed of nearly 50 members, many of whom are friends and family, who specialize in everything from jet propulsion to parachutes to data collection and management.

Also on the team is Jessi Combs, a professional automotive fabricator and accomplished driver eager to break a record of her own.

Combs, 34, is widely known as an automotive TV personality. She appeared on the Spike TV show Xtreme 4x4 from 2005-09 and has appearances on Mythbusters and other auto and technology-themed shows.

After pursuing a career in snowboarding, Combs shifted gears and took up an automotive career, earning a degree in custom automotive fabrication.

Land-speed racing is a different type of challenge, she said.

“It is the most thrilling thing I’ve ever done,” Combs said. “It is so fast it is slow, it is so loud it is quiet, it is so bumpy it is smooth.”

Like Shadle, Combs has experience facing catastrophic health problems.

In 2007 Combs survived being crushed underneath a 550-pound, industrial band saw. The accident crushed her L3 vertebrae and left her out of work for five months.

“I’m actually lucky to be walking,” she said. “I have a different appreciation for life and my legs and the things I can do.”

THE VEHICLE

The goal of reaching 800 miles-per-hour, which is greater than the speed of sound, takes a vehi-

cle that’s faster and more powerful than even the fastest race car.

Even something like a beefed-up version of a top fuel drag racer wouldn’t work because sending the amount of power it takes to go that fast from an engine through a transmission and to the wheels would tear the vehicle apart.

Instead, the team has installed a General Electric J79 turbojet engine onto the body of a Lockheed F-104 Starfighter, sans wings.

From 1958 through 2004, numerous national militaries flew Starfighters, the first combat aircraft capable of sustained Mach 2 speeds.

“We needed a platform that was capable of high speeds and aerodynamically very efficient,” Shadle said.

Given that Shadle and Combs are attempting land speed records the aircraft hardware is going to rest on a set of wheels specially designed for the task.

Instead of rubber tires on steel rims, the car will ride on solid, aluminum wheels. The special wheels are necessary because the centrifugal force generated from the high speeds would fling rubber tires off the rims. Instead of standard brakes it uses water-cooled, magnetic brakes and a specially designed parachute to stop.

THE VENUE AND ATTEMPT

When the North American Eagle team lands in Nevada they’ll be heading to Diamond Valley near Eureka.

Previous land speed record teams have used the Black Rock desert playa near Gerlach and the North American team has practiced on the dry lake bed in the Alvord Desert in southeastern Oregon.

The driving by Shadle and

Combs will be the first time anyone has used Diamond Valley for a land speed record attempt.

They chose the venue in part because it has fewer visitors than the Black Rock playa, which is the site of the annual Burning Man counterculture festival. Burning Man takes up much of the playa for weeks prior to the late August event, which is the prime season for land speed driving.

To count as an official record, the car needs to sustain the speed for a mile over two runs, which are averaged together.

The extra space on the playa provides room to get up to speed before the timed mile and slow down after.

“We could probably set a record still at Alvord desert but there is absolutely no room for error,” Combs said.

Shadle and other team members plan to visit the playa to meet with local officials and neighboring ranchers as early as February and return later in the summer for the attempt.

The team has already completed an environmental assessment and received a special recreation permit from the Bureau of Land Management for the attempt.

The record of decision had a finding of no significant impact, which means the BLM thinks the team can make the attempt without hurting the playa.

NOT ALL ARE ONBOARD

While the BLM has approved of the plan, there has been some opposition.

Photographer Bruce Couch of Bend, Oregon, is a frequent visitor to the Alvord Desert and has accused the North American team of leaving trash and debris on the dry lake bed following runs there.

Shadle said the Alvord incident was a misunderstanding blown out of proportion. He said near the end of their time at Alvord a wind and dust storm kicked up and obscured the playa and mile markers on it.

“The guys went out and searched all over for it in a dust storm, so we had to leave it behind,” he said.

In response to Couch’s official comments the BLM stated the North American Eagle team has agreed to clear the playa of any debris to, “ensure the pristine nature of the resource.”

Daimler Betting Big on New Auto Technology

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP) – German automaker Daimler made lots of money last year. That’s a good thing, because the company says it will need to spend heavily this year to keep up with the technological change expected to disrupt the car industry.

The maker of Mercedes-Benz luxury cars said Feb. 1 that its earnings this year faced the burden of “very high” expenditure on new models and technologies such as battery-powered cars. Like the rest of the industry, the company is positioning itself for an anticipated shift to autonomous driving and to transportation services such as car-sharing and ride-hailing through smartphone apps.

Based on that, the company issued a measured outlook for this year despite a record profit of \$13.5 billion last year, saying that operating earnings would only be of “the magnitude of the previous year” and not increasing.

Daimler AG said spending on research and development would increase slightly in 2018 after spending 8.7 billion euros in 2017, a rise of 15 percent.

CEO Dieter Zetsche’s position is that the company’s core business – selling gasoline- and diesel-powered luxury cars with fat profit margins, plus trucks and buses – is “very healthy and highly profitable” and can provide the investment cash needed to remain a leader as the industry changes rapidly. Daimler says it will spend 10 billion euros on new electric vehicles in the next few years. It has shown off pre-production versions of a new electric-driven EQ sub-brand within Mercedes, saying the first EQ sport-utility vehicle will be launched by 2020.

Tighter government restrictions on auto emissions are part of the reason behind the industry-wide push into electric vehicles, even though they have limited appeal to consumers due to higher prices, limited range and the amount of time it takes to charge them. Sales could pick up if battery-powered vehicles become cheaper and more convenient than internal combustion ones – a tipping point that some experts say could be reached by the early to mid-2020s.

California Sets New Rules

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) – Gov. Jerry Brown outlined a \$2.5 billion plan Jan. 27 to help Californians buy electric vehicles and expand a network of charging stations as part of a goal of getting 5 million zero-emission cars on the road by 2030.

The ambitious proposal to transform California’s car culture comes as Brown begins his final year in office and works to set the stage for his environmental legacy to continue under his successor. The Democratic governor has positioned California as a global leader in fighting climate change amid President Donald Trump’s decision to pull the U.S. out of the Paris climate accord.

The number of zero-emission cars is a significant expansion of Brown’s goal of selling 1.5 million such vehicles by 2025. It’s a nearly 15-fold increase over the 350,000 zero-emission vehicles already on California’s roads. The \$2.5 billion in spending still needs legislative approval.

Reaching the goal will require that 40 percent of vehicles sold in 2030 be clean, said Mary Nichols, chairwoman of the California Air Resources Board, up from about 5 percent now.

“We think that’s a very reasonable proposal,” Nichols said. “It’s not a stretch.”

Brown’s plan would extend subsidies to help people buy emission-free vehicles. It seeks to have 250,000 electric-vehicle charging stations and 200 hydrogen fueling stations, an increase from about 14,000 charging stations and 31 hydrogen stations.

California offers subsidies of up to \$7,000 for the purchase or lease of a new electric, fuel-cell or plug-in hybrid vehicle, though most subsidies are smaller.

Brown’s proposal would offer \$200 million worth of subsidies in each of the next eight years.

California will need to radically reduce pollution from the transportation sector to reach its goal of reducing greenhouse gases 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. Pollution from cars, trucks and other modes of transportation account for the largest portion of greenhouse emissions.

The state has successfully reduced emissions from power plants thanks to the widespread adoption of wind, solar and hydroelectricity, but pollution from transportation has inched up.

Brown proposes using money from a mixture of existing programs at the California Energy Commission and the state’s cap-and-trade program, which caps pollution levels and auctions off permits to pollute.

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