

Change is in the Air for GM-UAW Car Show

by Jim Stickford

They've decided to switch things up this year. The GM-UAW Local 160 Employee Car Show will be held on July 27, which is a Friday, instead of a Wednesday, as it has been for years.

The reason for the change is simple, said Nick Alexander, event co-chair and pre-production vehicle builder at the GM Tech Center.

"There's a lot of construction going at the Tech Center right now," Alexander said. "So we don't have as much room as in past years to put on the show. We decided that by holding the event on a Friday, busy people might decide to go forward with their weekend plans."

The show is for GM current and past employees and runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Because of construction at the Tech Center, the entrance to the show will be via Mound Road this year. Traditionally, the show was held in front of the VEC building and entry was gained through Van Dyke.

"As of June 26, we have just under 500 vehicles registered for the show," Alexander said. "We close registration down the Friday before the show, but we also get about 100 people registering the day of the show. So we ex-

pect between 700 and 800 cars to be in the show."

The theme of this year's event is celebrating the 65th anniversary of the Corvette, Alexander said. A couple of historic Corvettes will be on display, as well as a couple of Corvette concept vehicles provided by GM. Several new Corvettes also will be shown by GM.

"A DJ and a band will switch off," Alexander said. "The band,

called The Design Center Band, consists of 12 GM employees who play a variety of music.

Mark Reuss, executive vice president of GlobalProduct Development, will emcee the opening ceremonies.

"This should be a lot of fun," said Alexander, "and will give GM employees, past and present, the chance to show off their classic cars and honor GM's history."

Money raised by the show will

go to Grace Centers of Hope and Wigs for Kids.

While the show begins at 10 a.m., those entering cars in the show have between 5:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m. to get them in place.

The show is scheduled for July 27, rain or shine, he said. There is no rain date planned.

"I understand if people don't want to get their classic cars wet, but I think no matter what, this should be a great show."



700 to 800 vehicles are expected to be on display at the GM-UAW Local 160 employee car show July 27.

How Do Insurers Evaluate Rates For Autonomy?

All the talk about the development of autonomous vehicles has raised questions beyond whether the technology will work – questions like how this tech will affect the cost of car insurance.

Auto insurers take many factors into account when pricing a policy for an individual customer, said Robert M. Lajdziak, an Insurance Business Consultant at J.D. Power. The insurers offer discounts based on how someone drives, the number of policies they have and even good grades for students.

"But what if the customer has a vehicle with automatic braking or lane-centering technology?" Lajdziak wrote. "What if, several years from now, that customer buys a vehicle that is fully automated? Wouldn't there be less risk of a collision? If that's true, shouldn't a discount be in order for reducing the likelihood to file a claim? Further, who is liable in the event an automated vehicle is involved in a collision?"

"Despite generally low intent to consider purchasing a highly automated vehicle for their next car, customers perceive a wide range of benefits to automation

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Grassy rooftops have helped Ford meet emission reduction targets.

Ford Gets Jump on Its Own Emissions Goal

It's always nice to get ahead of one's schedule and Ford Motor Company has done just that.

The company has met its goal to reduce manufacturing emissions – eight years ahead of schedule.

The announcement came in Ford's 19th annual Sustainability Report, released on June 27.

In 2010, Ford's Environmental Quality Office announced a goal – to reduce the company's carbon dioxide emissions from manufacturing operations by 30 percent per vehicle produced by 2025, said Ford spokesman John

Cangany. Ford hit the target twice as fast as expected.

The results are dramatic, with a global manufacturing CO2 emissions reduction of more than 3.4 million metric tons from 2010 to 2017 – equivalent to greenhouse gas emissions from more than 728,000 passenger vehicles driven for one year, said Bruce Hettle, group vice president, Manufacturing and Labor Affairs.

"We are proud of the work we have done to achieve this goal," said Hettle. "We've made several improvements to our manufacturing operations – from the lighting we use to plant consolidations – all of which played a role in dramatically reducing our CO2 footprint."

Ford reduced its emissions footprint through energy conservation and efficiency changes at Ford's manufacturing facilities, such as installing more than 100,000 LED light fixtures and updating paint operations.

"Painting operations use a large amount of energy," said Andy Hobbs, director, environmental quality office. "Introducing technology that allows wet-on-wet paint application and eliminates a drying oven in more plants has significantly decreased energy use while maintaining quality."

Minimum Quantity Lubrication is another energy-reducing technology. In MQL, a machining tool

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Autonomous Shuttles Hit Downtown Roads

Self-driving shuttles are invading downtown Detroit.

These autonomous vehicles already are shuttling nearly 18,000 Quicken Loans employees between their offices, parking sites, events and other downtown destinations.

Quicken Loans and its Family of Companies are the first to utilize this initial commercial deployment of independent autonomous vehicles on public streets in any urban core in America.

The service begins with a 1-mile loop connecting the Bricktown Parking Garage to the One Campus Martius and First National Buildings in the heart of downtown Detroit.

At the forefront of this move is May Mobility, an Ann Arbor start-up that builds self-driving vehicles.

The company, in partnership with Bedrock, a full-service real estate firm in Detroit, launched the service June 27.

The partnership will immedi-

ately embed self-driving shuttles into the daily fabric of downtown Detroit.

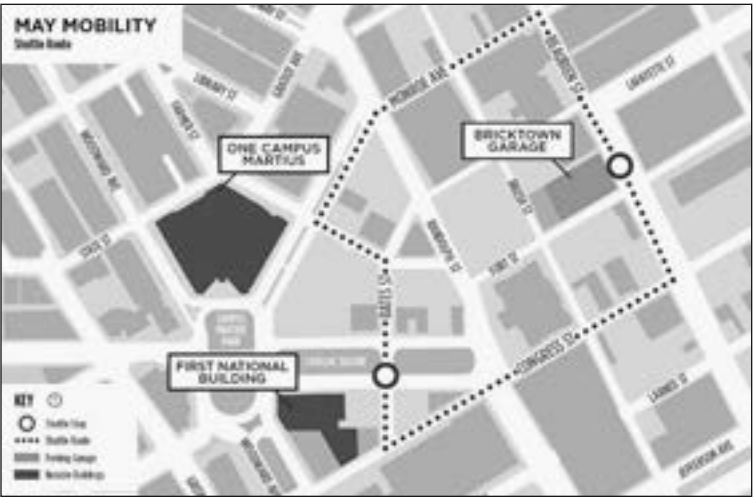
Under the partnership, May Mobility will provide a fleet of electric vehicles to Bedrock.

"Detroit is at the forefront of technology and innovation, which is why it makes perfect

sense for the first fully-autonomous shuttle route to launch in our city," said Quicken Loans CEO Jay Farnier.

"As a company dedicated to advancing mobility for a more livable, walkable and accessible

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2



The dotted line shows the Detroit route autonomous shuttles are taking.

by TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

From Out of the Past... It's a New Chevy Blazer

DETROIT (AP) – Because these days you can't have too many SUVs, General Motors is bringing back the Chevrolet Blazer.

Only this time it's not a thirsty and boxy truck like its predecessor, one of the original SUVs that was sold from the 1982 through 2005 model years.

SUVs based on car underpinnings, sometimes called crossover vehicles, are what buyers want these days.

And, the Chevrolet brand didn't have a midsize one with two rows of seats behind the front seat and therefore could not compete with the popular Jeep Grand Cherokee, the

Ford Edge and Nissan Murano.

So GM on June 21 unveiled the sculpted Blazer in Atlanta, trying to capitalize on a well-known name that has a lot of equity, said Steve Majoros, Chevy's director of car and crossover marketing. "There's still a number of people who either have good positive feelings about that product or still have them in their driveways," he said.

At its peak in 1996, Chevrolet sold just over 246,000 Blazers.

The new Blazer, to be made at GM's Ramos Arizpe factory in Mexico, is far from a box. It sits relatively low to the ground and has futuristic creases on the sides and a low-angle windshield

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Warren Library
Brews Up Fun
For July

Books, Brew, & Banter, Warren Public Library's monthly book club in a brewery, is continuing into the summer.

Anyone looking to meet new friends and enjoy good books, food, drink, and conversation together in a laid-back atmosphere is welcome to join, said Warren librarian Amy Nelson.

Books, Brew, & Banter will meet on Tuesday, July 17, at 7:30 p.m., in the Dragonmead Micro-brewery located at 14600 East 11 Mile Road in Warren.

"Our book for July is 'The Marsh King's Daughter' by Karen Dionne," Nelson said.

"Copies of the book and potential discussion questions can be picked up at the Miller Branch Library Circulation Desk in the Warren Community Center."

Two weeks later, on Aug. 1, Karen Dionne will visit the Miller Library to talk about her book, writing and getting published. Registration is required. Call 586-751-5377.

Bedrock Brings AV Shuttle Service to Downtown Detroit

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

community, Michigan-grown May Mobility made the ideal partner to further this mission," said Jim Ketai, Bedrock CEO.

"These autonomous vehicles will allow us to lead the nation in providing memorable and efficient transportation methods for our residential, office and retail tenants."

May Mobility maps, tests, and adds environmental sensors to routes block-by-block, which delivers a unique approach to autonomous transportation. This helps solve parking, traffic and land management issues for municipalities, developers, and business customers across the U.S.

The vehicles are deployed among other cars, cyclists, pedestrians and more, making self-driving vehicles a normal part of everyday life. As a result, May Mobility gathers invaluable data from vehicles, riders, business and community partners, which is crucial in helping expand services to additional roads and highways in the future.

"Our partnership with Bedrock shows that our self-driving vehicles can help address today's most difficult transportation problems," said Edwin Olson, CEO and co-founder of May Mobility.

"Our technology allows us to provide fully-managed transportation services that outperform traditional services on wait time, rider satisfaction, and other metrics.

"By improving the lives of Bedrock's employees and tenants, we move closer to our vision that everyone uses May Mobility every day."

As part of the expansion, May Mobility has opened its first of-



Shuttle's scanning sensor

fice outside of Ann Arbor at 601 Franklin in Detroit. From this location, May Mobility will provide full-time operational support for the Bedrock Bricktown route, store and charge the shuttles, and coordinate future route expansion.

"As a Michigan-based company with offices in Detroit and Ann Arbor, we are proud that our shuttles are solving transportation problems faced by everyday workers," said Olson. "Bedrock and May Mobility share a vision for a new era in Detroit, where transportation is safe, convenient, and accessible.

"Self-driving technology will transform cities, improving the lives of everyday people, driving commerce, and helping to create new green spaces by reducing the need for parking. Much of the necessary technology was developed here in Michigan, and at May Mobility, we've been able to turn it into a system that will start creating a positive impact today. It is fitting that we begin in our own backyard, the Motor City."

May Mobility's shuttle platform highlights three key focus areas:



This autonomous vehicle is now moving people in Detroit.

Self-driven: Builds and ships safe, reliable, and enjoyable autonomous driving capabilities that riders love.

Community-driven: Provides the "human touch" by creating a local presence through a hands-on operations support team

based in local offices. Its support includes route design, maintenance, upgrades and more.

Data-driven: Offers detailed analytics and reporting to track vehicles, optimize fleet usage, and empower customers to make smart transportation decisions.

Macomb County Celebrates Its History

To celebrate its bicentennial year, Macomb County hosted a 200-mile torch relay June 21-22.

In all, 200 runners from every county municipality carried the torch.

Then, in the evening of June 22, the annaul Mount Clemens' fireworks celebration was staged.

The two-day event saw torchbearers run through all 27 county communities, county parks and Selfridge Air National Guard Base.

On June 21, County Executive Mark A. Hackel and several community leaders kicked off the relay, lighting the torch at the Macomb County Administration Building.

"This 200-mile, non-stop relay

through every community in Macomb County, symbolizes 200 years of continuous progress in our county," said Hackel.

"This relay is about connecting our community, and building upon that sense of pride for this place we call home."

Hackel then ran the torch through downtown Mount Clemens and handed it off to the next runner at the Mount Clemens City Hall Building.

Over the next 40 hours, the torch and volunteer torchbearers traveled across Macomb County.

Several torchbearers – selected to run by their local communities – also joined in the relay and ran portions of the route.



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2019 Volt Doubles Charge Speed

If the saying, “Time is money,” is true, then buyers of the 2019 Chevrolet Volt will find themselves in the money.

A new 7.2 kW charging system on the 2019 Chevrolet Volt cuts recharging times nearly in half by adding about twice the all-electric driving range per hour of charge.

The new system headlines a number of additional enhancements for the 2019 Volt and increases the vehicle’s all-electric utility for owners who take advantage of “opportunity charging,” or plugging in around town to top off the battery charge, said Jesse Ortega, chief engineer, Chevrolet Electric Vehicles.

“With about twice the range added during 240V Level 2 charging sessions, the 2019 Volt’s 7.2 kW system makes opportunity charging more worthwhile,” said Ortega.

“It effectively extends the vehicle’s all-electric driving range, while providing about twice the range for the money when plugging in at public facilities that charge by the hour.”

With the new 7.2 kW system, a complete recharge can be achieved in as little as 2.3 hours with a 240-volt outlet and supporting hardware. The new system is standard on the 2019 Volt Premier model and available on the LT trim. A 3.6 kW charger is standard on the Volt LT.

The new charging system complements the Volt’s extended-

range electric propulsion system, which – with a full tank of gas and a full charge – offers an EPA-estimated 53 miles of pure EV range and 106 MPGe, or gasoline equivalent.

When the Volt’s battery runs low, a gas-powered generator kicks in to extend the driving range to 420 miles (675 km) on a full tank, said spokeswoman Katie Amann.

In addition to the new charging system, the 2019 Volt offers a number of enhancements designed to improve convenience and help owners get more out of their all-electric driving experience.

For those in colder climates who want to use as little gas as possible, the 2019 Volt allows activation of the automatic engine-assisted heating system to be deferred until much lower temperatures – minus 13 degrees F/minus 25 degrees C – for more all-electric operation.

The 2019 Volt also features new Low and Regen on Demand profiles that enable increased regenerative braking capability when drivers let off the accelerator pedal, Amann said.

The feature helps the vehicle achieve its class-leading EV range, and the updates come with an improved driving feel with smoother operation when slowing.

A new Chevrolet Infotainment 3 system with an 8-inch-diagonal color touchscreen incorporates a new Energy App. The app’s Impacts Screen shows drivers how

driving style, route, weather conditions and cabin comfort setting may affect range and conveys the impact more intuitively based on mileage rather than the previous numerical “score.”

Drivers will enjoy having more information about their efficiencies and can aim to eke out every EV mile possible, Amann said.

The 2019 Volt also introduces its first power driver’s seat. The six-way seat is standard on Premier and available on LT models.

Additional changes and updates:

- GM’s continuing evolution of the pedestrian alert system, first deployed in 2011, now using front and rear speakers to provide audible alerts when operating at slow speeds.
- A new digital rearview camera era replaces the previous analog system.
- New driver-switchable Adaptive Cruise Control allows the choice of conventional cruise control or adaptive cruise control.
- New tire fill alert sounds a horn when full tire pressure is achieved.
- New, decorative seating patterns are offered on cloth seats.
- New Power Convenience Package available on LT adds a power driver seat in addition to all content offered on the Comfort Package.
- Wireless charging pad for



Charging times will be a great deal faster for the 2019 Volt.

compatible phones is relocated ahead of the shifter for easier use (available with navigation radio).

- New Pacific Blue Metallic exterior color is available.
- New Jet Black/Porcelain Blue interior is offered on Premier.
- Available dealer-installed blackout package includes sport pedals, black front/rear

bowtie emblems and 17-inch machined-aluminum wheels with black-painted pockets.

“The 2019 Volt’s enhancements give customers more of what they love with the vehicle and make it even more useful as an everyday electric vehicle,” said Ortega.

The 2019 Chevrolet Volt goes on sale this fall.

MCC Offering PLM Training

Macomb Community College has been designated as a certified product lifecycle management (PLM) education partner and certification center by Dassault Systemes and will offer courses to help students develop expertise on the latest Dassault Systemes PLM solutions beginning in July.

Through the college’s Michigan Technical Education Center (M-TEC) in Warren, MCC will offer certified instructor-led classroom training and online training. Instruction can be performed onsite at M-TEC or at a business location, said Sean Patrick, manager of Media Relations for MCC.

CATIA V5 is a common software platform in the automotive and aerospace industries used for 3D parts and system design. Students pursuing the Dassault Systemes certifications would be prepared for positions with automotive manufacturers and Tier I and Tier II suppliers.

“This designation permits us to provide our students with product-specific learning that allows them to find well-paying meaningful employment or advance with their current employer,” said Joe Petrosky, dean of Engineering and Advanced Technology.

“Employers can also benefit by

sending their team through this certified training to improve their skills and value to their company.”

Classes start in July and, for a limited time, Macomb will provide free certification exams to current users, limited to three per company. For registration information, call 586-498-4157.

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How Do Insurers Set Rates For Autonomous Vehicles?

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with no one clear standout.” According to a recent J.D. Power pulse survey, 60 percent of customers say there are benefits to owning an automated vehicle, Lajdziak wrote.

Among the top benefits, the study discovered, more customers perceive value in fewer collisions, reduced stress (which can include a reduced fear of collisions) and improved fuel economy than they do in a lower insurance premium. While “lower insurance premiums” is a listed benefit of owning an automated vehicle, only 18 percent of consumers say that would play a factor in their decision to purchase one.

“Considering both the potential for fewer accidents and the added cost of replacing more advanced features, customers were asked about their expectations on whether automated vehicles would raise, lower or have no effect on their insurance premiums,” Lajdziak wrote.

“Only 57 percent of auto insurance customers say they completely understand their policy; however, customers seem to be somewhat aware of the conflicting forces on insurance premiums.”

The other major obstacle for insurers is understanding who owns the risk in the event an automated vehicle is involved in a collision, Lajdziak wrote.

Customers are understandably uncertain about who is at fault in the event of a crash, and the industry is not far ahead of them.

Nearly four of 10 (39 percent) customers would blame the driver for not taking over in the event of a collision, while only 22

percent say they would blame either the manufacturer of the vehicle or the supplier of the equipment. Nearly one-third (31 percent) say none of the above, which further underscores the uncertainty in the market.

“Today, it seems consumers aren’t quite ready to hand over the wheel and own an automated vehicle, even if they are going to get a lower insurance premium,” Lajdziak wrote.

“Insurers are going to have to keep a close eye on customer attitudes toward automation and evaluate the potential to incorporate such features into underwriting policies.”

Fuel Prices See Slight Decline

DEARBORN, Mich. (AP) – AAA Michigan says average gas prices statewide have fallen about 13 cents in last part of the month to about \$2.90 per gallon as of June 25.

The Dearborn-based auto club said on June 25 that the average price for self-serve regular unleaded gasoline is about 53 cents more than at the same point last year.

Michigan’s lowest average price was about \$2.75 in the Traverse City area. The highest was about \$2.99 in the Ann Arbor area.

AAA Michigan says it’s the eighth week in a row that the Ann Arbor area has had the highest average.

The Detroit-area’s average was about \$2.95, down about 8 cents per gallon.

AAA Michigan surveys daily fuel prices at 2,800 different gas stations all across the state.



Behm unveiled three new Dodge performance cars at a recent event showcasing FCA’s latest vehicles.

FCA Unveils Its Latest Performance Cars

by Jim Stickford

FCA showed the automotive press both the steak and the sizzle at a special gathering at the company’s Chelsea Proving Grounds last week.

Members of the media were able to drive the company’s latest vehicles as well as see the unveiling of three new Dodge performance cars – the new 2019 Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat Redeye, 2019 Dodge Challenger SRT Hellcat and the 2019 Challenger R/T Scat Pack Widebody.

Steve Beahm – head of Passenger Cars, Dodge//SRT, Chrysler and FIAT, FCA North America, spoke to the media about the three new vehicles. He said they will be in showrooms sometime

in the fourth quarter of 2018. Prices have not yet been set.

“The Challenger and Charger have been bucking a segment sales trend for the past several years,” Beahm said. “We are pouring on the gas. Since 2008, sales of these vehicles are up 70 percent. Let’s just say that market segment hasn’t grown by a similar amount. Let’s hope these three new cars will do us even better.”

The Dodge Challenger R/T Scat Pack continues to offer the most muscle for the dollar in the segment with 485 horsepower and a starting U.S. Manufacturer’s Suggested Retail Price (MSRP) less than \$40,000, Beahm said. Power comes from the proven, naturally aspirated, 392-cubic-inch Hemi V8 engine’s best-in-class 485 horsepower and 475 lb.-ft. of torque.

“I like to think the Challenger SRT Hellcat Redeye is the best of the Hellcat and the best of the Demon,” Beahm said. “It’s a Hellcat possessed by a Demon.”

Dan Reid, manager of SRT, Powertrain and Engineering Communications for FCA, said one of the reasons FCA builds these muscle cars is because there is always a segment of car buying public that wants to be in muscle cars.

“Let’s face it, when we first introduced the Hellcat to the market, it brought people into our showrooms,” Reid said.

“It still gets people interested in our cars and our brands. It’s called the halo effect and it’s a real thing.

“Myself, of these new cars, I like the Scatpack. Not because of its horsepower, but because it’s a car I can drive every day. And these cars come with safety features that really differentiate them from the muscle cars of yesteryear.”

Members of the media also had the chance to drive all of FCA’s latest vehicles at the Chelsea unveiling. Brenna Kauf-

man is the Model Responsible person for the new 2019 Ram 1500.

“Model Responsible is a real title,” Kaufman said. “It basically means that I’m the person responsible for the total execution of the new Ram 1500. I work with the head of Quality and the Chief Engineer and together we formed a sort of a three-legged stool that puts out the truck.”

And the success of the Ram 1500 is important to FCA due to the growing importance of trucks in the U.S.

“Just look at the pickup truck market over the past few years,” Kaufman said. “Trucks have gone from being a utilitarian vehicle to one where suburban moms drive them to get their children from school.”

The biggest challenge in designing, engineering and building the 2019 Ram 1500 was the issue of weight, Kaufman said.

“We really needed to reduce weight for efficiency and better mileage while keeping the kind of body strength needed for a pickup truck,” Kaufman said.

“Take for example the frame. It’s built using 98 percent high-strength steel. The cabin and the box are made of 54 percent high-strength steel.

“We even have an aluminum tailgate. It’s so light that I can close the tailgate using one hand, and I am the farthest thing from a burly construction worker people often associate with driving a pickup truck.”

And making the new Ram 1500 rugged was only half the equation, Kaufman said. Those soccer moms want their trucks comfortable.

“Luxury amenities are a big part of what make our new trucks great,” Kaufman said. “So today’s truck need to be strong and they need to be comfortable and they need to have all the amenities, like Uconnect and USB ports and entertainment technology.”

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Ford Gets Jump on Its Own Emissions Goal Set for 2025

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is lubricated with a very small amount of oil sprayed directly on the tip of the tool in a finely atomized mist, instead of with a large quantity of coolant/water mixture, Hettle said. Ford now is working on setting a new goal – focusing on renewable energy.

“We will continue to set ambitious goals and work to create innovative practices to achieve them,” said Hettle. “Our next strategy will focus on increasing Ford’s use of renewable energy while maintaining our energy efficiencies.”

Ford also remains focused on reducing vehicle emissions by doing its share to deliver on CO2 reductions consistent with the Paris Climate Accord, Cangany said. The company is charting its course for the future by investing \$11 billion to put 40 hybrid and fully electric vehicle models on the road by 2022.

The 2017-2018 Ford Sustainability Report features the automaker’s ongoing work to drive responsible business practices:

Mobility Solutions – In 2018, Ford launched a ground-breaking program in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, with the help of Jeddah’s Effat University called Driving Skills for Life ‘For Her.’ The first-of-its-kind program is focused on driving education for women, following the royal decree to lift the ban on females obtaining a driving license in the country.

More than 250 students were among the first graduates – completing courses that teach vital skills necessary for new drivers, tips from highly skilled experts and a deep understanding of safe driving practices. This customized version of Ford’s award-

winning program, Driving Skills for Life, empowers women to access greater mobility.

Electrification – In collaboration with BMW Group, Daimler AG, and Volkswagen Group with Audi and Porsche, Ford is one of the founders of IONITY, a pan-European joint venture to develop a fast-charging network for electric vehicles. Together, the goal of IONITY is to build 400 fast-charging stations in key European locations by 2020, with a charging capacity of 350 kW.

This enables a significant reduction to charging times compared with existing systems.

Products and Operations – In addition to reaching the company’s ambitious goal of reducing manufacturing greenhouse gas emissions with a 32 percent reduction, Ford makes around 300 parts from renewable materials, with eight sustainable materials featured in production vehicles: soy, wheat, rice, castor, kenaf (hibiscus), tree cellulose, jute and coconut.

By using less energy, less waste and moving away from the use of fossil fuels, the company has achieved a 228 million pound reduction in CO2 since the switch to soybean-based foam in 2011 – the equivalent to the carbon capture by four million trees in one year.

Ford’s Contribution to Society – Ford is committed to contributing to communities around the globe, Cangany said. In 2017, \$63 million of charitable donations were made through Ford Motor Company Fund. More than 237,000 volunteering hours were donated by current and retired employees across more than 1,700 community projects in 40 countries.



Bidding for the last-of-their-kind FCA performance vehicles was spirited at a recent Barrett-Jackson auction.

Last Viper, SRT Challenger Demon Sold

It was the type of offering that makes bidders and fans stop and pay attention: the last of two record-setting performance cars – the final 840-horsepower 2018 Dodge Challenger SRT Demon and the final 645-horsepower 2017 Dodge Viper – sold as a pair at the Barrett-Jackson Northeast Auction at Mohegan Sun in Connecticut on June 23.

The bidding was spirited, befitting the combined 1,485 horsepower of the cars on the stage, said FCA spokeswoman Eileen Wunderlich.

When the hammer dropped to end the “The Ultimate Last Chance” auction, the top bidder became the new owner of the Dodge Viper and Dodge Challenger SRT Demon, and the United Way was the winner, receiving 100 percent of the hammer price.

The final price ranked as the

highest during Connecticut’s four-day Barrett-Jackson event.

“We know the power of the Dodge Viper and Dodge Challenger SRT Demon to put a smile on people’s faces; we’re smiling today because we know the power of this donation to the United Way,” said Steve Beahm, head of Passenger Car Brands, Dodge/SRT, Chrysler and Fiat – FCA North America. “These particular vehicles mark the end of their eras as the last vehicles of their kind to be built; it’s rare to have just one such vehicle cross the auction block, much less a pair at the same time.”

“We are honored that Dodge chose Barrett-Jackson for this historic sale of the last production Viper and Demon,” said Craig Jackson, chairman and CEO of Barrett-Jackson.

“We’ve been fortunate to have many incredible moments on the

auction block for charity sales over the years and this was another one. The winner is taking home two spectacular and historically significant vehicles, and we can’t thank Dodge enough for bringing this special moment to our Northeast Auction at Mohegan Sun.”

Both cars wear the same Viper Red color (production code LRN) that was part of the Viper color palette. The auctioned Dodge Challenger SRT Demon was hand-painted to match after it left the Brampton Assembly Plant in Ontario, Canada.

The 8.4-liter, V10-powered Dodge Viper was hand-built at the Conner Avenue Assembly Plant in Detroit. The last production 2017 Dodge Viper pays homage to the first-generation Dodge Viper RT/10 with its Viper Red exterior and black interior and came with an exclusive VIN instrument panel badge.

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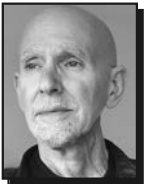
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Corvette C7.R to Hit China Racing Circuit

It looks like the Chinese will get a taste of that Corvette speed this year at the FIA World Endurance Championship (WEC) 2018 race in Shanghai.

Corvette Racing will close its 20th season of competition in grand style by competing in the WEC 2018 race in Shanghai, said GM spokeswoman Afaf Farah. The C7.R race car, which will wear a special Redline livery for the competition, will be the first factory-run Corvette to race in Asia.

The “6 Hours of Shanghai” will take place Nov. 16-18 at the 16-turn, 5.45-km Shanghai International Circuit. Built in 2004, the venue plays host to a number of motorsports’ top championships, including the Formula One Chinese Grand Prix.

“Corvette is a global icon that we are excited to be bringing to race in China – the second-largest market for Chevrolet,” said Scott Lawson, general director of Chevrolet for SAIC-GM.

The WEC is one of the world’s key sports car series and features racing at venues across the world with all races at least six hours in duration. The Le Mans 24 Hours endurance race is the WEC’s most famous stop and will take place twice in the 2018-2019 calendar. The race tests not only speed and driving skills, but also the stability and fuel economy of cars in extreme driving.

“Corvette Racing has proven itself as a world-class racing program,” said Mark Kent, Chevrolet director of Motorsports Competition. “Competing in the Shanghai race provides us an additional opportunity to test ourselves against the top manufacturers and teams in the FIA WEC.”

Corvette Racing team highlights:

- Winner of 107 races around the world.



The C7.R race car will be the first factory-run Corvette to race in Asia.

- 12 manufacturer championships in International Motor Sports Association (IMSA) competition.
- 11 driver’s championships in IMSA competition.
- 11-time class champion of the Sebring 12-hour endurance race.
- Eight victories in the Le Mans 24-hour endurance race.
- Three-time class champion of the Daytona 24-hour endurance race.
- Captured wins in Daytona, Sebring and Le Mans endurance races in 2015.

Racing has been part of Chevrolet’s DNA since the brand was established by race car driver Louis Chevrolet more than a century ago, Farah said. This performance-inspired DNA continues to influence the entire Chevrolet lineup today.

The Corvette C7.R will wear a special Redline livery for the race

in Shanghai to promote the launch of the special edition in China across Chevrolet’s portfolio.

Redline made its global debut in concept form at the 2015 SEMA Show. Inspired by a strong positive response, it became the broadest cross-portfolio special edition ever offered by Chevrolet, Farah said.

Last year, Chevrolet introduced its Redline special edition portfolio for China at Auto Guangzhou 2017 and announced that four Redline models will enter the domestic market in 2018. In the future, nearly all Chevrolet models in China will have Redline variants.

“Chevrolet is strengthening its brand in China by boosting our product lineup and our overall customer and ownership experience. We have begun rolling out our more youthful and sporty Redline edition to help us reach younger customers,” said Lawson.

AAM is Expanding Globally

Detroit-based American Axle & Manufacturing, Inc., a global provider in the design, engineering and manufacturing of automotive driveline and powertrain components, will expand operations in the industrial area of Viladecans, Spain, to support growth with new and existing European customers.

Set to open in January 2019, a new 15,000-square-meter facility located 20 kilometers southwest of Barcelona will produce powertrain components for Europe’s leading automakers including Renault, BMW, Daimler, Porsche, Audi and Ford, said AAM spokeswoman Andrea Knapp. The new facility consolidates two smaller facilities in nearby Gavà and at full capacity will employ 170.

“As AAM continues to diversify and expand our global customer base and product mix, our new Barcelona facility will be an integral part of our European manufacturing footprint,” said AAM CEO David C. Dauch. “The new facility will help AAM meet customer demand for products that help reduce noise and vibrations from downsized engines.”

AAM Barcelona will produce a complete range of damper products, including compression dampers, PV bonded dampers, isolation pulleys, in-mould bonded dampers and damped gears.

“The new Barcelona facility will allow AAM to rationalize and improve operations through a lean and efficient layout and production flow and to re-integrate the currently externalized warehouse,” said Greg Deveson, AAM Powertrain president. “As automakers continue to downsize engines, especially with the increased number of hybrid applications, demand for products like damped gears and isolation pulleys will increase. This new facility will help AAM continue to meet and exceed our customers’ performance and quality expectations.”

Among others, AAM will produce damped gears for Ford, BMW and PSA, PV-bonded dampers for Audi, Mercedes and

FCA, isolation pulleys for Renault and in-mould bonded dampers for Mercedes, Ford and Porsche.

The Catalonia Trade and Investment agency, the INCASÒL and the Consorci urbanístic DeltaBCN supported AAM with this facility expansion, Knapp said.

Blazer Aims to Compete in Popular Niche

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

to give it a sporty look. Chevy says it will come standard with a 193-horsepower, 2.5-liter four-cylinder engine, with an optional 305 horsepower, 3.6-liter V6.

All models will have stop-start technology that shuts off the engine at red traffic lights, plus nine-speed automatic transmissions that will help gas mileage.

Chevy executives say they hope to take a chunk out of Grand Cherokee sales, one of the more popular and profitable vehicles in the Jeep lineup, in the growing midsize SUV segment. Last year, Fiat Chrysler sold nearly 159,000 Grand Cherokees.

The choice to build the Blazer in Mexico brought a rebuke from the United Auto Workers union, which said in a statement that GM is building the SUV south of the border while GM workers in the U.S. are laid off and unemployed. The Blazer also could get caught up in a potential trade war, with President Donald Trump threatening tariffs on imported vehicles.

GM said the decision to build in Mexico was made years ago and that the Blazer’s engines are made in the U.S.

The Blazer, due in showrooms early next year, comes as American buyers continue their shift from cars to trucks and SUVs. This year, trucks and SUVs accounted for about two-thirds of U.S. new-vehicle sales, with cars making up the rest.

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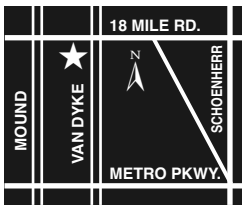
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