Tech Center News®

WARREN, MICHIGAN

VOL. 44 NO. 6 "by the publisher of Detroit Auto Scene" **OCTOBER 21, 2019**

GM and Union Reach Tentative Agreement

Editor's note - the GM-UAW negotiations are an ongoing process. This is the latest information available at press time. by TOM KRISHER

DETROIT (AP) - Striking General Motors workers will stay on the picket lines for at least another week until they vote on a tentative contract with the compa-

Factory-level officials from the United Auto Workers union voted to recommend the agreement to members at a daylong meeting in Detroit Oct. 17. But they also voted not to return to factories unless members approve the deal.

About 49,000 workers have been on strike for more than a month, paralyzing GM's U.S. factories and costing the company an estimated \$2 billion.

On Oct. 16, the company and the UAW reached a deal that would give workers a mix of pay raises, lump sum payments and an \$11,000 signing bonus. In return, the contract allows GM to proceed with factory closures in Lordstown, Ohio; Warren; and near Baltimore.

Details on the four-year pact were posted Oct. 17 on the UAW Web site as factory level union officials met to decide if they'll approve the deal. Workers went on strike Sept. 16, crippling the company's U.S. production and costing it an estimated \$2 bil-

The Detroit Hamtramck plant, which GM wanted to close, will stay open and a new electric pickup truck will be built there. Meanwhile, the Lordstown area will get a new battery factory

that is expected to employ 1,000 workers. In addition, a company called Lordstown Motors could also set up an electric commercial vehicle factory that would initially employ 400 workers. But neither of those would come close to the shuttered Lordstown assembly plant, which two years ago employed 4,500 people mak-

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Robert Bollinger in front of one of a recently-tested EV prototype.

Bollinger Motors Testing EV Prototypes

by Jim Stickford

It's a long way from Pittsburgh and New York City advertising to developing EV pickup trucks in Detroit, but that's the journey made by Robert Bollinger, founder of Bollinger Motors.

Bollinger's company last month unveiled the Bollinger B1 SUV and Bollinger B2 pickup truck. Both vehicles are EVs and aimed at a niche market of offroad enthusiasts.

Bollinger said the vehicles are in the development stage, and he currently has no plans to make them for the mass market.

"Our biggest followers are offroading enthusiasts," Bollinger said. "That's not a surprise to us because our vehicles, while being EVs, will also be street legal.

Our engineering team is developing these vehicles to have a 15inch ground clearance wheel-towheel, a portal gear hub and 10inch wheel travel, so the wheels can go as low as 10 inches and as high as 20 inches for clearance."

Bollinger started his company a few years ago, saying its official start goes back to June of 2015 when he hired Karl Hacken as his first employee.

Bollinger said that he didn't start off working in the auto industry. He studied industrial design at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh. There was an emphasis on creating manufacturing designs that were attractive while still having a practical production method.

He eventually ended up working for several ad agencies in New York City - agencies such as Young and Rubicam. He started in the business as a graphic designer, which led to a job as an art director, which led to his being a creative director.

After a couple of decades in advertising, he helped his friend John Masters create the packaging for John Masters Organic Shampoo.

"He made me a partner, and I found that I really enjoyed running a company full-time," Bollinger said. "It was sold in 2013. I won't say for how much, but it was a lot of money and I got a piece of that."

So he asked himself what would be next. He had always enjoyed cars and even at one time

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2

Bob Lutz Reflects on His Days at Ford, GM and Chrysler

by Jim Stickford

When employees from AMC joined Chrysler in the late '80s, they "felt like kids in a candy store.

That's how former Chrysler president and auto legend Bob Lutz described the situation to National Chrysler Retirement Organization (NCRO) members at a recent breakfast gathering.

"They told me that they felt like orphans who were finally adopted by a wealthy parent," said Lutz, describing the employees who came from capitalstarved American Motors to a Chrysler organization that was in a better resource position.

Lutz, during his time in the auto industry, served as a top leader of all of the United States Big Three automobile manufacexecutive vice president (and board member) of Ford Motor Company, president and then vice chairman (and board member) of Chrysler Corporation, and vice chairman of General Mo-

Lutz said it was Chrysler that was still paying him a pension. He said that his decade at Ford didn't bring him much, pensionwise. His pension at GM was wiped out after the bankruptcy. So when given the chance to speak to his fellow Chrysler retirees, he was happy to do so. After all, he said, they have a lot in

He then spoke about the differences in corporate cultures at the Big Three.

When I worked at Ford, I saw that there was the Ford way of doing things," Lutz said. "Everything was computed to be as air-

tight as possible. It was not a good environment for someone with an entrepreneurial bent.

"I was getting results, but I wasn't doing it the Ford way," Lutz said.

It was apparent that there was a clash in temperament between him and Ford's top management, Lutz said. So when he left the company and went to Chrysler in 1986, Ford CEO Don Peterson said that Ford had gotten rid of the last of the misfits. And that description was OK with Lutz.

"At Chrysler, we were a band of misfits," Lutz said. "We loaded with people who left their previous jobs two steps ahead of the

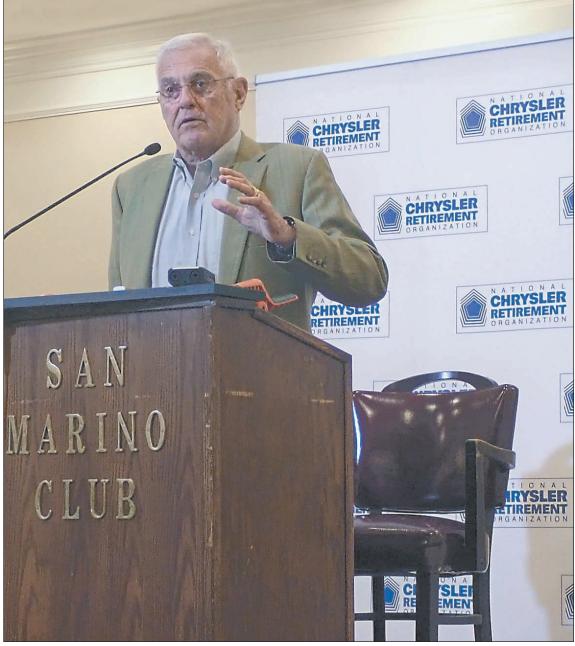
"When we bought AMC, we got their people. They were used to being small and poor and doing more with less. They had a sayturers, having been in succession ing that in their next phase, they would have to do everything with nothing."

Lutz said that Chrysler didn't have a lot of the resources of GM and Ford, but when the AMC people came to the company, they kept saying how much Chrysler had. That was an eye-opener.

Chrysler ended up forming a Gang of Five" that made decisions and acted on them quickly, Lutz said.

"This was a brilliant time for Chrysler," Lutz said. "We were going from success to success. I remember one day I was at the Townsend Hotel in Birmingham and I ran into a couple of GM people. They said that I was really lucky at Chrysler, what was my secret? I said what do you mean? They said they spent a lot of time and effort on cars and it seems

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Auto legend Bob Lutz spoke to Chrysler retirees about the state of the industry and its future with AV tech.

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Deadline: Thursday 5:00 p.m. for the next edition of Monday

William Springer II, publisher Lisa A. Torretta, operations Jim Stickford, editor

Tech Center News. Detroit Auto Scene are of Springer Publishing Co. Inc.

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Ally Financial Donates \$1M To Museum

Ally Financial donated \$1 million to the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture with a check presentation by Ally Chief Executive Officer Jeffrey J. Brown to interim director of the museum, Spencer Crew.

The museum, located on the National Mall in Washington, D.C., is the nation's largest museum devoted exclusively to the documentation of African American life, history and culture, and its impact on the world today, said Ally spokeswoman Caitlin Palumbo.

This donation, which was made on Oct. 16, supports Ally's commitment to advancing diversity and inclusion through education, understanding and action, Palumbo said.

'Championing diversity and inclusion is a cornerstone of our culture at Ally and at the foundation of what it means to do it right," said Brown. "An important part of this includes education and an understanding of the rich fabric of diversity. The National Museum of African American History and Culture tells the story of America through the lens of black history and culture, and we are proud to be able to help support them in that mis-

Brown was joined for the check presentation by 24 students from historically black colleges and universities who were invited by Ally to tour the museum. Prior to the museum tour the students participated in a learning session on the topic of design thinking that was led by

The students were in Washington, D.C. for the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCF) 18th Annual Leadership Institute. TM-CF is the nation's largest organization exclusively representing the black college community. Brown has been named CEO of the Year by TMCF and were honored at the 32nd Anniversary

Consumer Power Gets State OK For Wind Farm

LANSING, Mich. (AP) - Michigan regulators have approved Consumers Energy's plan to buy a wind energy farm in Hillsdale County. The Public Service Commission says the deal calls for the Jackson utility to purchase the 166-megawatt wind farm after Crescent Wind LLC designs, builds, and tests the project.

The property is in Adams, Moscow and Wheatland townships in southern Michigan. Commercial operations are expected to start no later than the end of 2020. Regulators say the full cost of the Crescent Wind project can be recovered by Consumers Energy through the company's power supply cost recovery process.

GM, UAW Reach Tentative Agreement, Ratification Next

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ing the Chevrolet Cruze compact car.

The deal shortens the eight years it takes for new hires to reach full wages and gives temporary workers a full-time job after three years of continuous work. Workers hired after 2007 who are paid a lower wage rate will hit the top wage of \$32.32 per hour in four years or less. The deal also provides a \$60,000 early retirement incentive for up to 2,000 eligible workers.

The tentative agreement between GM and the UAW now will be used as a template for talks with GM's crosstown rivals. Ford and Fiat Chrysler. Normally the major provisions carry over to the other two companies and cover about 140,000 auto workers nationwide. The union hasn't decided yet which company it will bargain with next, and it's not clear if there will be another strike.

The local union officials met

for about six hours Thursday before reaching their decisions. Morgan, the bargaining chairman at the Lordstown assembly plant, made an unsuccessful plea to hold out so GM would build another vehicle

"We're extremely disappointed that we didn't get a product out of the contract," said Tim O'Hara, the Lordstown local's president. "I think a lot of people in the room realized what happened to us can happen to anybody.

But union spokesman Brian Rothenberg said bargainers only could get the company to agree to early retirement and buyout offers for workers from the factories that are closing who didn't move to other GM plants.

"I think our national negotiators and all of us did everything we could," he said.

GM has promised \$7.7 billion worth of investments in U.S. factories, but details of what would be built where were left out of the union's summary of the contract, unlike in past years. Rothenberg said he would release more information on investments later.

Lordstown is likely to become an issue in the 2020 presidential campaign. At a 2017 rally in nearby Youngstown, President Donald Trump pledged that factory jobs would be coming back to the region. "Don't move. Don't sell your house," he said at the

The strike at GM immediately brought the company's U.S. factories to a halt, and within a week, started to hamper production in Mexico and Canada. Analysts at KeyBanc investment services estimated the stoppage cut GM vehicle production by 250,000 to 300,000 vehicles. That's too much for the company to make up with overtime or increased assembly line speeds.

GM and the union have been negotiating at a time of troubling uncertainty for the U.S. auto industry. Driven by the longest economic expansion in American

history, auto sales appear to have peaked and are now heading in the other direction. GM and other carmakers are also struggling to make the transition to electric and autonomous vehi-

Meanwhile, Trump's trade war with China and his tariffs on imported steel and aluminum have raised costs for auto companies. A revamped North American free trade deal is stalled in Congress, raising doubts about the future of America's trade in autos and auto parts with Canada and Mexico, which last year came to \$257 billion.

Amid that uncertainty, GM workers wanted to lock in as much as they can before things get ugly. They argue that they had given up pay raises and made other concessions to keep GM afloat during its 2009 trip through bankruptcy protection. Now that GM has been nursed back to health - earning \$2.42 billion in its latest quarter - they wanted a bigger share.

Bollinger Motors is Testing Company's EV Truck, SUV

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tried to be a designer for Ferrari in Italy. He was told that he wasn't qualified to be a designer for their supercars and his career took a different path.

"I was going to study at the Center for Creative Studies in Detroit," Bollinger downtown said. "But I needed the money to attend, so I took a job in advertising to pay for school, but ended up staying in that business.'

So Bollinger took the plunge and got together with people like Hacken and C.J. Winegar. They formed the nucleus of Bollinger Motors and decided to build EVs from the ground up.

The company is self-funded and was founded in the state of New York. After a while, they realized that they had to come to Detroit because that was where the experts on EVs are, where the engineers are, the fabricators and manufacturing experts and has opened up space in front of where the suppliers are.

They finally landed in Ferndale and proceeded to develop the prototype B1 and B2.

"I have to say Michigan is cool," Bollinger said. "We just took our prototypes to the Eaton testing track in Marshall on the state's west side. I grew up in the Pittsburgh area, so Detroit seems familiar to me.

"It's a big city, but still has a bit of a small-town feel. It's quite different from New York City. I'll tell you that."

Bollinger said the B1 and B2 are based on the company's own platform.

They are the same vehicle from the front to the C-pillar, with the pickup truck having a bed instead of a trunk.

They have designed the vehicles with their own unique architecture, Bollinger said, placing the motor under the floor, which

the vehicle.

The results of their work are two vehicles designed from the ground up, and from the inside out, Bollinger said. The goal, he said, is to create a dependable vehicle that gives performance while having a body that has a timeless look with the classic shape of a pickup and an SUV.

'The pickup is also longer than any pickup on the market today," Bollinger said. "With the B1, we can have 13-foot boards go through the middle of the vehicle and the B2 can hold 16-foot boards in the back.'

This kind of truck has gained in addition to off-roaders who appreciate the instant torque farmers who want a sturdy work truck they don't have to constantly fill with fuel, and early adopters who are interested in the latest green technology.

"We've also heard from several

game preserves in Africa who like the idea of a working pickup truck that doesn't emit fumes, Bollinger said.

"We are still testing the prototypes and are in contact with several potential manufactur-

Going from prototype development to production is not only difficult and time-consuming, it's expensive, Bollinger said.

The company is currently seeking finance to bring them to the next phase of production. But he said there's a market out there for the B1 and the B2 and he's confident that the company will be able to obtain the needed funding.

Bollinger said the company hasn't announced when the truck will be made available to the public, but he said they want to have it in production by late 2020 and have it for sale by some time in 2021.

Tesla Being Sued Over Battery Fire

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) The father of an 18-year-old Florida teen killed when his speeding Tesla slammed into a wall and caught fire is suing the company, saying the crash should have been "entirely sur-

Police say Barrett Riley and his 18-year-old friend Edgar Monserrat died when Riley lost control of his father's car at 116 mph (187 kph) in May 2018. Another friend was thrown from the car and survived the accident.

The South Florida SunSentinel reports that James B. Riley sued Oct. 9 in Santa Clara County, Calif., where Tesla is based.

Monserrat's parents filed a similar lawsuit against Tesla in January.

Both blame the car's lithiumion battery pack, which exploded when the Tesla hit a concrete wall. A Tesla statement earlier this year said "no car could have withstood a high-speed crash of this kind "

This is the latest lawsuit filed against Tesla. Last year a Utah driver sued the company after her Tesla slammed into a stopped firetruck. Heather Lommatzsch claimed that salespeople told her she could touch the steering wheel lightly while in Autopilot mode.





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OCTOBER 21, 2019

Kettering University Builds Own Test Track

by Jim Stickford

Flint's Kettering University offers educational opportunities to students in different automotive disciplines, but it does have oneextra advantage over other schools, it has its own test track.

School president Robert McMahan said that Kettering's Mobility Research Center (MRC) completed a test track in September of 2018.

The MRC track is special because it is part of a larger research complex that includes a customizable test pad built to race track performance specifications plus low speed handling loops with elevation and surfaces charges, a comprehensive V2-communications and network support and a standalone research building containing research laboratories that include secure and private spaces for prototype development.

The MRC is already being used to support research programs in mobile communication technologies, autonomous driving, secure communications vehicle-tovehicle-tovehicle and infrastructure communications, cyber-security, technologies for level 4 and level 5 automated self-driving cars including artificial intelligence, deep learning and computer vision.

"This makes the facility an innovation magnet and a first choice partner in the development of new technologies,' McMahan said.

The state-of-the-art facility provides Kettering's more than 600 corporate partners a place to use when they are researching, developing and testing new mobility and transportation technolo-

"A note of distinction," McMahan said. "The Mobility Research Center is the only facility of its kind on a university/college campus in the United States. Kettering students are able to participate in cutting-edge research and hands-on development programs using the MRC.'

school several years to build the MRC facility and track. It's located at the old Chevy-Oldsmobile manufacturing site in Flint.

brownfield site in the 2000s," McMahan said. "So it took us a year to do all the environmental work. Then we built the facility. All told, it was a three-year proj-



Kettering's private test track in Flint comes with a 4G LTE communications system as part of the test facility.

roughly the same size at the Michigan City site in Ann Arbor. But it's different because it has an engineering focus, where Michigan City has more an urban driving focus. We are especially proud of the communications network built in to the facility and track. It's a 4G LTE Advanced system, the only one owned by a university in North America."

The total cost of the MRC facility is around \$8 million, McMahan said. But that's just the building an track. It doesn't include the cost of the equipment and the land work.

"The thinking behind the MRC facility is that our students get to use it and a number of different companies will be able to take advantage of the site, which increase interaction between students and business," McMahan

While the OEMs and major suppliers have their own test tracks, a lot of big suppliers don't. So being able to go to Kettering to test products on a modern track with a 4G communications network is a great advanof the Kettering Board of Trustees from 1983 to 1992. He is a Flint native and was an engineer at GM. The Harris family was very generous in their donations to the project.

Harris Mobility Research Annex facts:

- The annex is 3,000 square feet.
- · An observation balcony overlooks the proving grounds.
- The annex provides secured and private spaces for prototype development, along with conference facilities.
- The facility is temperature controlled with a single drive-thru bay and a heavy duty two-post vehicle liftt available.
- The space supports various fuel sources, including gasoline, propane, natural gas, and hydrogen.
- The facility includes Level-II EV charging options.

What is now Kettering University was founded in 1919 by Major Albert Sobey when he took over the night school that the Industrial Fellowship League ran with the YMCA. In 1924, he launched the Cooperative Engineering Program with 20 stu-

The students learned how to become mechanics for Buick in the early days until General Motors agreed to take over the institution in 1926. It became independent in the 1980s.

Warren Symphony Orchestra Coming Soon

The Warren Symphony Orchestra will begin its 47th season with Through the Eyes of Dvorak: The New World Symphony at 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 24, 2019 at the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts located at 44575 Garfield Rd. in Clinton Township. Performing under the baton of music director/conductor Gina Provenzano, the Warren Symphony Orchestra (WSO) will perform "Symphony No. 9 "New World" and "Slavonic Dances" composed by Antonin Dvorak and "Overture No.1 op 23 in e minor" by female composer Louise Farrenc.

The remainder of the WSO's 47th season will consist of two additional concerts to be held at 3 p.m. at the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts; A Divine Genius: Mozart, on Sunday, February 23, 2020 and Bernstein & Williams Favorites: West Side Story to Star Wars on Sunday, April 19, 2020.

Tickets are \$23 for adults, \$20 for seniors, \$10 for college students, and K-12 are free. A discounted Season Package, tickets to all three season 47 concerts, is available to purchase until Nov. 23. To purchase tickets, please contact the Macomb Center for the Performing Arts box office at 586-286-2222 or MacombCenter.com.

For more information visit WarrenSymphony.org.



FCA Starts Building Paint Shop at Warren Truck Location

Construction continues.

That's the latest on the updating of FCA's Warren Truck facility that's getting ready to assemble the new Jeep Wagoneer.

A giant industrial crane last week hoisted a nearly two-storytall piece of steel high into the blue sky and dropped it into place to mark the first column raised for the Warren Truck Assembly Plant's new paint shop.

The steel column is the first of nearly 7,500 pieces that will be lifted into place to form the frame of the new 300,000-squarefoot facility expansion that includes a paint shop and offices.

Installation of the steel columns is one of the first visible signs of FCA's \$1.5 billion investment to retool Warren Truck for production of the new Jeep Wagoneer and Grand Wagoneer, along with their electrified counterparts, said Edward Cardenas, multimedia editor for FCA.

Before a single piece of steel could be installed, crews removed the existing parking lots and prepared the area for the expansion. Once cleared, 280 caissons were drilled deep into the ground to support the steel columns.

Two crews of construction workers will be working 10 hours a day, seven days a week for the next three months to complete the installation of the 3,400 tons of steel, Cardenas said.

Renovation work will also be conducted inside the plant in preparation for the expected 2021 launch of the new Jeep



The first of 7,500 building parts was put into place at FCA's Warren Truck facility as upgrades continue.

will continue building the Ram 1500 Classic.

The history of Warren Truck Assembly Plant goes back to 1938. According to FCA records, 6,767,213 trucks were produced from 1938 through 1985. Dodge Dakota was introduced in 1987 and Ram 1500 was introduced in The second-generation Dakota was launched in 1996.

The 2002 Ram 1500 was launched in September 2001 with the Quad Cab. The Mitsubishi Raider began production in Sepmodels. Additionally, the plant tember 2005. Production of

2009's most award-winning lightduty pickup truck, the Ram 1500, began in 2008. Production of the Dodge Dakota ended on Aug. 23, 2011, with more than 2,750,000 built at the plant.

The $2013\ Ram\ 1500\ launched$ on Sept. 6, 2012; the Ram 1500 EcoDiesel on Jan. 21, 2014.

FCA announced on Jan. 8, 2017, that it would invest \$1 billion to retool and modernize Warren Truck to produce the all-new Jeep Wagoneer and Grand Wagoneer and the south plant of the Toledo Assembly Complex

(Ohio) to build an all-new Jeep pickup truck. These actions are planned to be completed by

On Feb. 26, 2019, FCA confirmed that the investment announced in 2017 will increase to \$1.5 billion and include tooling to produce electrified versions of the Jeep Wagoneer and Grand Wagoneer. As part of the announcement, the company also confirmed that production of the Ram 1500 Classic will continue. It is expected that 1,400 new jobs will be added.

AAM Expanding **International** Reach in Spain

American Axle & Manufacturing (AAM)of Detroit, a global provider of design, engineering and manufacturing of automotive driveline systems and components, celebrated the grand opening of a new manufacturing facility in Spain on Oct. 17.

The new facility will support demand and growth from new and current European customers including Renault, BMW, Daimler, Porsche, Audi and Ford. AAM Barcelona produces a complete range of vibration control and damper products including PV bonded dampers, press-in compression dampers, isolation pulleys, in-mould bonded dampers and damped gears.

"AAM's new Barcelona Manufacturing Facility is a key part of our continued mission to diversify and expand our global customer base and product mix,' said David C. Dauch, AAM CEO "European automakers are continuing to downsize engines and AAM's segment-leading products support this mission with technology that helps reduce noise and vibrations in the vehicle."

The new 15,600 sq.-m. facility located 20 kilometers southwest of Barcelona consolidates two smaller facilities in nearby Gavà and at full capacity will employ nearly 300 associates.

"AAM is a leader in this segment having pioneered the isolation pulley, many types of viscous dampers and damped gears," said Greg Deveson, president, AAM Driveline. "As production of downsized engines and hybrid applications increases, AAM will support our customers with industry-leading technologies that meet and exceed performance and quality expecta-

Goodyear Celebrates 75th Anniversary of Texas Test Track

der the shade of a trailer canopy the guests waited. Some snapped photos of each other in the black open-face racing helmets.

In the distance tires screech as they slid across pavement.

The guests had listened to the mid-October anniversary presentation and learned about how the Goodyear Proving Grounds - already the largest in the company – is expanding its operation to offer broader testing capabilities for tires fitted on everything from sports cars to earth movers.

They learned about the company's 75-year history in town, which began when Goodyear relocated from Phoenix to downtown San Angelo in 1944, at the time using public roads for testing. The overview documented the company's growth onto the 7,250-acre site situated on U.S. 277 north of town, and the operations that take place on its 53 different test surfaces.

But this was the moment the guests were anticipating.

The Rally-Yellow Camaro SS 1LE, Hyper-Blue Camaro SS 1LE and Black Mustang GT lined up, more than 1,325 combined horsepower under the hoods and test drivers ready to thrill. One-byone guests slid into racing seats nounced during the 75th anniverand fastened the 5-point harness sary celebration includes an adbelts. The test drivers did not disappoint.

much smoother," Bruce Partain, San Angelo Chamber of Commerce president, told the San Angelo Standard-Times . "The only way to improve it would be to let me switch seats."

Test driving for Goodyear takes more than steely nerves, however. At minimum, drivers are required to have an engineering degree, and a background in vehicle dynamics with some racing experience under their belt would help a candidate land the spot. It's a formula Goodyear has been using for decades at the site that tests more than 20,000 tires annually

Not all tests have a need for speed. Sometimes they involve the everyday aspects of driving, potholes. That's right, there's a test track set up with potholes designed to maintain the exact shape and size so Goodyear tires can be driven over them repeatedly. Just like real life.

Other tests evaluate fuel economy, noise, vibration, durability and vital safety aspects including traction, stopping distance and handling in varying weather con-

Part of the expansion anditional evaluation facility for massive off-road vehicles that "It reminded me of pulling Gs will allow testing of the indus-

SAN ANGELO, Texas (AP) – Un- on a wooden roller coaster - but try's largest earth-mover tires. The company recently added a 250-ton, 25-foot-tall earth-mover haul truck to its fleet.

Texas isn't the only proving

grounds in the company. It also has a testing site at its home of Akron, Ohio; and internationally in Brazil, Luxembourg, France, Germany and Finland.



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Lutz Says Automotive AV Tech is Coming Sooner or Later

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

like success was a matter of luck. I said it's not luck if you know what you're doing. You make your own luck.'

Lutz said Chrysler was a fun place to work because it was so unconventional. When he became vice chairman at GM. he got a bunch of people together and talked to them about product development.

"I would say things just to get pushback," Lutz said. "When I did that at Chrysler, people would call me on some of the things I said. That was good. If people can't express their opinions honestly, things don't work."

Lutz noticed that all the GM people were studiously taking notes on what he said, and he was getting no pushback.

When he asked what the audience was doing, he was told that he had a reputation for product development and they wanted to learn his secret. Lutz said that he was saying things to provoke a debate and get a reaction, but he wasn't getting any feedback.

And that was a major problem with GM at the time, Lutz said. The company was filled with smart people, but perhaps it needed some people with common sense and the ability to make decisions quickly.

All too often, the words of senior staff were treated as if they were carved in stone and came from the gods.

As a result, too often Lutz said he saw vehicles being developed in ways that resulted in uninspiring design. Designers were essentially told to create a shell to meet all the engineering specs of vehicles. This process didn't allow them to do their jobs.

"The Chrysler 300M had a bold design and was a huge success,'

right away and put it on display for people at the company to look at so they might see why it succeeded."

Lutz said he went to the 300M and saw a bunch of yellow Post-Its on the car. Each one represented a criticism of how the car didn't do something the GM way. Basically, he said, GM people were criticizing the car for not doing things by GM's rules.

"That's totally absurd," Lutz said. "But that's why GM had such unexciting design. The designers weren't allowed to do their jobs. So I try to strip away a lot of these rules. I tried to get GM to play by Chrysler rules. I hope things have stayed that way, but things have a way of going back."

Lutz said that Chrysler, now FCA, has been doing things right. The Ram trucks went from 4 percent of truck sales to about a third. Lutz said getting to that point wasn't easy because there were a lot of naysayers telling FCA people that in a three-company niche, 4 percent wasn't cutting it and they should just leave.

FCA people didn't listen and they carved out a chunk of the truck market, which is important for profits because that's where the money is.

He said the Chrysler 300 has a timeless look and with updates to technology, FCA can keep selling them for years without having to spend a fortune on redesign. He also praised Dodge for its sedans, noting that "all the R&D was completed years ago, but by adding models with more horsepower on a regular basis, the brand gets press and keeps customers. Again, this is done without having to spend a for-

Lutz saved his highest praise

Lutz said. "So GM bought one for the Jeep brand, crediting Chrysler for getting the Jeep brand for a song as Lee Iacocca's best move in the car industry, "not the creation of the Mustang or the minivan.'

> "Ultimately, I think FCA is in good hands our retirement checks will keep coming." - Bob Lutz

The Jeep brand has international cache, Lutz said. It is not seen as downscale and sales have gone from 200,000 to 2 million. SUVs, like trucks, are where the money is, and their popularity is a North American thing.

He added that the auto industry is changing, and that's something that can't be avoided.

"You all should be grateful that you worked in the auto industry during its golden age," Lutz said.

His fellow Chrysler retirees worked for an industry that combined engineering and art to make cars people loved. And it was an industry that required high finance.

"But AV cars are inevitable," Lutz said. "They might not generate the passion of today's cars, but transportation has to change because the world is getting more urban and they can't keep paving over the land.

"AVs picking up and dropping off people frees up land and provides transportation to the elderly and the vision-impaired. Parents won't have to constantly act ther."

Lutz said that there is no Second Amendment for cars. "We might lose the freedom to drive the way we want to in ICE cars," he said, "but we gain freedom from traffic jams and freedom from car accidents."

He said that was a fair trade. So the tech isn't here today, but it is coming. It might be 10 or 20 or 30 years, but it's coming, he

When asked about the Chinese auto market, Lutz said it's growing, but with a global supply chain, the cost of parts will be equal for OEMs around the world. Labor costs are rising in China, and as long as shipping costs outweigh labor advantages, he doesn't see huge Chinese imports coming to this country.

He said that for all his criticisms of GM's slow decision-making process, the company deserves credit for getting into the Chinese market in 1992. At the time, people thought they were crazy. But the cash generated from GM's China operations help the company during down times.

In the past, Lutz pointed out, it was said GM would run out of cash after a 10-week strike. Thanks to cash from China, the company can last 20 or 30 weeks during a strike.

Lutz said that the North American market is becoming distinctly American, with our love of trucks and SUVs. He said Nissan is discontinuing vehicles like the Cummins diesel and Toyota hasn't been able to penetrate the truck market they way the company penetrated the sedan market. This was good news for NCRO members.

"Ultimately, I think FCA is in good hands," Lutz said. "Executives have read the market cor-

as drivers for their children, ei- rectly, and our retirement checks will keep coming."

Jay Kuhnie, president of the NCRO, said the organization is made up of 6,000 Chrysler retirees, most of them salaried.

"We've been around since 2008," Kuhnie said. "We do all we can to protect the pensions and benefits of Chrysler retirees. That includes lobbying in Washington, D.C., and we've built a relationship with FCA, so if a member has trouble, we know who we can contact to help fix it.'

Piston Automotive Purchases Ohio Auto Supplier

Piston Automotive, a subsidiary of the Piston Group formed by Detroit businessman and NBA legend Vinnie Johnson, has acquired Ohio-based Marion Industries, a Tier I assembler of brake modules for Honda of America.

Marion Industries, established in 1999, was a member company of Ernie Green Industries, a certified minority-owned business enterprise.

This acquisition expands Piston Automotive's footprint into the Central Ohio region and further diversifies the company's growing list of OEM customers.

"Transforming our business and accepting new challenges is required in order to compete in today's marketplace," said Piston Group's Founder, Chairman and CEO Vinnie Johnson. "The acquisition of Marion Industries allows us to leverage our process design and product assembly expertise and diversify our customer base which are two key elements of our growth strategy."



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Welcomes Dennis Thacker, who brings 25 years Serving GM Employees in Metro Detroit.



Renault Removes Old CEO

by CLAIRE PARKER **Associated Press**

PARIS (AP) - French carmaker Renault dismissed its CEO on Oct. 11, an attempt to revitalize its alliance with Nissan, which was shaken by the jailing of the companies' previous chief, Carlos Ghosn.

The board's decision to fire Thierry Bollore effective immediately came days after Nissan also named a new CEO, indicating the companies were intent on cleaning house after the scandal over Ghosn

Bollore had replaced Ghosn after the former CEO was jailed in Tokyo last November on charges of falsifying financial reports in under-reporting compensation and breach of trust. Ghosn, who led both companies and the Nissan-Renault alliance, is currently awaiting trial and denies wrong-

The company said Bollore will be replaced on an interim basis Chief Financial Officer Clotilde Delbos. Chairman Jean-Dominique Senard will become president during the interim pe-

At a news conference to explain the decision to oust Bollore, Senard said it was meant to "breathe new life" into the alliance with Nissan. He said it was made without pressure from the French government or Nissan.

"No one exerted pressure," he

Renault owns 43 percent of Nissan but their alliance came under strain after Ghosn's jailing. Renault considered a merger offer from Fiat Chrysler Automobiles that would have created the world's third-largest automaker. but the talks fell apart due to concern over Nissan's role.

Bollore told French publication Les Echos ahead of the an-

nouncement that the board's move to oust him came as a surprise. He said he found out Senard wanted him gone from media reports after he flew back to Paris from Tokyo in the early hours of Oct. 9.

"The brutality and the totally unexpected nature of what is about to happen is stupefying," he said, adding "I was always loyal to him.'

Responding to a question about Renault's poor performance since he took the top post in January, he emphasized the strategic partnerships the company entered into with Google and Waymo under his watch.

"What is at stake is not me personally but the future of Renault and its 186,000 employees," he told Les Echos.

Backup Camera Troubles BMW

DETROIT (AP) - BMW is recalling more than 257,000 vehicles in the U.S. because drivers might not be able to see the backup camera display.

The recall covers certain 3-Series, 5-series, 6-Series, 7-Series and 8-Series cars as well as certain X3, X4, X5 and X7 SUVs from the 2018 to 2020 model years. Also included are Z4 sports cars and the Rolls-Royce Cullinan and Phantom.

The company says in documents by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration that the camera and display settings can be adjusted so the display isn't visible, and the system will keep that setting the next time the vehicles are shifted into reverse. That violates federal safety standards.

Dealers will notify owners. The recall is expected to begin Nov.

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