



PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

The Henry Ford Estate, tabbed Fair Lane by its owner nearly a century ago, has been a part of the University of Michigan-Dearborn, but soon will belong to the Edsel Ford House governing body.

## Ford Fair Lane Estate Winding Down

By Gerald Scott  
Staff Reporter

Big, big changes are coming to the Henry Ford Estate - Fair Lane in Dearborn.

Fair Lane, of course, which opened in 1915, was the personal home of auto pioneer Henry Ford and his wife Clara for much of the 20th century - he died in 1947 in the master bedroom there, in fact.

But it seems the venerable automotive estate is not only changing hands in terms of ownership, but it will be closed for several years for major renovations as well.

It is currently owned by the University of Michigan-Dearborn, but will eventually be ceded to the Edsel Ford

House in Grosse Pointe Shores.

It has been six months since the U-M Board of Regents and the Board of Trustees at the Edsel & Eleanor Ford House approved a Memorandum of Understanding to transfer ownership of the Henry Ford Estate from the University to the governing body that oversees Ford House.

Both the University and Ford House have been work-

ing diligently on many fronts regarding the official transfer, which is expected to occur on July 1, 2011.

Meanwhile, the Estate will continue to operate on its regular fall and holiday schedule and the Pool Restaurant will be open through Dec. 17. The University will then close the Estate to prepare for the transfer and impending restoration projects.

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## Food for the Hungry is On Way, Thanks to Ford

DEARBORN, Mich. - For more than 37 million Americans, Thanksgiving Day is another day of food insecurity, described in the 2010 study by Feeding America as not knowing where they will find their next meal.

Ford Motor Company is partnering with Feeding America affiliate food banks and other organizations on a number of initiatives aimed at providing needed support.

For high school students in Southeast Michigan, Ford is creating a fun and unique way to get involved. From Nov. 25 through Dec. 12, students at Wayne, Oakland and Macomb County high schools can compete for a school-wide pizza party and funds for school supplies by building a look-alike Ford Explorer from cans and non-perishable packaged food items that they collect.

Complete contest details are available at [www.clickondetroit.com](http://www.clickondetroit.com). Pictures of school entries will be posted on this site, where the public can vote to determine the finalists on

Dec. 13 and 14. The winner and two runners-up will be selected by Ford Explorer Exterior Design Manager Melvin Betancourt.

After the contest, Gleaners Food Bank will pick up and distribute the donated food in the tri-county area.

For 9,000 homebound seniors and homeless, Ford's support meant a hot, fresh meal on Thanksgiving Day, with many meals packed and delivered by Ford employees who volunteer through the Ford Volunteer Corps.

Ford volunteers partnered with Detroit Area Agency on Aging, Capuchin Soup Kitchen, Grace Centers of Hope and McWarm to prepare and deliver Thanksgiving Day meals in Wayne, Oakland and Macomb Counties.

For thousands of families that depend on Southeast Michigan agencies, Ford's support meant weekend food backpacks, holiday food packages or holiday meals.

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## Whew! Ford EcoBoost Makes it Through Tough Tests

DEARBORN, Mich. - The 2011 Ford F-150 EcoBoost race truck with the torture-tested "hero" engine finished one of the most grueling desert endurance races in the world - the Tecate SCORE Baja 1000 - in 38 hours and 20 minutes, after 1,061 miles.

The 3.5-liter EcoBoost engine used to power the race truck performed spectacularly in the harsh terrain and extreme temperature swings of the Baja California Peninsula.

The truck endured hard accelerations - often at full throttle - and stiff decelerations across the mountains at temperatures that swung between freezing and 100 degrees Fahrenheit.

Though the EcoBoost engine entered the race with the equivalent of 10 years worth of rugged use, its inherent performance advantages - twin turbochargers and direct fuel

injection - helped it complete the race.

"I've never seen anything like it in a stock engine - especially one that's been through what this one has," said driver Mike McCarthy.

"This EcoBoost engine didn't miss a beat. It took a beating and kept right on going. This is one tough engine."

Earlier this fall, the engine was randomly selected off the line from the Cleveland Engine Plant to be put through a series of rugged exercises to test its long-term durability.

It was installed in a 2011 F-150 at the Kansas City Assembly Plant, then traveled to Oregon where it worked as a log skidder. Next, the truck towed 11,300 pounds at high speeds around a NASCAR track in Florida before towing up steep grades in Arizona against competitive trucks.

Last week, the engine was re-

moved from the F-150 and installed in a race truck to take on the extreme conditions and terrain of the Baja 1000 in Mexico. In last year's race, fewer than half of the competitors - many with modified engines -

finished this race.

The Baja 1000 represented the culmination of the F-150 EcoBoost torture test program, demonstrating the durability

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The stock engine in this 2011 Ford F-150 race truck underwent a series of rugged exercises earlier this fall before it was placed in the truck to compete successfully in the Tecate SCORE Baja 1000.

## DTE Exec Puts to Rest False Beliefs on Plug-ins

By Gerald Scott  
Staff Reporter

With the launch of plug-in vehicles like the Chevrolet Volt and Nissan Leaf at hand, the message from autos to energy utilities is "ready or not, here we come."

The electric utilities are undaunted and ready to deliver the juice to thousands, hundreds of thousands or eventually millions of plug-in cars.

That's the message, at least, from Haukur "Hawk" Asgeirsson, manager - Power Systems Technologies, DTE Energy. He's DTE's point man on everything to do with plug-in cars and their impact on DTE, on society and more.

"We've been studying this since the 1990s," Asgeirsson pointed out in a wide-ranging interview at his office at the Detroit Edison building downtown.

Asgeirsson put to rest the two canards that seem to be haunting the otherwise rosy notion of plug-in electrics beginning to reduce society's dependence on fossil fuels in general and on OPEC and petroleum in particular.

Yes, Asgeirsson said, DTE Energy will, indeed, be able to provide juice for all the plug-

in cars it expects to handle over the next decade.

That, and the so-called tradeoff that losing tailpipe emissions at the automobile end will just increase power plant emissions at the electricity production end.

First things first, though. "I think we should be able to handle all the vehicles we can take - overnight," Asgeirsson said.

"We have about 4 million cars in our service area (across Southeast Michigan), so that's a lot of cars."

He estimates that if just 10 percent of those 4 million vehicles - that's 400,000 cars - were plug-in vehicles tapping the grid overnight, that would represent a 4 percent increase in "new" electricity that DTE would need to generate to support the endeavor.

But home and commercial electricity use by traditional DTE customers is lately down 6 percent, so even an influx of about 400,000 plug-ins in this area alone wouldn't overwhelm the utility as far as electricity generation goes, Asgeirsson said.

"Assuming you're going to charge them off-peak (hours), you should be able to handle most of them," he added.

"On a national scale, the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory has said that if 85 percent of the cars (across the U.S.) are plug-in electrics, the grid as a whole can handle that - off peak.

"So it's really meeting the energy (need), because we usually have plenty of capacity at night - our load is down, people are not using as much electricity, businesses are shut down."

DTE's "off-peak" rate runs from 11 p.m. to 9 a.m. That's when they would encourage Volt and other owners to plug-in and recharge the vehicle's batteries.

He said the difference in charge rates is 7.3 cents/kw hour vs. about 18.1 cents during the day, during prime time electricity use.

So, of course, there's a financial incentive for EV car charge users to charge up overnight and not during the day.

"Today, because the smart charging stations are not really here yet and the standards are not really in place, we'll be putting in a basic charging station that has all the national electric code requirements," he added.

"So, we're going to rely on

the customer to determine when he wants to charge or not. Or you can tell it you only want to charge between 11 at night and 9 a.m. So, initially, we're relying on the customer and the vehicle to manage that charging.

"In the future, once the standards have been set, communication standards between the vehicle and the utility, and within the utility and networks, you're going to see

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ROUSH Performance's new dedicated headquarters is in a 65,000-square-foot facility that helps the operation "gain workflow efficiencies," said Gary Jurick, vice president and general manager.

## Roush Moves to Plymouth

LIVONIA, Mich. - For the first time in the history of Roush Performance, the company will have its own dedicated headquarters as the company moves into a new building in Plymouth Township, Mich.

This 65,000-square-foot facility will be known as Building 79 in company nomenclature; each Roush building is assigned a unique sequential number as it's added to the corporate footprint.

"Moving into Roush Building 79 is an exciting step in the evolution of Roush Performance as our business continues to grow and thrive," said Gary Jurick,

Roush Performance vice president and general manager.

"It allows us to consolidate our vehicle build, warehousing, and offices together in a manner that gains workflow efficiencies and helps to further set the company up for additional growth opportunities."

Effective immediately, the new address is: Roush Performance, 39555 Schoolcraft Road, Plymouth Township, MI 48170.

The toll-free customer service and warranty line remains the same - 800-59-ROUSH, as does the central fax number

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## U-M Robotics Team the Victors

By Gerald Scott  
Staff Reporter

Oh, to be a University of Michigan undergraduate majoring in engineering these days - the "real-world" opportunities they are receiving are quite literally out of this world, or at least out of this hemisphere.

One group of U-M engineering students designed and built the Radio Aurora Explorer (RAX) satellite that is now in low earth orbit performing science experiments.

And another group of U-M students just returned from Australia, where their fleet of 14 ground robots won a \$750,000 contest sponsored by the U.S. Army/TARDEC lab in Warren.

That is, a team of 14 autonomous robots built by U-M students has won the prestigious international competition sponsored by the U.S. Department of Defense and its Australian counterpart, officials announced from Brisbane earlier in November.

And U-M's team of more than 20 students, mostly from the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, won a \$750,000 grant for finishing in first place out of five teams in the final round of the contest.

MAGIC, which stands for Multi-Autonomous Ground-robotic International Challenge, initially involved 23 teams from around the globe. And U-M's student team ended up winning.

"This was an outstanding competition and I have been blown away by the technologies these teams demonstrated," said Dr. Jim Overholt, the Army's senior research scientist at the Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center (TARDEC) in Warren.

"I am sure we will look back upon MAGIC2010 as a watershed moment for our soldiers."

Contest participants were tasked with developing swarms of autonomous robots that could communicate with each other and operate with minimal human involvement.

During the contest, held at

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Back from a major victory in Australia, this team of University of Michigan engineering students won a \$750,000 grant through the U.S. Army/TARDEC lab for their fleet of 14 ground robots.