

NAIAS Gearing Up for January Opening at Cobo

DETROIT – The North American International Auto Show (NAIAS) will open its doors to more than 4,500 automotive journalists in a few short weeks with an anticipated 30-40 worldwide debuts from automotive manufacturers around the globe.

“We’re rapidly approaching January 10th when the door of Cobo Center will once again open to the NAIAS and 2011 will be another banner year for media, industry and the public alike as they will be able to explore a packed show floor,” said Barron Meade, chairman, 2011 NAIAS.

“We’re again bringing a wide array of exhibitors featuring the latest in environmental technologies for automotive and lifestyle into Michigan Hall with Smarter Living in Michigan sponsored by the Michigan Economic Development Corporation (MEDC) and DTE Energy, which will once again include the popular ride-and-drive element.”

The public and media will be treated to highly anticipated debuts from exhibitors such as Audi, BMW, Chrysler, GM, Ford, Mercedes-Benz, Toyota and Volkswagen, to name a few.

The annual Charity Preview gala event is once again scheduled for the Friday prior to public days, Jan. 14, from 6 to 9 p.m., and will feature a concert by “The Rockets,” a legendary Detroit rock band.

The annual event benefits local charities and has raised more than \$82 million since its inception in 1976, over \$37 million of which was raised in the last seven years alone.

The money raised by ticket sales provides medical treatment, clothing, and support services for local kids. Tickets for Charity Preview are currently available and can be purchased by calling 888-838-7500, or by visiting charitypreview.com.

The popularity of the MEDC’s EcoXperience ride-and-drive showcased at the 2010 NAIAS led to another innovative exhibit to be featured at the 2011 show.

“Smarter Living In Michi-

gan” will be presented by long-time partner, the MEDC, and will be a key feature of the 2011 NAIAS. The exhibit will be composed of two different areas, the MEDC Town Square and the adjacent Smarter Living Showcase, sponsored by DTE Energy.

Michigan Hall will be transformed into an interactive display showcase, highlighting the many ways that Michigan companies are building and creating eco-friendly communities and sustainable lifestyles.

The MEDC Town Square and Smarter Living display area will again bring the ride-and-drive element indoors with a test track featuring electric-drive and hybrid vehicles from leading domestic and import manufacturers. Such technologies to be featured include solar cars, charging stations, batteries, transit connect, rolling chassis, and alternative energies.

In line with trends of other international automotive shows such as Geneva, Paris and Frankfurt, and to also accommodate customer de-

mand – both the auto manufacturers and the media who attend the show – the 2011 NAIAS is making game-changing moves in how it is scheduling the cadence of some of the world’s most highly touted worldwide debuts.

As a reflection of the “new normal” in the 2011 automotive industry and an unprecedented demand for news conference timeslots from the past two years, NAIAS will feature two distinct press days.

The first press day, Mon., Jan. 10, will feature exciting worldwide, never-before-seen products, as well as significant North American introductions that will steer the direction of the industry for years to come.

The second press day, Tue., Jan. 11, will showcase highly anticipated innovative technological advancements by auto companies and suppliers, while including additional key product unveilings.

NAIAS officials note more surprises are on the horizon and will be providing updates up to show time. The full press conference schedule

can be found at naias.com.

Media credentialing for NAIAS 2011 is in full swing. Those who wish to apply for a credential can visit naias.com to download a media credential application from the NAIAS Web site.

A limited number of parking passes are available to credentialed media and can be requested by contacting Max Muncey at mmuncey@lambert-edwards.com.

Entering its 23rd year as an international event, the NAIAS is among the most prestigious auto shows in the world, providing unparalleled access to the automotive products, people and ideas that matter most – up close and in one place.

One of the largest media events in North America, the NAIAS is the only auto show in the United States to earn an annual distinguished sanction of the Organisation Internationale des Constructeurs d’Automobiles, the Paris-based alliance of automotive trade associations and manufacturers from around the world.

‘Steelworker’ Trains New Employees

BURNS HARBOR, Ind. (AP) – Andrew Sweeney said it wasn’t part of his initial plan to work in the steel industry.

Hired earlier this year as an electrical maintenance technician working at ArcelorMittal Burns Harbor, Sweeney said his thoughts changed once he enrolled in a training program that helped him snag a job with the world’s largest steelmaker.

ArcelorMittal has hired four of five recent graduates of Steelworker for the Future, a training partnership launched two years ago to bring more craft workers into the steel industry, said Mark Langbehn, manager of hourly employee training at ArcelorMittal USA.

The partnership is a 2 1/2-year program that includes four semesters of classroom training at Ivy Tech Community College or Prairie State College and 24 weeks of on-site training at ArcelorMittal facili-

ties.

About 80 students currently are enrolled in program.

“The work is highly technical and changes depending on the project,” Sweeney, 30, of Matteson, said of his job in the mill. “I had an electrical background and still was amazed at the size of the machinery and complexity of the maintenance work needed.”

Langbehn said the company knows the need to replace workers over the next few years is great. ArcelorMittal facilities in Northwest Indiana lose about 7.5 percent of their workers each year.

That, coupled with an expected onslaught of retirements in the next five to 10 years, is exacerbating the need to find educated workers, including those who can repair sophisticated pieces of equipment in a variety of industrial environments.

Steelworker for the Future

is one component of the company’s hiring plans, and efforts are underway to promote the program’s profile. In the last few weeks, open houses took place at Ivy Tech campuses in Valparaiso and East Chicago, where representatives from the school and company encouraged people to enroll.

Langbehn said he’s met with school superintendents from Lake and Porter counties, and the program has been showcased at career and technical schools and adult job fairs. Salaries for new employees through Steelworker for the Future program would have a starting salary of about \$40,000 per year in base pay, and a benefit package including pension, health care and profit sharing.

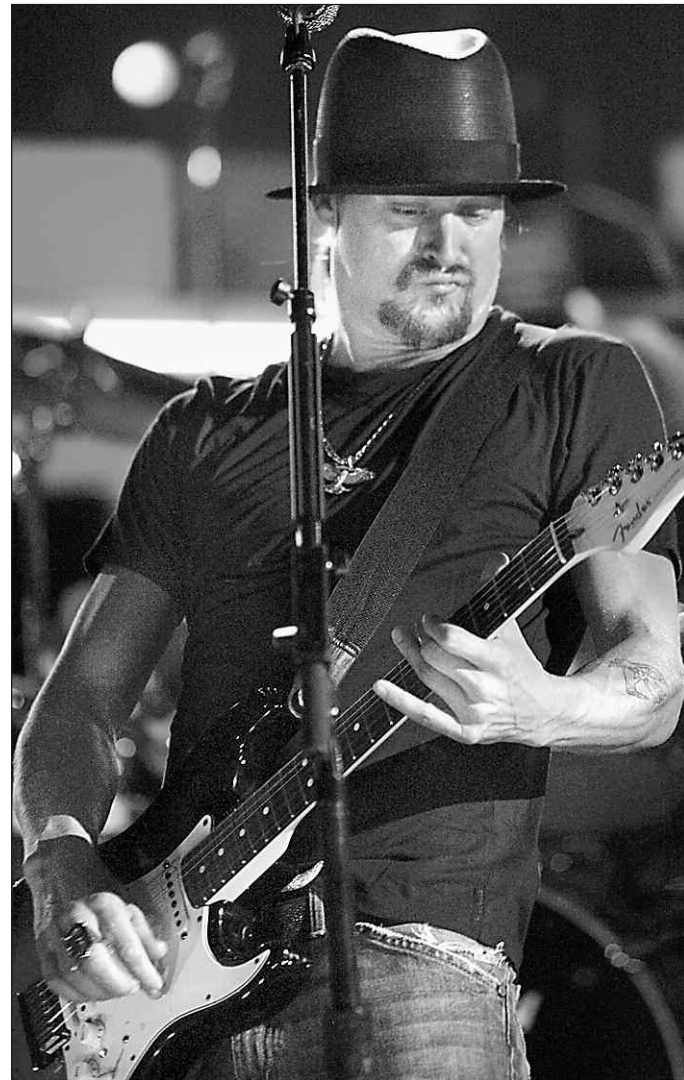
He often tells the message that “there are solid, safe, sustainable jobs in steel, and it’s a good livelihood, and there’s a good opportunity there.”

Mike Fish, an electrical maintenance technician at ArcelorMittal Burns Harbor, said the training was beneficial to him because of the hands-on experience he received.

“I knew I had to take advantage of this type of opportunity and more people should,” said Fish, a 47-year-old Monee resident. “I definitely recommend seeking a career in the steel industry - there is demand for motivated, well-trained workers.”

Steelworker for the Future is expected to launch partnerships in Philadelphia and Weirton, W. Va., in spring 2011.

Steel has not fallen out of fashion as far as a design element in cars, certain furniture and consumer products such as washers and dryers go. The steel industry has done well to ensure that mainstream business continues to look its way as they develop their 21st century product lineup across the board.



Kid Rock brings his live concert extravaganza to Ford Field in Detroit on Jan. 15 for his 40th birthday party. Ford Field will be renamed “40 Field” for the occasion. His new album is “Born Free.”

Ford Field Will Become ‘40 Field’ for Kid Rock

by Gerald Scott
Editor
U.S. Auto Scene

Ford Field in Detroit, already one of the hottest entertainment and athletic venues these days, is about to get a little hotter.

The proverbial joint will be jumpin’ Saturday, Jan. 15, when local hero Kid Rock hosts his “40th birthday party” at the venue.

The joint will be jumpin’, in part, because that’s also coincidentally the first public day of the 2011 Detroit auto show, so downtown and Foxtown figures to be crowded all day and evening long.

Ford Field, of course, is coming off fresh national publicity for having so successfully hosted the NFL game between the New York Giants and Minnesota Vikings – all because the snow caved in the roof on the Metrodome in Minneapolis.

And now in January, here comes two more major events, including the Advanced Auto Parts 2011 “Monster Jam” on Saturday, Jan. 8, and then the big Kid Rock concert the following Saturday.

Rock is touring to support his new album, “Born Free.”

Says a release on the Ford Field Web site, “The kickoff of the tour comes in the form of a 40th birthday party Kid Rock is throwing for himself with 60,000 of his closest friends, at Detroit’s Ford Field, home of the Detroit Lions football team.

“The stadium will be renamed ‘40 Field’ in honor of the occasion. The special show will include surprise

guests and plenty of other stage surprises. As usual, Kid Rock will be backed by his own excellent Twisted Brown Trucker Band.”

A Romeo native, Rock has become a concert favorite in the metro area and his Ford Field show, already a sellout, promises to be another in a long line of high-energy shows that he’s been known to perform.

Rock is remembered for having hosted two successful stadium shows at nearby Comerica Park in the summer of 2009, and now he returns with a bang to Ford Field almost two years later.

It’s hard to believe that Ford Field itself will be a decade old next year – the Lions’ home field actually opened in 2002, making next year, 2012, a full decade in the works.

The Lions, of course, moved from the Pontiac Silverdome back to downtown Detroit after the venue opened some nine years ago. The Lions had been playing in Pontiac since 1975. Prior to that, they had played their home games at the old Tiger Stadium.

Rock’s concert is one of several such shows already lined up for Ford Field in 2011.

Country chanteuse Taylor Swift will bring her touring show there on June 11 and she’ll be followed almost two months later by Kenny Chesney and the Zac Brown Band, who will perform on Aug. 20.

One of the opening acts for Chesney will be Mt. Clemens native and local favorite Uncle Cracker – an old crony of Kid Rock’s, for that matter.

Ford Offers Safe-Driving Tips for 2011

New Year’s resolutions often revolve around healthy activities, which is why Ford Motor Company is offering 5 ways to help you drive safer in 2011.

Here are Ford’s “resolutions” designed to help make you a smarter, safer driver in the New Year:

1. Click it – even when you’re not worried about a ticket. Always buckle that safety belt – no exceptions. In 2009 alone, the use of safety belts in passenger vehicles saved an estimated 12,700 lives in the U.S., according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

Isn’t that statistic alone worth taking that extra two seconds to click on the belt when you travel – and make sure your passengers do, too?

In case you do forget, however, you can bet your vehicle’s safety belt reminder systems won’t. Ford’s own Belt-Minder system has been credited by NHTSA for increasing the buckle-up rate, based on a study done by Ford and the Insurance Institute for High-

way Safety showing that safety belt usage increased five percent among drivers in vehicles with BeltMinder.

2. Keep your eyes on the road – not on your cell phone. Avoid unnecessary distractions. According to a 100-car study conducted by Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, driver inattention that may involve looking away from the road for more than a few seconds is a factor in nearly 80 percent of accidents. So, no texting – no message is that important!

3. Read a good book – like your owners’ manual. You know the one; it’s been languishing in your glove compartment. Reading through it will give you some valuable safety information and could even save you some money. For instance, Ford owners might be surprised to find out they don’t need those oil changes every 3,000 miles like they used to. Many new Ford models allow 10,000 miles between oil changes.

4. Scrape that ice, ice baby! On wintry mornings, don’t be one of those people trying to

negotiate the roads peering through a tiny hole of visibility in the windshield. That’s just plain dangerous. Leave an additional 5-10 minutes of time in the morning to scrape the snow and ice from your car and give your defroster a chance to do its job.

5. Find out how technology is working to keep you safer. Today’s vehicles are equipped with state-of-the-art technology that can help keep you safer – but it always helps if drivers better understand these features.

Take your anti-lock-brake system, for example. Many of us grew up being told to pump the brakes when we hit a patch of ice. That’s not the right technique with four-wheel ABS technology.

With ABS, pumping the brakes turns the anti-lock brake system on and off, which decreases braking efficiency and increases your stopping distance. ABS pumps the brakes automatically at a much faster rate than you could do it manually and allows better steering control.

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