

Ford Retiree Puts 1M Miles on his F-350 Truck

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ever since.

Mueller travels between 600 and 800 miles most days and has been to 48 states and seven provinces in Canada. He doesn't know how many RVs he has hauled over the years but said he has hauled about 40 through the first four months of 2011.

The RV trailers he tows start at about 11,000 pounds, a sizeable load for most pickups but not even testing Super Duty's maximum trailer tow capability. The 2002 model F-350 Super Duty had a maximum fifth-wheel tow capability of 14,400 pounds. Showing the ever-improving nature of Ford F-Series trucks, the 2011 F-350 Super Duty has a maximum fifth-wheel tow capability of 22,600 pounds. Scott said Super Duty's best-in-class towing capability enables Mueller to constantly haul the large RVs and sets Ford apart from competitors.

"For years we've had a huge advantage over the competition when it comes to towing weight," said Scott. "That's why if you're going to do a job like this, there's only one vehicle that can handle it day in and day out with confidence and that's the Ford Super Duty."

Truck delivers RVs – and fuel efficiency
Mueller said that his F-350 Super Duty gets about 20 mpg when delivering RVs – a crucial number to him since he is responsible for most of the expenses.

"As long as I can keep getting 20 mpg, I'll keep hauling,"

Mueller said. "That's the only way it makes economic sense."

With its 7.3-liter Power Stroke diesel, Mueller's truck is equipped with the first generation of the Power Stroke engine, available between 1994 and 2002. It produces 275 horsepower and 520 lb.-ft. of torque.

By comparison, the fourth-generation Power Stroke diesel – the 6.7-liter version introduced in the 2011 F-Series Super Duty – produces 400 horsepower and a whopping 800 lb.-ft. of torque.

Among the features of the prior generation engine in Mueller's truck are direct injection and turbocharging, which help deliver improved fuel economy with the high torque required of a powerful tow vehicle. The 2011 Super Duty with the all-new 6.7-liter Power Stroke diesel engine has further refined fuel injection turbocharging technology for even higher levels of efficiency.

Mueller said his driving habits also contribute to the outstanding gas mileage. He avoids fast starts and stops. If weather conditions create too much drag, he parks the truck. And he keeps the rpm near 2,000 whenever he can while generally staying between 60 and 62 mph.

"I will see the same people pass me two or three times a day," Mueller said. "They're going 70 or 80 mph, and have to keep stopping for fuel."

Mueller said he also maintains the truck properly. He has had the oil changed more than 100 times and the tires have been replaced 10 times.

GM Heritage Center Hosts Karmanos Fundraiser

by Gerald Scott
Editor
U.S. Auto Scene

GM Chairman and CEO Dan Akerson was telling a funny story from the podium of the big Karmanos fundraiser held at the GM Heritage Center in Sterling Heights April 30.

Akerson mentioned that an earlier GM philanthropic endeavor to raise money for the Detroit Public Schools system resulted in a big gain by auctioning off the first Chevrolet Volt.

Ordinarily, the Volt goes for \$40,000 in the marketplace, but this special first edition sold for \$225,000 to a GM car dealer to benefit the DPS charity fund.

"I told (GM North America President) Mark Reuss that's a margin I can live with," Akerson said to much laughter and applause.

Likewise, the Karmanos Cancer Institute can live with the \$700,000-plus that the 29th annual dinner, hosted with GM, effectively raised through ticket sales, auctions and other levers.

Event co-chairs were Akerson and his wife, Karin.

Karmanos said it will apply that \$700,000 to its new Joseph Dresner Family Bone Marrow Transplant and Hematologic Malignancies Center. Scheduled to open later this year, the

Dresner Center will benefit hundreds of patients each month and expand Karmanos' ability to conduct future cancer research and clinical trials.

"At GM, we are fortunate to have so many people who care about supporting the communities where we live and work," Akerson said.

"In Detroit, we're fortunate to have the Karmanos Cancer Institute in the heart of our community. That's why we are proud to help the Institute in its important work to save lives and to provide hope and inspiration to cancer patients and their families."

At the same time, it was announced that the General Motors Foundation was making a \$50,000 grant for research to help the nationally renowned Cancer Center in its work toward curing and treating cancer.

In addition to the foundation's grant, GM supported the Institute's premier fundraising venue through a \$25,000 sponsorship with Cadillac and provided use of the GM Heritage Center and several prominent silent auction gifts.

"GM continues its long history of support for the Karmanos Cancer Institute with this cancer research grant and active participation in our 29th Annual Dinner," said Gerold Bepko, president and CEO of Karmanos.

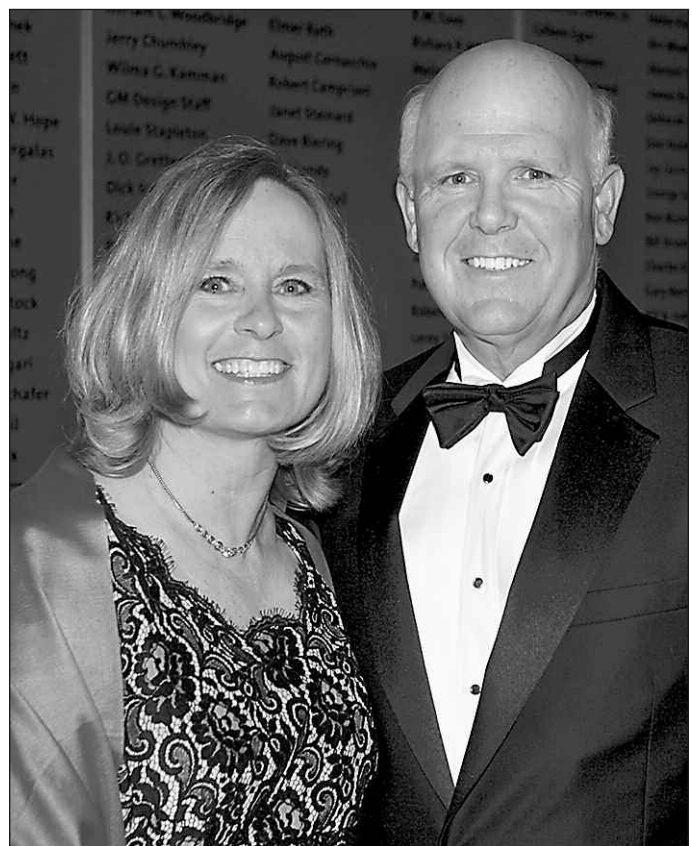


PHOTO: RON LIEBERMAN

GM Chairman and CEO Dan Akerson and his wife Karin were the co-chairs of the 2011 Karmanos Cancer dinner event held at the GM Heritage Center in Sterling Heights.

Roush CleanTech Displays Vehicles at Trade Show

With gasoline prices in California among the highest in the country, ROUSH CleanTech arrives in Long Beach this week to showcase the positive economics of propane autogas powered Ford work trucks, vans, and shuttles at the Alternative Clean Transportation (ACT) Expo, held May 5 and 6 at the Long Beach Convention Center.

"At a time when gas prices in California are averaging \$4.21 per gallon, ROUSH CleanTech offers fuel-price relief with an alternative fuel at about half that cost," said Todd Mouw, ROUSH CleanTech's vice president and a featured speaker at the ACT Expo on May 5.

"At this clean energy event, fleet managers can see firsthand the benefits of using propane autogas, both in terms of economic recovery and environmental stewardship."

ROUSH CleanTech will feature an extensive line up of their propane autogas vehicles, all of which are certified to meet the stringent guidelines of the Environmental Protection Agency and the California Air Resources Board. ROUSH CleanTech will have

two customer vehicles on display in their booth – a ThyssenKrupp Elevator Ford E-250 cargo van and a Marquez & Marquez Ford E-450 cutaway box truck.

The ride-and-drive portion of the event will feature a wide variety of vehicles, including a Ford F-350 pickup truck; a Prime Time Shuttle Ford E-350 passenger van; and a Ford E-450 box truck.

A ROUSH CleanTech propane autogas powered Class A school bus, based on the Ford E-450 chassis and equipped with a Micro Bird G5 school bus body, will be on display near the front entrance.

"Our customers know each ROUSH CleanTech truck or van is backed with the rich heritage and engineering expertise that comes with the ROUSH name," said Mouw. "Propane autogas is a cost-effective, domestically produced, and clean-burning fuel that is highly reliable and readily available."

"Just a few of our current customers right here in California include Prime Time Shuttle, Marquez & Marquez, SuperShuttle, and the City of Riverside," said Mouw.

"They're already reporting tremendous savings on maintenance and fuel costs, and uncompromising range and performance. No matter a fleet's size, we have a propane autogas application that will leave fleet managers wondering why they waited so long to switch."

Representatives from two widely known ROUSH CleanTech customers, ThyssenKrupp Elevator and Wright & Fillippis, spoke about their successes with propane autogas during the Expo's breakout sessions on May 5.

"We feel strongly that propane autogas is a practical and proven solution in reducing our operating costs and becoming more eco-friendly," said Hopkins, Wright & Fillippis' distribution and fleet manager.

"Large fleets outside of our industry like Schwann's have been running propane-powered vehicles since the '70s. It is sustainable technology that works. Currently, there are also great government incentives and grant funding opportunities to assist with the incremental cost of conversion. I would encourage fleets to take a look at the propane autogas solutions that are out

there today. I think they will find that this is a very cost-effective solution available that makes sense for their fleets as well."

Based in Plymouth Township, ROUSH CleanTech offers dedicated liquid propane autogas fuel systems for a variety of light- and medium-duty Ford vehicles, including the F-150, F-250, F-350 pickup truck series; the F-450 and F-550 chassis cab truck series; the E-150, E-250, and E-350 van and wagon series; and the E-350 and E-450 cutaway van series.

Currently offered through authorized Ford dealerships around the country, the ROUSH CleanTech propane autogas system delivers the same factory Ford performance characteristics and serviceability with a 5-year / 60,000-mile limited warranty. Customers can reduce operating costs significantly while reducing vehicle emissions.

ROUSH CleanTech recently co-hosted a big fleet rollout with Wright & Fillippis, the health care services provider in Rochester, which has 40 vehicles that put on 1 million miles per year. ROUSH is converting vans to propane.

Books, Tapes, DVDs for a Buck at Dearborn Library

by Gerald Scott
Editor
U.S. Auto Scene

Feisty lady, that Lenore Churgay.

Churgay is the book-sale coordinator of the Friends of the Dearborn Library, which hosts a charity fundraising, used book sale on the first Wednesday of most every month of the year.

The monthly used book sales, held at the Henry Ford Centennial Library on Michigan Avenue, generates much-needed supplemental income for the Library's various programs and offerings that aren't necessarily supported by the annual budget.

Anyway, Churgay was told that her first name, Lenore, coincidentally was the same name as the famous "lost Lenore" from Edgar Allen Poe's "The Raven." A visiting newspaper reporter expected some rather high praise for being so keenly aware of classic American literature, but got a thumb in the eye, instead. (Quoth the craven scribe: "Nevermore!" Indeed).

"I'm not lost," Lenore quipped, "I'm right here!"

Indeed, she is, and right here these days she is in the first-floor lobby and back store-rooms of the Henry Ford Library, where the public gathers for these popular and busy used book sales like nobody's business.

Janet Reickel, like Churgay, a retired Dearborn public librarian who enjoys keeping her connection to the local library, pointed out that the monthly book sales generate more than \$1,000 by the end of the first couple hours and maybe \$2,000 to \$3,000 by the end of the sales day, on a good day.

"I came in at 8:30 this morning," Reickel said last Wednesday, May 4, "and even though the sale didn't officially start until 9:30, there were already people in line."

Friends of the Friends of the Dearborn Library show up early to "bird dog" the good books,



PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

Coordinators of the monthly used book sales at the Henry Ford Centennial Library in Dearborn are Janet Reickel, left, and Lenore Churgay. The used book sales generate needed funds.

media and materials that are available at each used book and media sale. Often the material is what is being retired out of the Dearborn Public Library system while occasionally someone will donate used books, magazines, older music album LPs or DVD movies back into the system specifically to benefit the sale days.

"We have 25 volunteers working monthly," Churgay pointed out. "We all really love what we're doing. We enjoy meeting the public."

And in turn, the public enjoys meeting them, too.

Not only can a visitor pick up "page-turning" novels like "Lie Down with Lions" by Ken Follett, "Trinity" by Leon Uris or "Gold Coast" by Nelson DeVille, but books on tape, old-fashioned VHS movies and more recent DVD movies or CD music albums can all be had for a

buck or two as well.

One visitor even walked away from last Wednesday's sale with Parts I and II of the unabridged version of James Joyce's prolific novel "Ulysses" – that's 30 audio cassette tapes across two box containers – for only a single dollar for the total run! Imagine.

Otherwise, more recent and more popular media, particularly movies or recorded music, can be had on the cheap as well. "If you enjoy 1960s or 1970s music, or classical music, this is the place to come," Churgay advised.

For example, movies on the cheap available last week on DVD included everything from Abbott and Costello's "Africa Screams" and their version of "Jack and the Beanstalk" to Robert Redford's 1975 spy thriller, "Three Days of the Condor," to the more recent

"Rachel Getting Married," starring the lovely and talented and just really, really, really plain darn lovely Anne Hathaway.

But the real killing can be had for "books on tape," particularly the kind that are unabridged and come in the older audio cassette format.

It seems that more recent books recorded on CDs, as well as the downloadable or MP3 versions, have been supplanting books on audiotape and since the boxes of taped programs take up too much shelf space and nobody seems to check them out anymore besides, the library has been rather fire-sale-ing this particular format.

Thus, various books on tape available for just \$1 or so included "Seabiscuit" by Laura Hillebrand, "The Diary of Anne Frank" by Anne Frank and her father, and the Civil War novel, "Cold Mountain," by Charles Frazier.

Organizers say they're pleased that most everything they put on the display tables for the used book and media sales seems to find an audience that appreciates it mightily – and you can't beat the price.

Oh, and did we mention a certain visiting reporter cleaned up the joint by claiming 30 audio cassettes of the epic novel, "Ulysses," for a single George Washington? Best dollar I ever spent, I swear, not counting the \$1 lottery ticket that was worth \$300 and helped pay for my earlier Route 66 trip, but that's a story for another time.

Anyway, check out the monthly used book sale at the Henry Ford Centennial Library in Dearborn, but get there early because local literary bird dogs line up 1-2 hours ahead, we're reminded. Visit the Dearborn Library's Web site for upcoming monthly sales dates and related details.

When you visit, be sure to ask for Lenore. Turns out she's not lost, by the way. Luckily for the Dearborn Library, she's there and she's rare. Enjoy.

Weak Dollar Makes U.S. Goods Cheaper Overseas

By CHRISTOPHER S. RUGABER
AP Economics Reporter

WASHINGTON (AP) –

Finally, there's something good to be said for the weak dollar.

The nation's manufacturing sector has expanded this year at the fastest pace in a quarter-century, boosted by a weak dollar that has made U.S. goods cheap overseas.

Strong factory production could help the economy rebound after experiencing weak growth in the first three months of this year. But the construction industry is struggling and manufacturing won't drive enough job growth by itself. Rising prices are also threatening many companies' profit margins.

The Institute for Supply Management said Monday that manufacturing activity expanded in April for the 21st

straight month. While the trade group's index dipped to 60.4, it's down only slightly from the previous two months. And February's reading of 61.4 was the fastest expansion in nearly seven years. Any reading above 50 signals growth.

"In April, there was no meaningful slowdown in what has become the most important sector in the economy," said Dan Greenhaus, economic strategist at Miller Tabak.

The index has topped 60 in every month this year, the best four-month stretch in 27 years, said David Resler, an economist at Nomura Securities.

Companies are buying more industrial machinery, heavy equipment, and computers, spurring much of the growth in factory output. And consumers are buying more cars, helping the beleaguered U.S. auto industry recover after

General Motors and Chrysler declared bankruptcy two years ago.

Another reason for the growth is the falling dollar. It has declined 8 percent in value this year against a basket of six other currencies. That helped fuel a 7.8 percent rise in exports in the first three months of this year. A weaker dollar makes U.S. goods cheaper overseas, and imports more expensive in the U.S.

The manufacturing sector has expanded in every month but one since the recession ended in June 2009. Still, it represents only about 11 percent of U.S. economic activity and can only do so much to lift the broader economy.

Paul Ashworth, an economist at Capital Economics, said the manufacturing index is at levels that are historically consistent with economic growth at about 5 percent.

But growth is likely to be much weaker than that because of subpar activity in other areas.

The home-building industry is on pace to suffer the worst two years for new-home sales since the government began keeping records in 1963. The service sector is recovering at a sluggish pace. Consumers are spending more after getting a cut in Social Security payroll taxes, but most of the extra money is going toward higher priced gas and food.

"That just shows you the gap between manufacturing and the rest of the economy," Ashworth said.

Builders did break ground on more hotels, office buildings and factories in March, lifting U.S. construction spending for the first time in four months. The increase is partly a bounce-back from weather-related declines in January and February.