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AD DEADLINE: Thursday 5:00 p.m. for the next edition  
Ads@SpringerPublishing.com 586-939-5850 Fax - SPC Warren

Lisa A. Torretta, Office of the Publisher  
William L. Springer, Publisher

Springer Publishing Co., Inc. © 2011  
31201 Chicago Road South #A-101  
Warren, Michigan 48093 586-939-6800

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## Students Urged to Enter NAIAS Annual Poster Contest

TROY – The 2012 North American International Auto Show (NAIAS), sponsored by NAIAS LLC, an association of Detroit-area auto dealers, has announced the launch of its annual poster contest in connection with the NAIAS next January.

The contest was established to engage the creative minds of Michigan's students and encourage careers in automotive design while recognizing local art communities for their talents.

In 2011, NAIAS received 740 entries from 79 high schools.

The 24th annual NAIAS Poster Contest is open to all Michigan residents enrolled in grades 10 through 12. An

independent panel of recognized representatives from the local art community will judge the contest.

Past judges have included the NAIAS Chairmen, General Motors Automotive Designers, and College for Creative Studies instructors. This year, the judges will choose winners in 16 categories.

"We are extremely excited to launch this year's creative competition," said Bill Perkins, chairman of the 2012 NAIAS.

"This unique opportunity encourages students to pursue interests in not only the art community, but the automotive industry as well."

Winning posters will be displayed at the 2012 NAIAS and

reproduced in the official NAIAS program, which is available to the public. Winning posters may also be displayed on the official NAIAS website, [naias.com](http://naias.com).

Posters must be original artwork, 25" x 21" in size, two-dimensional and camera-ready. The poster theme must be automotive-related, and any mixed media suitable for reproduction as a poster is allowed, including computer-generated graphics. All subject matter must be in good taste.

Posters must contain all of the following copy: "North American International Auto Show 2012, Detroit, and Cobo Center." The entry deadline is Nov. 22, 2011.

Prizes will be awarded in the

following categories:

Chairman's Award \$1,000; State Farm Insurance Award \$1,000; Designer's Best of Show - Digital \$500; Designer's Best of Show - Traditional \$500; Best Theme \$250; Best Use of Color \$250; Most Creative \$250; 1st Place, 10th Grade Award \$500; 1st Place, 11th Grade Award \$500; 1st Place, 12th Grade Award \$500; 2nd Place, 10th Grade Award \$250; 2nd Place, 11th Grade Award \$250; 2nd Place, 12th Grade Award \$250; 3rd Place, 10th Grade Award \$100; 3rd Place, 11th Grade Award \$100; 3rd Place, 12th Grade Award \$100.

Visit <http://bit.ly/pE3CyM> for more details on the NAIAS high school poster contest.

## MIS Fan Makes Highest Bid to Win Bus Makeover

BROOKLYN, Mich. – An Extreme Bus Makeover is in the near future for Michigan International Speedway race fan Bill Brown, but only because of his girlfriend's flower shop in his hometown of Cassopolis, Mich.

Brown was bidding on the bus makeover before his home computer went down just days before the auction was over.

He was the leading bidder at that point.

"A friend was monitoring the auction the day it was over and said someone had outbid me.

"I immediately went to my girlfriend's flower shop and made a couple of more bids at the end, which turned out to be the winning one," Brown said.

"Thank goodness she had the computer at her shop because I wanted to win this bus makeover really bad."

The \$1,600 winning bid by Brown will benefit the speedway's nonprofit arm, MIS Cares.

MIS Cares has donated more than \$50,000 over the past two years to various charity and nonprofit organizations.

"We appreciate Mr. Brown's \$1,600 bid to win the Extreme Bus Makeover and in turn support MIS Cares," MIS Di-



MIS Speedway fan Bill Brown of Cassopolis won a contest and will have his 1999 International Diesel school bus renovated by Speedway mechanics. It still has its yellow school bus look after he purchased it a few years ago. After adding a deck, bunkbeds and bathroom, Brown says the bus now needs a good exterior makeover. Brown parks the bus on the MIS infield during NASCAR race weekends every summer.

rector of Government and Community Affairs Alisha Cottrell said.

"We have had a lot of fun with these bus makeovers in the past two years and the money raised from this will be given to good causes during our annual MIS Cares Christmas holiday luncheon in December."

Brown, an MIS infield camper for the past 10 years, saw the previous bus makeovers the MIS mainte-

nance department did during the past two years for Maurice "Moe" Clark (2009) and Tom "Woofly" Wolfram and Mike Smith (2010).

His bus, a 1999 International Diesel, still has its yellow school bus look after he purchased it a few years ago from a retiree in South Bend, Ind. After adding a deck, bunkbeds and bathroom since he purchased it, the bus is now in need of a makeover to the outside of it.

"It still has the original school bus yellow on the outside, which isn't all that pretty to look at," Brown said.

"We have many people that attend the June and August races with us who are all excited that we are getting this makeover done.

"A big reason why we participated in the auction is that the money goes to a good cause like MIS Cares and we will proudly drive the bus into the infield next June with a new and improved look."

Brown will meet with MIS staff in January 2012 to mutually agree upon a design that will be a fabulous transition. The bus will be delivered to MIS at that time and will be stored, made over and unveiled to Brown by April 15, 2012.

"I can't wait to see what it looks like.

"If the previous two makeovers are any indication of what it will be, I can't wait for April to get here," Brown said.

Nestled in the lush Irish Hills of Southeastern Michigan, Michigan International Speedway is a NASCAR national park where race fans and sports fans can get away and enjoy the very best in racing and camaraderie.

It's the fun of NASCAR and the thrill of a great time for guests and drivers alike.

## AWAF Golf Outing Chips in \$28,000 for Scholarships

by Irena Granaas  
Special Writer

The crisp "whack" of clubs hitting golf balls filled the air as \$28,000 filled the scholarship coffers recently.

The event was the Automotive Women's Alliance Foundation's 16th annual charity golf outing at the Forest Lake Country Club in Bloomfield Hills recently.

Johnson Controls co-sponsored the outing, which carried the theme, "Swinging FORE Scholarships."

The AWA Foundation, a nonprofit organization, whose mission is to advance and empower women in the automotive industry, generated the money for scholarships.

The annual golf outing is the main yearly fundraiser for its scholarship program. According to the AWA Foundation's Web site, the group has awarded \$157,000 in scholarships to 64 students since 2001.

Sandra Kinney, regional marketing manager for General Motors, was the featured luncheon speaker at the golf outing, relating her personal

keys to success in a talk entitled, "10 Rules I Live By."

Automotive Women's Alliance Foundation board member Jennifer Nyquist-Bivins said the AWA Foundation and Johnson Controls each awarded one \$2,500 scholarship at the event.

"We get a lot of assistance from our sponsors . . . Johnson Controls has been a fabulous partner," she said.

Nicole Kelsey of Tulsa, Ariz., and Nicole Findlay of San Angelo, Texas, were the scholarship recipients at the golf outing.

Both winners went through a rigorous application process to be candidates for the awarded funds. Kelsey plans to attend Pima College in Arizona while Findlay will be a junior at Kettering University in Flint.

Nyquist-Bivins explained, "We wish to advance the entrance of more women into the automotive industry, and we do this primarily through scholarship awards to young people."

Scholarships are only a part of what the AWA does. The foundation's vision "is to help



Attending the recent Automotive Women's Alliance Foundation charity golf outing are, from left, Judy Sprader, Mary Ann Audette, Patricia Courie, all from LaFontaine Automotive Group, and Sandra Kinney of Cadillac.

create and sustain a diverse automotive industry optimized by empowered women," and the membership, which Nyquist-Bivins estimates is currently about 167 members, meets quarterly to participate in interactive settings with those who work in the automotive industry, including manufacturers, entre-

preneurs, engineers, and Tier I and Tier II suppliers.

Members are encouraged to take advantage of the many perks offered, including leadership development; quarterly events featuring industry leaders as speakers; professional development events, and more. The AWA also publishes a newsletter.

## Michigan Legislature Debates Medical Benefit Changes to Car Insurance Law

By TIM MARTIN  
Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. (AP) – Possible changes to Michigan's unique auto insurance coverage for people injured in accidents are coming up for debate in the state Legislature.

Michigan now is the only state in the nation that mandates unlimited medical benefit coverage for people seriously injured in auto accidents. That would change under proposals that could offer motorists less expensive insurance in exchange for limited personal injury protection coverage.

Supporters of the changes, including the auto insurance industry, say it would allow motorists to opt out of more expensive coverage they can't afford or don't want. Insurers also are looking for relief in a system they say is growing increasingly expensive and threatening their finances.

"If you take a look at the cost of the system, the skyrocketing medical costs, it's simply unsustainable," said Sen. Joe Hune, a Republican from Livingston County's Hamburg Township and chairman of the Senate Insurance Committee.

"There's going to be a tipping point some-

time. The system just can't sustain itself."

Opponents of the proposed legislation say it could threaten the financial stability of the state's no-fault auto insurance system. They say motorists opting for less coverage could wind up underinsured and in deep financial trouble if they're seriously injured in an accident.

John Cornack, CEO of Ann Arbor-based Eisenhower Rehabilitation Center and president of the Coalition Protecting Auto No-Fault, said the proposed legislation "does not come close to meeting the needs of severely injured accident victims."

The coalition opposed to the proposed changes includes hospital and health groups, trial lawyers and other organizations. They're engaged in a lobbying battle with auto insurance companies and business groups such as the Michigan Chamber of Commerce that want to alter the system.

The legislation would make significant changes to how people involved in catastrophic injury accidents are covered under state law.

Currently, all Michigan auto policyholders must buy unlimited medical benefits as part of their coverage. Regular auto insurance poli-

cies handle coverage up to \$500,000, after which all insured motorists are assessed a fee to cover more severe cases, which are reimbursed through the Michigan Catastrophic Claims Association. The association, created in the late 1970s, now covers medical bills for roughly 12,800 accident victims across the state.

Unlimited coverage would continue for those currently in the MCCA system, according to supporters of the developing legislative plan. But there would be no such guaranteed coverage for those severely injured in future accidents.

Instead, motorists would have options for personal injury coverage likely ranging from \$250,000 to \$5 million. The developing legislation, which could be introduced this month, is likely to replace an original proposal that would let motorists buy as little as \$50,000 in coverage up to unlimited coverage.

The new plan also likely will contain fee schedules and other measures aimed at controlling health insurance claims costs. It also likely will include elements of a plan backed by Sen. Virgil Smith, D-Detroit, that could provide some personal injury protection insurance relief in Detroit and possibly to residents

in other areas of the state.

The \$250,000 threshold would cover about 99 percent of accident victims, Hune said. But the Coalition Protecting Auto No-Fault says the average acute care stay cost for a person with a severe brain injury is more than \$250,000, with some surpassing \$1 million. CPAN says hundreds of people a year could have injury-related costs beyond even \$500,000 in insurance coverage and would need to turn to other income, charities or taxpayers to pay for their current care.

"Right now, accident victims in our state can get the care they need without turning to welfare," Cornack said.

But the possibility of cheaper rates might be tempting for some motorists, who now pay an average premium of more than \$1,000 a year in Michigan. Supporters of allowing flexibility on medical coverage say Michigan motorists could save roughly 15 percent on comprehensive policies and up to 40 percent on basic policies that don't include coverage for collision or theft.

"Michigan consumers should not be forced into a 'one size fits all' auto insurance system," said Pete Kuhnmueller, executive director of the Insurance Institute of Michigan.

elongation, stretch under temperature or impact stress – is reduced by almost 12 percent.

From a customer's perspective, the Focus instrument panel is softer to the touch: it seamlessly contains the first-row passenger airbag, for a more appealing interior.

Productivity is improved and the manufacturing process is simplified by the 43 percent reduction in time for the castor oil-based foam product to cure. Scrap from this foam product is reduced due to improved flow and processing characteristics.

"BASF is committed to the development of sustainable solutions for the automotive industry," said Joel Johnson, vice president, BASF Polyurethan Systems.

"Working with Ford on the first castor oil-based foam is an excellent example of two industry leaders focused on speed-to-market made possible by collaboration.

"Finding a sustainable product that saves more than 5,000 barrels of oil for every 300,000 Ford Focus models produced in North America is a very exciting solution for all of us."

Ford says that over time, the automaker plans to incorporate castor oil-based foam solutions across more products in its full-line global portfolio.

Ford uses soy foam seat cushions and gaskets, wheat straw-filled storage bins and more recyclable materials.

## LEGO Explorer to Leave Plant, Head to LEGOLAND

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kids' imaginations and their sense of adventure through interactive play."

The driving school is divided by age. There's a Ford Junior Driving School for children ages 3 to 5 years old and a Ford Driving School for those ages 6 to 12.

The children watch a video with driving instructions and safety tips – starting with the basics like safety belts and the difference between the accelerator and the brake – and move on to stoplights and stop signs.

Children then have the opportunity to drive in their own electric vehicles on curbed roads with maximum

speed limits of 3 mph. With its detailed LEGO theme, the attraction is designed to give children the experience of driving in a real-world neighborhood.

While the children are behind the wheel, park employees known as "model citizens" are nearby to ensure the experience stays positive. After the drive is complete, the children are issued their own Ford Driving School license.

The school was the brainchild of Florida-area Ford dealers that worked with LEGOLAND Florida management, and is designed to introduce the fun and responsibility of driving skills to children.

## Ford, BASF 'Green Up' With Castor Oil Foam

DEARBORN – Castor oil is just what the proverbial doctor ordered to reduce petroleum-based fossil fuel content in the instrument panel of the new Ford Focus.

"Working with BASF, we now can offer our North American customers the new Ford Focus with the industry's first seamless soft-touch instrument panel that's stronger, better-looking and better on the environment," said Bari Brown, Ford advanced product development engineer.

"Castor oil from plants helps deliver sustainable interior foam that reduces petroleum use while improving vehicle craftsmanship. It's beneficial both for the customer and Mother Nature."

Meanwhile, castor oil is derived from the Ricinus Communis flowering spurge plant, which has widespread growth throughout tropical regions.

The plant's oil presents a sustainable interior foam solution that does not compete with food sources. Employing more than 10 percent renewable content, the resulting foam product passes all Ford performance requirements for interior components.

The new castor oil-based foam is significantly more durable than the previously used material, with a 36 percent better tensile strength, a measure of the foam's ability to hold its shape over time and use.

Tear strength also is improved by 5 percent while