

General Motors Chairman and CEO Dan Akerson donned an apron last week to help serve breakfast to the homeless at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen in Detroit. The Capuchin Soup kitchen is a Detroit-area charity for which Akerson and his wife Karin will chair a major fundraising dinner on Oct. 19 at the GM Renaissance Center. The Akersons, along with a group of area business and community leaders, hope to raise \$750,000 at the Capuchin's 40th anniversary SOCK (Support Our Capuchin Kitchen) dinner.

Akersons Step Up for Capuchins

DETROIT – General Motors Chairman and CEO Dan Akerson and his wife, Karin, donned aprons last week and helped serve breakfast to the homeless at the Capuchin Soup Kitchen, a local charity for which the Akersons will chair a major fundraising dinner this fall.

"Karin and I are both extremely pleased to be involved with such a terrific organization, one that is essential to this community," Akerson told a gathering of Capuchin supporters before the breakfast service.

"I've based my career, and my life, on two things: leadership and service. And one of the most important things you serve is your community."

The Akersons, along with a group of area business and community leaders, will help spearhead an effort to raise \$750,000 from the Capuchin's 40th anniversary SOCK (Support Our Capuchin Kitchen) dinner on Friday, Oct. 19, at the GM Renaissance Center.

"I believe in what this organization does, and Karin and I want to help in any way we can," Akerson said.

For more information on the SOCK dinner, please call 313-579-2100 or visit www.CSKDetroit.org.

Founded in 1929, the Ca-

puchin Soup Kitchen serves Metro Detroit by providing food, clothing, and spiritual counsel to those in need.

Frequently preparing and serving 2,000 meals a day, the Capuchin Soup Kitchen also distributes household items and operates a shower program, food pantry, and children's tutoring and art therapy program.

Its Earthworks Urban Farm produces vegetables for Detroit's hungry, and educates the community on sustainable relationships between human beings and the earth.

The soup kitchen's ROPE (Reaching Our Potential Everyday) ministry is designed to assist individuals "re-entering" society after bouts of incarceration or substance abuse. ROPE's first social enterprise is the "On the Rise Bakery."

Meanwhile, GM's Dan Akerson is nothing if not busy these days, what with him not only visiting the Capuchin Soup Kitchen, but he also gave the graduation speech to the Columbia University Business School in New York, where he challenged students to make an impact on the world they are entering.

Akerson is also readying for the GM Annual Meeting of Stockholders, scheduled for June 12 in Detroit.



Cobo Center's new facade along the Detroit riverfront is planned to do for Cobo what the Wintergarden did for the GM RenCen – to finally open the facility up to river views. Overall renovations at Cobo continue apace under the guidance of the regional consortium.

Cobo Glass Atrium Completion Slated for Pre-NAIAS

DETROIT – Thom Connors, SMG regional vice president and general manager of Cobo Center announced last week the onset of construction for the new "signature space" for Cobo Center.

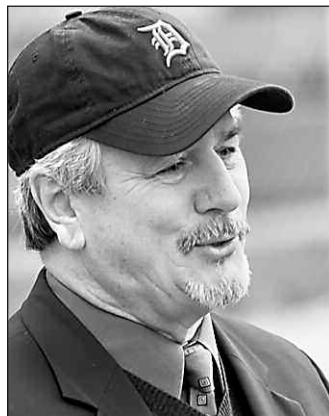
Well into stage one of Phase III of the five-year renovation, the spacious three-story glass atrium that links the main floor of the venue with a new entrance facing the Detroit River is scheduled for completion in January of 2013, in time for the North American International Auto Show (NAIAS).

When completed, the atrium area will bring the lower-level exhibition space more naturally into the facility and link Cobo Center more fully to Detroit's scenic riverfront.

"Today's the day when the caterpillar officially enters its cocoon and begins its transformation into a butterfly," said Detroit Regional Convention Facility Authority (DRCFA) board chair Larry Alexander. "When complete, this area will be the most visually dramatic and breathtaking manifestation of physical change to the facility."

Internal demolition on the former Cobo Arena is complete, and a new glass exterior, a 40,000-square-foot ballroom and 25,000 square feet of meeting space will take its place, scheduled to come online in May of 2013.

Construction has not interrupted Cobo Center operations, which was assumed by SMG in October of 2010, when the DRCFA hired the company to manage operations at Cobo Center.



Cobo Center General Manager Thom Connors discusses renovations at the facility recently. Connors said he saw the Jimi Hendrix concert at Cobo in 1969 just before he graduated from Birmingham Seaholm as a kid, but he never imagined he would go on to actually run the facility later in his career.

Thom Connors, regional vice president and 37-year veteran with SMG came aboard as general manager to improve customer service, change the corporate culture and stabilize operational finances.

"Attendance was up this year for our two largest shows, the North American International Auto Show and Autorama," said Connors. "The construction areas have been successfully isolated from events and we are open for business."

The first-year track record of Cobo Center's new management team: in January 2011, the NAIAS announced an agreement with SMG for a five-year deal to keep the auto show in Cobo, expected to

pump an estimated \$1.75-billion into the Metro Detroit community.

Later that month, the state of Michigan awarded Cobo Center a Green Venues Michigan certification.

The Detroit Shoppe featuring made-in-Michigan and Detroit sports team merchandise opened on the concourse, with all proceeds going to local area charities. And the number of events and visitors to Cobo Center doubled from fiscal year 2011-2012, while operating expense was reduced by \$1.3-million due to reduction in energy usage.

"It's professional management, it's better service, it's better sales, so we've increased the level of activity," said Patrick Bero, CEO and chief financial officer of the DRCFA.

Summer bookings have doubled for 2012 vs. 2011. The return of the corporate market segment for Cobo Center includes events such as Novonordis, BASF, and Care Fusion.

First-time public shows will be coming back: Youmacon, Detroit Bike Expo as well as a new Golf Show.

New bookings in the government sector include the National Veterans Administration Small Business Conference and Expo that will include a huge job fair for veterans and is their largest annual event.

Also included is the American Federation of Teachers Biennial Conference in June. Summer sporting events including Schneider Publications TEAMS Conference and Expo, and the 2012 Acrobatic Gymnastics Na-

tional Championship.

With all the new bookings, the number of visitors to Cobo Center during the summer is expected to rise 250 percent.

Connors credits much of the recent success in Cobo Center operations to staff restructuring:

- Facility operations placed under Cobo's assistant general manager Claude Molinari, a 15-year veteran of SMG and former general manager of SMG's SMGX Exhibition Services company;

- Turning the previous sales staff of one member into a team of four;

- Recruiting new event managers;

- Creating a new finance team;

- Adding a marketing and communications position for website development, public and media relations development, and customer relations.

Progress from these advances is evidenced by recent customer survey results giving Cobo an overall facility rating of 97.6%, or excellent, in the first quarter of 2012.

"I think that's now become the new standard and we're challenged to maintain it throughout the construction," said Connors.

"All three stages of Phase III of the Cobo Center renovation will be completed for our upcoming ASAE Annual Meeting & Exposition in the summer of 2015.

"In the meantime, we have all exhibit space available and full use of meeting rooms up to current capacity," he adds.

2013 Cadillac ATS Manages to 'Keep Weight Down'

DETROIT – When engineers set out to make the all-new 2013 Cadillac ATS as light as possible, they used advanced materials to minimize weight throughout the compact luxury sports sedan – but never compromised performance capability, GM officials say.

Lightweight parts such as an aluminum hood and magnesium engine mounts help ATS achieve a curb weight less than 3,400 pounds, and highway fuel economy well over 30 mpg, according to GM officials.

Keeping weight down also enabled balanced distribution of vehicle weight that helps deliver a world-class driving experience, say officials.

"We designed and engineered ATS's vehicle architecture to deliver quick, nimble and fun-to-drive dynamics," said David Masch, ATS chief engineer.

"We distributed mass to key areas, much like an athlete builds muscle where he needs it most. This enabled ATS to achieve the performance characteristics that lux-

ury sport sedan buyers demand."

One seemingly heavy way the ATS engineering team achieved its performance goals was using cast iron in the rear differential instead of aluminum, a learning taken from the performance-tuned CTS-V.

The differential provides torque and rotation to the wheels, and ATS's cast iron design helped distribute weight equally between the front and rear wheels to provide agile handling while reducing noise and vibration.

Cadillac benchmarked it against world-class competition to deliver a driving experience that is as well-tuned for sound as for ride and handling, say GM officials.

Unlike a differential made from aluminum, which expands and contracts twice as much in response to temperature change, a cast iron differential is stronger and retains its shape better under temperature extremes, which allows the ring and pinion gears to operate more quietly.

As a result, a cast iron differential also requires less energy to operate, contributing to higher fuel efficiency.

To the consumer, this means more miles between fill-ups.



The all-new Cadillac ATS navigates through the turns and straightaways at Atlanta Motorsports Park during performance testing last week in Dawsonville, Ga.

The ATS team also achieved significant weight reduction in the rear suspension by using specially engineered straight steel links with lightening holes instead of using aluminum.

"The team focused on grams, not pounds, every day of the ATS's development," Masch said. "Even the smallest of changes could contribute to the overall mass goal."

Bob Boniface, Cadillac exterior design director, said last week at the Automotive Press Association, "As consumer demand for more features, space and comfort continues to increase, so too has our proficiency in designing vehicles that offer aerodynamic performance and efficiency equivalent to lower vehicle weight."

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