

Boy Scouts' Fundraising Car Show Kicks Off 2012 Spring Cruise Season

by Gerald Scott
News Dept.

How curious that the Bearing Burners car show and the Boy Scouts of America/Troop 390 car show are each held annually in May to help kick off the spring "car show season" in the area, and yet they're so different.

The Bearing Burners show, held at the GM Tech Center, is a regional draw that brings in thousands of people to downtown Warren.

Sunday, May 20, was a sunny day in town and there was a good turnout of both classic cars competing for prizes and the visiting public coming in to kick the tires.

The show is held in the largely unused parking lots just west and south of the new city hall in Warren.

And the Troop 390 show is a more intimate affair, drawing hundreds. Note that Troop 390 is for special needs participants, usually adults, and this now 3rd annual show is the big fundraiser for the Troop.

GM retiree Ed Jablonski and his wife Vicki are the organizers of the event.

"This is our third year we've put the car show together," said Vicki.

"What it is, is a fundraiser



PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

GM retiree Ed Jablonski and his wife Vicki organize the BSA Troop 390 spring car show every May at city hall in Warren. All proceeds benefit the troop, whose members are challenged and are of adult age. The Jablonskis' son is a Troop member. Ed was a gear developer at Chevrolet Gear & Axle for 42 years.

to send our boys to summer camp.

"We have 25 Scouts, they're all special needs and half come from group homes. They cannot afford to go to summer camp, so the money that we raise from here sends most of those boys to summer camp.

"It also sends them to the other weekend camps that we do, it helps pay for their uniforms and anything else that we might do, like go to the zoo or on a campout.

"We have two service projects that we try to do every year: this year, we went to Mount Clemens Train Station to spruce up there and then we found a handicapped family that needed their front yard cleaned up.

"We're always open for service projects."

Indeed, by hosting the annual spring classic car show, the Troop makes money from gate attendance as well as car registrations. The city of Warren graciously allows the



PHOTO: GERALD SCOTT

Visitors check out the lineup of classic cruisers at the Boy Scouts of America Troop 390 spring car show at Warren city hall last week.

Troop to use the site for free for the occasion.

The boys and young men of the Troop also help organize and run the car show and they seem to have a blast doing it.

"We have 25 boys, 9 of them are Eagle Scouts.

"There is a special order called Order of the Arrow, we have 6 boys in the Order of the Arrow and we have 4 boys

who have been in the Troop since it started 35 years ago, there's a lot of boys."

Vicki Jablonski's son, Steven, 39, is one of the Troop 390 participants.

"We try not to get any members under the age of 18 (because it's not a good fit with the adult members) and we have a lot of parents who help out, but we also have friends who've been in the Troop

longer than I have, but they don't have children.

"We have the Jefferson Lodge help us . . . they give us the building for the spaghetti fundraiser - that's our second-biggest fundraiser."

Vicki's husband Ed is a GM retiree who was a gear developer for Chevrolet Gear & Axle - as well as its spinoff organization, American Axle - for 42 years.

Military Vehicle Conference Talk Focuses on Energy

by Gerald Scott
News Dept.

It turns out that TACOM and TARDEC, based locally at the Detroit Arsenal in Warren, actually have a separate "army" of research and support help outside of the military framework.

This came to light in Ann Arbor last week, where the ARC - Automotive Research Center - held its annual military vehicle conference at the University of Michigan's North Campus in Ann Arbor.

Attending were a leading group of researchers and engineers, all from the U.S. Army, domestic auto industry and esteemed universities, all working under the ARC umbrella to explore energy security and the future of mobility.

Established in 1994, the ARC is an Army Center of Expertise for advancing the state-of-the-art in high-fidelity modeling and simulation of military and civilian ground vehicles.

The ARC is a network of partnerships between the Army and several universities known for their modeling and simulation expertise, including Wayne State University, Oakland University, University of Iowa, Clemson University, Virginia Tech and the host University of Michigan.

The U.S. Army's Tank Auto-

motive Research and Development Center (TARDEC) serves as the military's technical leader along with university counterparts.

"As the Defense Department strives to make ground vehicles more survivable, mobile and fuel-efficient, advanced modeling and simulation allows researchers to better understand potential solutions and tradeoffs prior to platform integration," said TARDEC Chief Scientist David Gorsich.

"Much of this groundbreaking work is conducted through the Automotive Research Center."

The two-day conference featured speakers from government, industry and academic institutions along with technology demonstrations

that further addressed public and private energy issues alike.

In a collaborative ARC setting, university students benefit from real-world interaction, working alongside dedicated teams of researchers, and the opportunity to contribute to technology innovations that will save lives and make military vehicle systems more efficient.

"It's a total boost of motivation for the students," said Prof. Anna Stefanopoulou, ARC director.

"It's like high-octane fuel for them, the fact that they work on something that matters (to society). Every week, I open the newspaper and, on the front page, I read about a problem we're addressing."

Perhaps the biggest sur-

prise at the ARC conference came from Gary Rogers, CEO of Auburn Hills-based auto supplier FEV, Inc., who called for a dedicated family of military truck engines.

Rogers made the case for it, but, of course, the counterpoint is that the U.S. Army has less than half-a-million vehicles worldwide, so it's difficult to say if Congress and the Pentagon would support the notion when the Army can buy diesel or hybrid truck engines off the shelf from the usual suppliers.

Still, even the suggestion shows how much the military vehicle landscape is changing in terms of the Army wanting to drive cost out, and fuel efficiency in. These are the topics that the annual ARC conference likes to tackle.



TARDEC juxtaposes its hybrid dune buggy in front of the entrance to the University of Michigan football stadium in Ann Arbor last week, all to call attention to TARDEC's two-day ARC military conference that was held for two days on U-M's North Campus.

The Pentagon is under pressure to reduce its annual fuel consumption bill, so the topics discussed at ARC all fall

under the umbrella of fuel efficiency and hybridizing of heavy Army trucks and tracked vehicles.

186 Pounds of Blueprints Led to Chrysler's First Tank in Warren

by Gerald Scott
News Dept.

Local historian Charlie Hyde, who has a book coming out about the auto industry's contributions to the Arsenal of Democracy during World War II, briefed an audience in Eastpointe last week about the particulars of the project.

Speaking at the new Military Museum on Stephens in Eastpointe, Hyde's research sheds new light on two major projects that Chrysler was involved in during the big war: the Dodge Chicago plant, which built B-29 bomber engines, and the Warren tank plant, which built thousands of Army tanks between 1941 and 1945.

"I'm in the middle of publishing a very broad history of the auto industry's role in the Arsenal of Democracy and that will appear in the fall of 2013," he said. "Today, I'm going to concentrate on Chrysler partly because I know Chrysler's history during the war best of all.

"Chrysler was pretty typical of all the automakers who switched over from civilian car and truck production during the early stages of the war to making various weapons and other war goods.

"All the companies: General Motors, Ford, Chrysler, Hudson, Nash, Studebaker, Packard, the various auto

body makers and parts suppliers, all faced similar problems in converting from civilian production to war production."

That is to say, according to Hyde, all of the participants learned the hard way that producing war materiel for the government was a much different enterprise than producing cars for themselves and the public.

"Chrysler's managers and engineers worked probably as well, if not better than the other car companies, in working with the government pro-

curement officers, military planners and with outside companies that served as sub-contractors," Hyde said.

"Much of the work was done in government-owned factories that were built for those purposes. Even a lot of the work done in Chrysler's own factories were done with government-owned machinery."

Hyde added that the Detroit automakers all made reasonable profits in 1939-40-41 and weren't particularly interested in doing defense work.

Henry Ford, for example,

turned down the chance to produce Rolls-Royce Merlin engines for aircraft used by the Royal Air Force (RAF).

"He refused, once he found out a lot of the engines were going to go to the British government - he was of Irish background and did not like the British, or English, one bit and refused to make the engines," Hyde said.

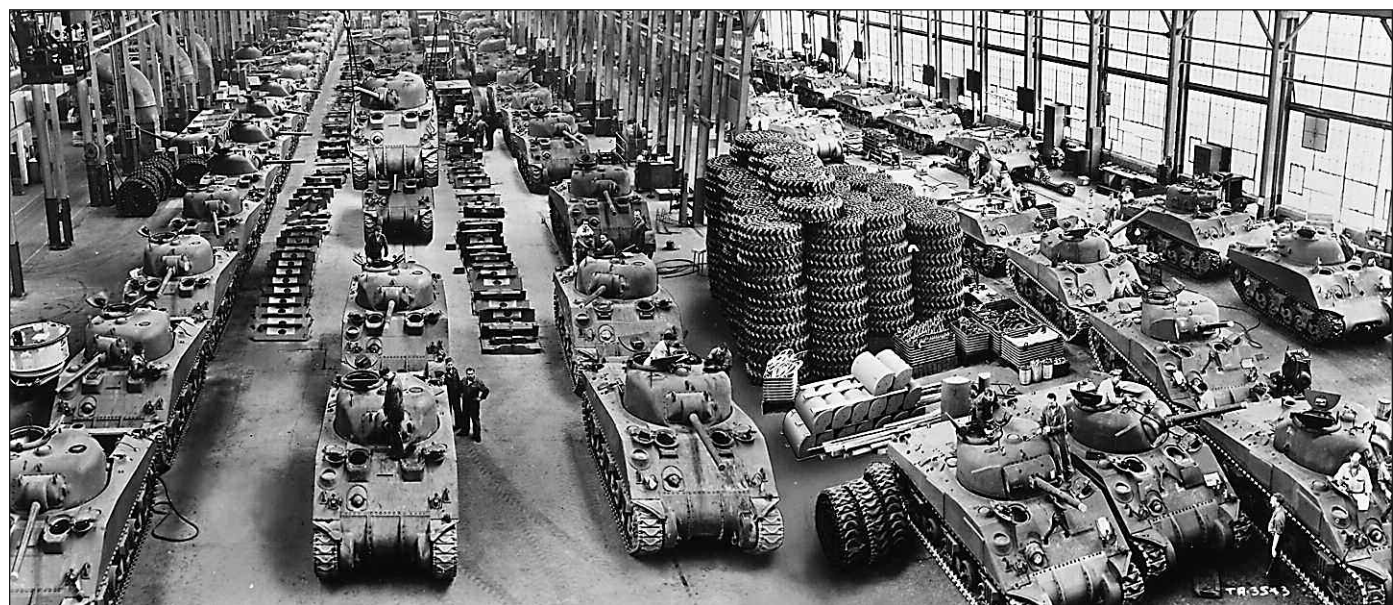
That same engine was offered to Chrysler, which backed off because it believed that it couldn't be mass-produced. It finally settled with Packard on East Grand Boule-

vard in Detroit. "American companies were very nervous about taking over these products that somebody else designed," he added.

"In the end, Chrysler and the others did convert over to war production - they didn't really have any choice after Pearl Harbor. They all stopped making automobiles in either January or February of 1942."

By the end of the war, Chrysler made everything

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Much of local author Charlie Hyde's planned book about the history of Chrysler's contributions during World War II centers on the former Chrysler Tank Plant located on Van Dyke in Warren. Photo, circa 1943, shows five parallel tank assembly lines.