

Chrysler Staffers Fill Backpacks to Help Feed the Kids

AUBURN HILLS – Last week, Chrysler Group LLC employees turned part of its Auburn Hills headquarters into an assembly line to help hungry children in Detroit.

Over a two-day period (July 23-24) employees rolled up their sleeves and formed a human assembly line to fill 12,000 weekend backpacks (nylon draw-string bags) with nutritious food for children who are at risk of hunger and malnutrition this summer.

As part of their ongoing effort to fight against the epidemic of childhood hunger that has plagued the region in recent years, The Chrysler Foundation, Chrysler Group LLC and United Way for Southeastern Michigan (UWSEM) have partnered with Gleaners Community Food Bank of Southeastern Michigan to bridge the hunger gap and create greater awareness and access to summer food programs.

According to Gleaners, only 13 percent of Detroit-area children who are eligible for free or reduced meals at school participate in summer food programs. On the weekends, when summer food programs



Rita Peterson, a Mopar contract employee.

are not available, children often go without meals.

Each Friday, beginning July 27 and continuing through Aug. 31, Gleaners will distribute the weekend backpacks at select Summer Food Service Program sites throughout Detroit. In addition to the meals served at the sites, children will receive a backpack that contains sliced peaches, cut green beans, beef ravioli, spaghetti and meatballs, raisin bran cereal and shelf

stable milk – enough food for about six meals.

The total cost of the food, \$60,000, was underwritten by The Chrysler Foundation; and Chrysler Group provided the bags and volunteers to assemble the backpacks.

“We are proud to partner with the United Way and Gleaners Food Bank to help meet this pressing need in the fight against childhood hunger,” said Jody Trapasso, president – The Chrysler Foundation.



Chrysler Group employees form an assembly line to fill 12,000 weekend backpacks.

“We hope the Weekend Backpack program also helps nourish our children’s dreams for a bright future.”

In 2011, Gleaners provided food to approximately 21,500 children whose families struggled to afford groceries.

“I’m deeply grateful to Chrysler for stepping up in a big way to help feed hungry children,” says W. DeWayne Wells, president – Gleaners.

“More than 315,000 kids in metro Detroit rely on school meals. When these kids are

home during the summer, our pantry partners see a huge uptick in families seeking help with putting food on the table.” The automaker has also called upon its more than 62,200 employees to do their part to end childhood hunger.

Porsche Club to Gather at Fox Grill Before Cruise

By Gerald Scott

The Woodward Dream Cruise pretty much defines itself as the showcase of American muscle car prowess – the Corvette, Camaro, Mustang and Charger from all eras dominates the scene.

But that doesn’t mean that there isn’t room for a little upscale, premium-vehicle refinement.

As such, the Rally Sport Region of the Porsche Club of America will be hosting a mini cruise at the Fox Grill in Bloomfield Hills on the Friday night prior to this year’s Dream Cruise on Aug. 18.

“We have a great group of people, socially well-balanced, anything from mechanics and young computer geeks all the way up to the stereotypical lawyers, doctors and people who can write the checks for the newer cars,” said Rick Mamman, president of the club and Cruise event organizer.

Mamman is a veteran auto parts fabricator and longtime Porsche car brand enthusiast.

“My main skill set is metal-shaping so if you want a new body made for your car, I still

maintain some of that equipment. A lot of race car parts, a lot of old aircraft parts, and a lot of medical components, that’s what I was doing to pay the bills while everyone’s cars languished slowly (during the economic downturn),” Mamman said.

“I spent my early years in the U.S., when I came down from Canada, racing for IMSA, race car fabricator for IMSA Series – not coincidentally on Porsches.”

Mamman is a pal of Fox Grill manager Nigel Barnett, so, of course, one good thing led to another as far as a Porsche-themed Woodward Dream cruise goes.

“I’ve known Nigel since he was a CAD designer way-back-when, and he actually came up with the idea – he said why don’t you hold an event here? I said, ‘Well, you’re on Woodward, I guess the best event would be the Dream Cruise,’ and boom, there it is,” Mamman said.

“We do have support from Motor City Porsche (in East-pointe) coming in, he’s going to bring in some vehicles to park them there for display.

“But mostly it’s a good op-



Rick Mamman’s 1993 Porsche 993 will be on display at Fox Grill.

portunity for our people to get out on Woodward and have somewhere to park the cars and not get stuck in a lot of traffic – you can get in off of Long Lake.”

Parking space limitations will peg the gathering at 20-plus cars and having the event on the night prior to the actual Cruise gives the club a little bit more leeway and breathing room.

Royal Oak Library Hosts ‘Tech Fix’ Night

From 6-7 p.m. on Monday, July 31, the Royal Oak Public Library is hosting a tech night, where the public brings

“Woodward, on Saturday, is one big lake of (overheated) anti-freeze,” Mamman pointed out of the Woodward Saturday cruise. “So, you just don’t like to sit there idling in hot weather.

“I know they’re going to put on a great gig, it’s a wonderful restaurant and the wonderful thing about the patio is that it’s right there on the street, so it’ll be a great spot for us.”

in their malfunctioning laptops or cell phones for a free diagnosis or fix. See the library’s website for details.

Chrysler Museum Getting Ready For Outdoor Family Movie Night

AUBURN HILLS – An animated family movie will be shown at the Walter P. Chrysler Museum on Saturday, Aug. 4, from 6 to 11 p.m.

The outdoor movie will be viewable on the terraced hillside behind the museum (One Chrysler Drive in Auburn Hills).

A wide range of family activities also will be staged throughout the museum property during the evening.

Highlights of the evening include:

- A Ram truck and vintage vehicle car show in the museum’s parking lot. All guests are encouraged to bring their Ram truck or classic car, all makes and models.
- A ride-and-drive of new Ram trucks.
- A display of new Ram trucks, including the new 2013 Ram 1500, where visitors can learn from product specialists highlighting vehicle features.
- Ram truck product give-aways.
- Face painting.
- Balloon artist.
- DJ music.
- Prepared food by a fea-

tured local Michigan food truck/cart vendor (food and beverage charges apply).

• Access into the museum to see 65-plus vintage Chrysler vehicles on display on three levels of the museum and an opportunity to view its two new exhibits, “75 Years of Mopar” and “Viper Café.”

Admission for the evening is \$10 per vehicle (food and beverage are extra). Museum members with membership cards or guests driving any current model Ram truck or Dodge Ram receive half-off the price of admission.

All activities are subject to change without notice. Please check the museum’s website at www.wpchryslermuseum.org or Facebook at facebook.com/wpchryslermuseum for additional movie information and updates.

The Walter P. Chrysler Museum is located on the Chrysler Group LLC headquarters complex in Auburn Hills, at the southeast corner of the complex, at the intersection of Featherstone and Squirrel roads.

The museum is a nonprofit public charity.

GM Tech Center Employee Car Show Continues to Shine

By Gerald Scott

If there has been a bigger or better GM Tech Center Employee Car Show in Warren in recent years that surpassed the 2012 event in size, impact, car quality and quantity, well, we sure can’t remember when it was.

Thanks to both the GM and UAW organizers and the participating employees themselves, the 2012 show was a dandy indeed as the weather held out and some 800-plus classic cruisers, hot rods and relics lined the east campus during lunch hour on July 25.

“We had 780 cars pre-register and more than 50 register at the gate, so we’re above 800 and it’s a pretty good turnout today. The really good weather helps, too.”

Note that to make sure the show events and setup ran smoothly, Duncan arrived at the Tech Center on the morning of the show at 4:30 a.m. But of course the hard work paid off as thousands of Tech Center employees toured the row after row of cars lined up on the east campus green space along the Van Dyke fence.

The UAW Region 1 Color Guard presented the U.S. flag and UAW-GM employee Ron O’Shea sang the National Anthem at the event’s kickoff ceremonies at the main stage.

Said Andy Pawlaczyk, shop chairman, “To put out a car show of this magnitude takes a lot of effort – I’d like to

thank Bill Duncan, the car show committee and all the volunteers who helped put this together. It’s a great day, there’s a lot to look at and we’re all truly blessed to be with this organization.”

The \$2 entry fee for each registered car will eventually go to favorite UAW-GM charities and a 1955 pedal car was also auctioned off to benefit charities. The Warren Cousino High School color guard performed at the stage as well, helping to invite the community into the show.

Speaking of the show, with 830 cars to choose from, there was chromed glory and delight everywhere you looked.

The Tech Center employee audience has a broad definition of car cool, so it wasn’t just 1955 Chevy Bel Airs that were on display. Non-GM cool cars spotted at the show included a 1966 Shelby Cobra, a 1978 Volkswagen microbus and a couple of 1960s-era Dodge Chargers. So cool is cool.

Gary Hand, a UAW-GM retiree, had his 1968 Camaro at the show and he was tickled he was able to display and visit the event.

“I was at 13.5 years altogether, I started in Pontiac. They call it the Validation Center? I transferred here (to Warren) in 2005 and retired in 2008,” Hand said. And he was proud of how crisp and shiny his Camaro was.

“When I got it, it was pretty much rusty with holes in the



The view of the GM Tech Center Employee Car Show, from the hill at the north end of the lake overlooking Van Dyke Ave.

roof. (A body worker) had it for six months, he did all my body work. I took it to a place called Strip It on Groesbeck, they media-blasted it right down to bare metal. I took all the chrome out, polished the chrome myself. The bumpers I had re-chromed.”

Asked why he cruised in a 44-year-old car, Hand said, “This makes you feel young again, you know?”

Indeed, cars and nostalgia seem to go hand-in-hand, whether here at the Employee Car Show or the Woodward Dream Cruise – the themes seem very similar as a number of classic car owners pick the

year, make and model of the car to rehab based on their mispent youth. Hand, for example, graduated from high school in 1962 but likes the charm that his 1968 Camaro evokes.

Another GM retiree with similar feelings was Steve Wolken of Rochester Hills, formerly a manager at Cadillac.

He had his 1958 Cadillac on display and he’s actually owned the car since he was a teenager – over 50 years or more.

“I drove this car in high school where I grew up in St. Louis,” Wolken pointed out. “Back then they laughed at me for this (big land boat) car. Now, when I go back for a re-

union, I’m the only one there still driving the same car he drove in high school.”

The car was gifted to Wolken by his great uncle and it still looks as good as the day it came off the assembly line back in 1957 as a 1958 model year vehicle.

In that sense, these cars really are like time machines.

VEC employees Curt Diss, Jeffrey Lawrence, Brad Kinnannon and Carl Diss were touring the show together with GM retiree Carl Eggers and Jeffrey Lawrence’s 4-year-old son Nicholas.

As they browsed the lot, they were impressed with

how “simple” some of the powertrains were, especially one from a 1938 Chevrolet Deluxe touring car. One could get an automotive lesson, just visiting these glorious cars, from decade to decade, gleaning how the automotive forefathers put together cars in ways still being used in some measure by the current folks working in the car business.

Fun, auto history, sunshine and hot dogs all mixed together at the GM Tech Center Employee Car Show this year and, truly, who could ask for a better combination than that?