

# Detroit Auto Scene®

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## Big Three High-Performance Execs Will Gather Before Dream Cruise To Discuss Future of Muscle Cars

By Gerald Scott

One of the more enjoyable traditions surrounding the Woodward Dream Cruise returns this year as the high-performance car managers from the Big Three automakers gather to discuss the Muscle Car's history and future.

The WWJ Newsradio 950 Dream Cruise Business Breakfast, which is open to the public, will be held on Friday, Aug. 17, at Duggan's Irish Pub in Royal Oak with continental breakfast and networking starting at 7:30 a.m. and the formal discussion and Q&A at 8:30 a.m.

Speakers include Jamal Hameedi, SVT Chief Nameplate Engineer at Ford; Dave Leon, Global Vehicle Line Executive at General Motors, and Erich Heuschele, Vehicle Integration Responsible Manager, 2013 SRT Viper, at Chrysler.

Moderating will be the station's car experts, journalists John McElroy and Jeff Gilbert.

"We've got performance oriented managers from the Big Three all coming out to talk about their latest and greatest, and naturally the audience is eager to hear about what these guys are doing from a performance standpoint," said McElroy.

"More horsepower is equal to more grins (from the audience)," he added.

The high-horsepower crowd would seem to be at loggerheads with today's green-themed, fuel-efficient market, but McElroy, for one, sees today as the proverbial second coming of a Muscle Car, plus high-performance cars like the Corvette getting 30 mpg on the highway, so what's the argument against them again?

"You know, look, we've seen a tremendous increase in the horsepower and performance over the last decade, and yet, fuel economy has gone up and emissions have gone down - one of the most astonishing things we've seen is that even though the Dream Cruise is all about celebrating the 'Golden Age of the Muscle car,' (I'd argue) that this is the Golden Age," McElroy said.

### LTU Names Mirshab Dean of Management

SOUTHFIELD - Bahman Mirshab is the new dean of the College of Management at Lawrence Technological University.

Mirshab has returned to Michigan after serving as dean of the Cameron School of Business at the University of St. Thomas in Houston since 2006.

He received a doctorate in economics from Wayne State University, a master's degree in economics from University of Detroit Mercy and a bachelor's degree in economics from the University of Tehran, his native country.

Mirshab's appointment is effective on Aug. 1.

"It wasn't the 1950s and 1960s, it's right now," he continued. "We've never seen such high levels of performance and yet we're meeting all of the fuel economy standards and emissions standards right now."

Add in airbag proliferation and safety features like Brembo car racing-caliber brakes and, arguably, today's muscle cars are also much safer than the late-1960s-early-1970s muscle cars, which for the most part didn't even have power brakes or in some cases power steering.

"Today's cars are far safer, but it's taken an enormous amount of new technologies to accomplish that," McElroy added.

Elsewhere at the Woodward Dream Cruise, the local Buick-GMC dealer body will be renting out the Athens Coney Island at 14 Mile and Woodward for the second year in a row. In cruises gone by, that was always Chevrolet's home stand.

Also, Auburn Hills auto supplier Plex Systems will be sponsoring the Dream Cruise road signage this year, while the Chevrolet brand is in the second year of a three-year overall corporate sponsorship of the Big Cruise.

The cruise is expected to generate an audience of 1.5 million people and 50,000 classic cars from 8 Mile Road north through the suburbs all the way up to downtown Pontiac.



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