

# Marsalis, Other Jazz Greats To Play at Chrysler Festival

DETROIT – Notable jazz legends Sonny Rollins and Wynton Marsalis will kick off the 33rd annual Detroit Jazz Festival.

The event, which will be held in and around Hart Plaza in downtown Detroit between Friday, Aug. 31 and Monday, Sept. 3, is being sponsored by Chrysler Corp.

“The automotive industry and jazz music both have rich histories in the city of Detroit. The partnership between Chrysler and the Detroit Jazz Festival bridges these great histories and brings key elements of our city together,” said Gretchen Valade, chair of the Detroit Jazz Festival Foundation board of directors.

“Welcoming Chrysler as a presenting sponsor, and hosting its vehicles for a ride and drive, further proves this year will be the best festival we’ve seen yet.”

The Chrysler brand is also the exclusive ride and drive sponsor participating with a unique activation at the festival, offering attendees the chance to test-drive some of the top vehicles on the road. On-site, Chrysler will offer attendees the chance to drive the 2012 product lineup that in

A host of jazz greats will play, including Sonny Rollins, Wynton Marsalis, Terrance Blanchard, Steve Wilson and Gregoire Maret.

Rollins, who will perform on the first day of the festival, has been playing in jazz clubs since the mid 1950s. His fans included Miles Davis and his mentor Thelonious Monk.

He has played in Detroit, appearing in such clubs as Minor Key and the Rouge Lounge. This year marks his fifth appearance at the Detroit Jazz Festival. He will be joined onstage by Clifton Anderson on trombone, Bob

Cranshaw on bass, Kobie Watkins on drums, Saul Rubin on guitar and Sammy Figueroa on percussion.

The Wynton Marsalis Quintet will play on Sept. 1. Marsalis travels the country with his Lincoln Center Orchestra or combo; he is a trumpet virtuoso in both jazz and classical idioms. He has become recognized as a composer of note winning a Pulitzer in 1997. He has been director of the most visible jazz institution in the country at Lincoln Center for 25 years. Generally recognized as the public face of jazz, and at 50 Marsalis still has that youthful energy that can spark any appearance of his.

He is the second of six sons of the eminent New Orleans pianist Ellis Marsalis. At 17 he moved to New York City to attend Juilliard and in 1980 he entered the foremost training ground for modern jazz musicians: Art Blakey’s Jazz Messengers. Once he formed his own bands he became a mentor of a long line of youngsters including trumpeters Roy Hargrove and Nicholas Payton, and Detroiters James Carter and Rodney Whitaker.

As early as 1995 he was appearing on his own PBS music education programs and was a major figure in Ken Burns’ miniseries Jazz five years later. He has won nine Grammy Awards and in 1983 became the only artist ever to win Awards for both jazz and classical records. In 2005, Wynton Marsalis received The National Medal of Arts, the highest award given to artists by the U.S. government. Wynton will be joined on stage by Walter Blanding (Saxophone/Clarinet), Carlos Henriquez (Bass), Ali Jackson (Drums), and Dan Nimmer (Piano).

## Special Olympians to Ride Bikes at Chrysler’s Track

by Gerald Scott

The local auto industry continues to support the Special Olympics in a very tangible way.

That’s because on Sept. 8, a Saturday, Chrysler’s Chelsea Proving Grounds is hosting more than 150 Special Olympics Michigan (SOMI) athletes for the 2012 State Cycling Finals.

Bike inspection begins at 7:30 a.m. with competition beginning at 9 a.m. sharp.

Mallorie Stiger, p.r. coordinator at Special Olympics Michigan office in Midland, said, “This is our second year at the Chrysler Proving Grounds, it’s an awesome venue and our participants are excited to participate.”

“Chelsea has plenty of room for our participants, coaches, chaperones, for parking and cyclings.”

“We previously had this event in Warren at the GM Tech Center but we had to move so we’re happy with Chelsea.”

The State Cycling Finals is a dedicated competition by SOMI athletes and not a joy ride, she pointed out. A total of 15 events are available for bicycles, tricycles and United team and tandem events.

“A number of Chrysler employees who work at Chelsea are also volunteering to work this event on our behalf, so we’re grateful for that, too.”

Indeed, the Big Three automakers are famous for lending their facilities, and volunteer staff, to support major charitable events such as this.

GM continues to support Special Olympics when the State Soccer Finals are held every October at Halmich Park in Warren and the nearby GM Tech Center hosts the kickoff dinner and pro-

vides employee volunteers to work the event.

Earlier in GM’s history, in the 1990s, GM allowed hundreds of Boy Scouts to host an annual Saturday morning bike-riding fundraiser on a circular road at the GM Proving Ground in Milford. All of the Boy Scouts there traditionally stopped to get their pictures taken in front of the “Speed Limit 100 MPH” sign astride the test track.

And in September, Ford Motor Co. is hosting a charitable event that allows attendees to test-drive cars on the Ford test track in Dearborn.

Back at Chelsea, Special Olympics Michigan is expecting up to 300 or more people to attend their event, counting participants, Chrysler and SOMI volunteers, chaperones, parents, family members and the like.

On a related note, SOMI is also putting on the second Flag Football Expo at the State Cycling Finals. This event will be held at nearby Chelsea High School. Eight teams are competing in flag football as a trial run for this sport in hopes that flag football will become an official sport in 2013.

Chrysler is the official event sponsor of the State Cycling Finals.

## Harris Poll Says That Hybrid Interest Grows

When it comes to selecting a new automobile, car owners are showing an interest in purchasing a hybrid vehicle over traditional combustion engine vehicles, according to a Harris Poll.

One-third of car owners (32 percent) they have an interest in purchasing a hybrid vehicle, which is significantly up from a similar 2011 survey.

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