



Chairman of the War of 1812 Bicentennial Committee Dr. Jeff Pierce speaks at the RenCen last week.

'The Fleet's In' and They Paid a Visit To RenCen and Hamtramck Assembly

The GM RenCen hosted a series of Navy Week activities but we're not surprised – remember that the CEO of General Motors is an Annapolis grad himself, Dan Akerson.

Otherwise, sailors and military types scoured the GM RenCen and adjacent riverfront last week, all to simultaneously celebrate Navy Week and the Bicentennial of the War of 1812.

These events brought a number of ships, displays and activities to the Detroit River in what is estimated as the city's biggest riverfront celebration since the Detroit Tricentennial events of 2001, a decade ago.

Navy types, GM executives and event organizers gathered at the main stage adjacent to the RenCen's riverfront entrance to formally kick off the event on Sept. 5, coming out of the Labor Day weekend holiday.

GM Chief Diversity Officer Ken Barrett, himself a former Navy officer, led the remarks from dignitaries.

"Hey, the fleet's in, isn't that great?" Barrett beamed as hundreds of white-uniformed U.S. sailors (and their Canadian coun-

terparts) could be seen up and down the promenade.

"Welcome to GM's world headquarters at the Renaissance Center. On behalf of the GM men and women in these towers and throughout our company, I want to thank the Detroit War of 1812 Committee for its hard work in organizing this event that coincides with Navy Week.

"I also certainly want to thank Deputy Mayor Kirk Lewis and Lt. Gov. Brian Calley for their continued support of this event.

"And of course, (thank) the U.S. Navy, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Royal Canadian Navy for making Detroit and Windsor stops on this Bicentennial Tour.

"There is a great deal of history in and around this river. General Motors is a proud supporter of our nation's military for more than 100 years. We hope our participation will help the community honor our 'sea services' and give citizens and sailors a chance to meet.

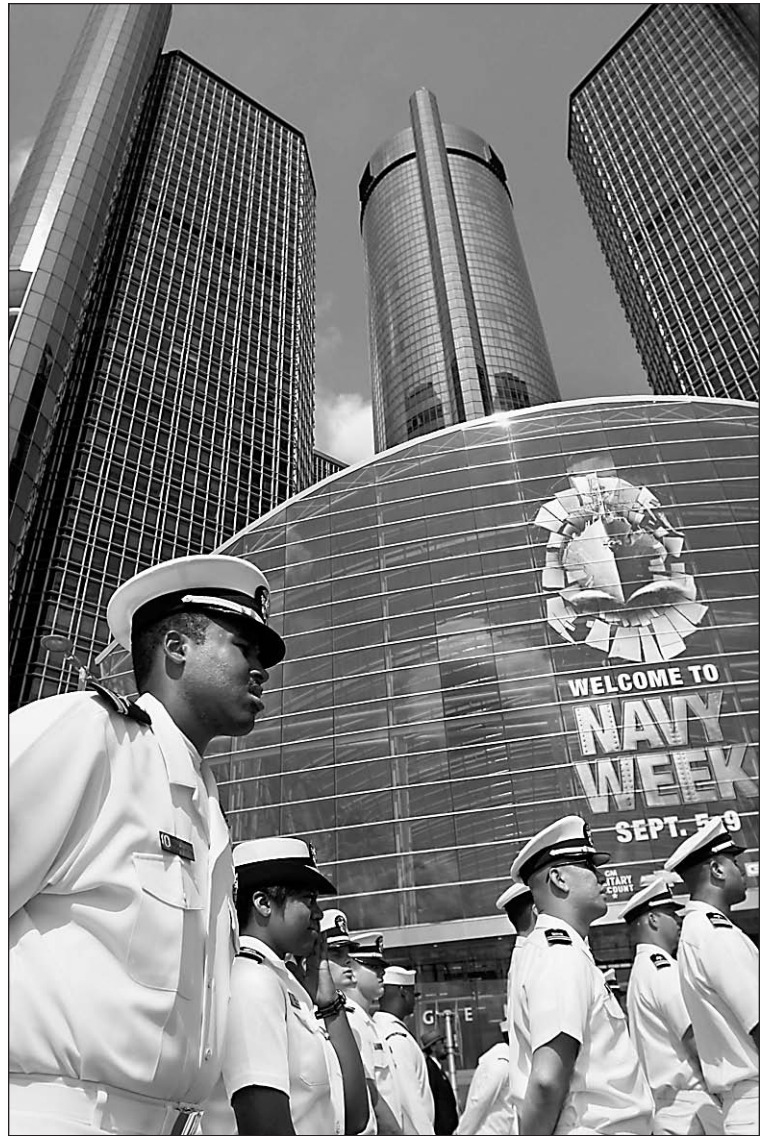
"We're proud to give back to those who give of themselves every single day."

Indeed, sailors and other U.S. military servicemembers could be seen throughout the RenCen, kicking tires on the cars in the basement-level GM auto display or picking up shuttle buses out front on Jefferson Avenue to go tour the GM Hamtramck Assembly Center, home of the Volt and still operational ahead of a planned shutdown in a couple weeks. The tours were popular.

Also, a large group of U.S. Navy officers and staff visited Campbell Ewald advertising agency in Warren last week because CE is the agency of record for the national Navy advertising account.

Detroit probably hasn't seen this many sailors in one place at one time since maybe World War II – or perhaps the War of 1812 prior to that. Which was the point of the celebration, one supposes.

GM is usually associated with the Army trucks that it has made dating back to the World War I era, but this time around the white-uniformed Navy sailors, and their ships, got their due from General Motors instead.



General Motors commemorates Navy Week on the Riverwalk outside of GM Global Headquarters at the RenCen in Detroit last week.

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Van Dyke North Of I-696 to Close Thurs. at 9 p.m.; Stores Accessible

MDOT says that Van Dyke Avenue in Warren, just north of I-696, will close for four days beginning Sept. 13 to allow Consumers Energy to replace a 20-inch main under the surface.

"All lanes will be closed, this will allow Consumers Energy to finish their work in about four days," said MDOT manager Rob Morosi. "Detours will be posted at the site, forcing northbound traffic onto the (I-696) service drive."

Van Dyke Ave. will be closed at 9 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 13, and then open up again on Tuesday, Sept. 18, at 5 a.m.

Morosi added that only about one-eighth to one-quarter mile of Van Dyke would be closed for the four-day stretch.

"We looked at different scenarios but a full-closure will work out best for Consumers to complete their repair work," he said.

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