

## Detroit Auto Scene

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Deadline: Thursday 5:00 p.m.  
for the next edition of Monday

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## Ford Beats SDD Goal in 2012

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

GDC, owned by Loretta Miller and based in Goshen, Ind., specializes in utilizing green technology (i.e., recycled tires) in plastic and rubber-formed products. GDC helped develop a product using coconut shells and fibers for Ford Super Duty.

G-TECH Services, a woman-owned business enterprise based in Dearborn, has been a professional staffing supplier to Ford for more than two decades. Under President and CEO Theresa Ghafari, the company has tripled its sales and employee numbers in the last decade alone.

ETCS, a minority-owned and operated engineering, tooling, components and staffing company located in Troy, is led by President and CEO Ravi Kapur. ETCS became a new supplier to Ford in October 2012 and provides die design.

"As innovators, these business leaders are creating new sustainable products that help us meet our goal to reduce our environmental footprint while at the same time accelerate development of advanced, fuel-efficient vehicle technologies around the world," said Preston. "They have made substantial contributions to Ford's profitable growth."

## 2013 Autorama Celebrates 50 Years Of Ridler Award Winning Hot Rods

A 1940 Ford Coupe with a unique, three-stage paint job left behind rivals from the most competitive field ever at the 2013 Autorama at Cobo Center to win the coveted Ridler Award at the Meguiar's Detroit Autorama.

Dubbed "Checked Past," the vintage Ford, owned by Ron and Deb Cizek of Bennington, Neb., triumphed out of a field of seven nearly equally spectacular custom vehicle runners-up to be named the winner of the Ridler Award, sponsored by Chevy Performance.

"His vehicle certainly was an eye-grabber," commented Pete Toundas, president of Champion Auto Shows, producer of Autorama, noting the 2013 contest was tough on the judges because all the 'Pirelli Great 8' cars competing for the Ridler Award were very close in terms of their fit, finish and quality.

The Cizek entry won out in the end thanks to its flawless body work, "spectacular" execution, three-stage paint job and Blown Ford Flathead. The car was built by Andy Leach of Cal Automotive in Omaha.

"The gold highlights with the burgundy paint job made it just an unbelievably beautiful car," Toundas added.

"There was quite a buzz in the hallways about the car because of the number of modifications on it ... It had a real elegant quality about it," commented Autorama Spokeswoman Linda Ashley.

"There was certainly no unanimous winner from the beginning," Toundas said. "It was the judges going at each car thoroughly, and finding out all of the pluses and minuses."

The Ridler Award is named in honor of Don Ridler, who was the first professional promoter of Detroit Autorama, and is given to the best custom 'rod in the country, shown for the first time at Autorama. The March 8-10 event at Cobo was also a celebration of all 50 past Ridler winners. According to Ashley, 25 of the 50 previous winners came to the event.

Although at press time a final count was not available, Ashley said attendance at this year's Autorama appeared to be somewhat improved over last year's figure of 150,000, likely because of the draw of being able to see many of the past Ridler Award-winning vehicles gathered in one place.

"People loved the opportunity to see the Ridler Award winners ... You could sense the enthusiasm," she said.

The chance to see the Ridler winners also raised the competitive stakes, with many more cars qualifying for this year's show because owners wanted to take part in the award's 50th anniversary.

"It was certainly the best of the best," Toundas said. "People came out to compete for the 50th anniversary of the Ridler Award. It just had excitement in the air this year, not only with the cars, but with the celebrities, features, packages, the Batmobiles ... You couldn't have made it a more perfect event for a car enthusiast."

The competition was truly national this year, with the Pirelli Great 8 finalists representing eight states. In addition to Cizek's winning Ford Coupe, other finalists were a 1956 Chevy pickup owned by Alan Beers of Owassa, Okla.; a 1934 Ford owned by Christian Harker of Blaine, Minn.; a 1935 Ford Phaeton owned by John Mayer of Berwyn, Ill.; a 1934 Ford owned by Ken Serenson of Sedona, Ariz.; a 1972 Chevy pickup owned by Buddy Schutz of Washington, Texas; a 1956 Buick Special owned by Mark Williams of Davenport, Iowa; and a 1965 Chevy Corvette owned by Allan Woodall of Cary, N.C.

Among awards going to Michigan owners, Best Restored honors went to John Kryta of Romeo for his 1969 Pontiac GTO convertible. Kryta also took home



2013 Ridler Award winner "Checked Past"

the Outstanding Restored award for his 1970 Oldsmobile 442.

Doug Wright of Waterford earned "Outstanding Competition" honors for his 1964 Plymouth Belvedere.

The Mitten State was well-represented under special awards as well. The CASI (Championship Auto Show) Cup went to Dale Hunt of Westland for his 1932 Ford Roadster; Adam Edwards of Detroit

picked up the Family Events Performance Series award for his 1971 Chevy Chevelle; and The Master Builder Award went to Stan Cole of Plymouth for his 1957 Belair Convertible.

The Best Bike award went to Ken Carr of Shelby Township for his 1952 Harley Davidson motorcycle; while Outstanding Bike went to John Szeszulski of Vassar for his 2011 Harley Road King.

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