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Selfridge Slates Appreciation Day

The Macomb County Chamber has joined forces with Selfridge Air National Guard Base to plan Selfridge ANGB Family Appreciation Day on Sunday, Aug. 18, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The event is being organized so the local community can pay tribute to military service members and their families in recognition of the sacrifices they make for the U.S.

The day is exclusively for active duty, reserve and National Guard military members, civilian base employees and their families. It will feature free food, drinks, competitions, kids' activities and live entertainment at the Selfridge ANGB Top 4 picnic area.

"We've modeled this event after military appreciation days in several other communities throughout the country," said Chamber CEO Grace Shore.

"We believe there are many businesses and individuals in metro Detroit who would like to express their gratitude and support for our U.S. Armed Forces, and this event gives them a chance to do it."

Besides monetary sponsorships, the chamber is seeking restaurant participation as well as volunteers for the event.

For more information, contact Jeffrey Wasser at 586-493-7600 or Jeffrey@macombcountychamber.com.

The National Guard base is situated on the shores of Lake St. Clair in Harrison Township.

Ram 1500 Powers To Top Spot on CR's Pickup List

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is one more validation that this truck can go head-to-head with anything in the marketplace – and we're not standing still," Hegbloom said.

Hegbloom pointed out that the Ram Truck brand is throwing multiple new technologies into the ring to stay competitive.

He also pointed out the new 3.0-liter diesel Chrysler will make available on its light-duty truck – which is expected to deliver greater than 25 miles to the gallon – the new 6.4-liter Hemi V8 gasoline-powered engine coming soon for the automaker's heavy-duty trucks, as well as new air suspension systems for these workhorses.

"We're not going to stand still and wait for someone to catch up – we're going to continue to push the bar," he said.

Hegbloom said *Consumer Reports* is a resource used mostly by younger, more educated and more affluent consumers.

"When we look at the demographics," said Hegbloom, "we are resonating with those consumers, and we are getting a higher mix of younger, more affluent and more educated consumers than our domestic counterparts."

New Vehicle App Ideas at GM Keep Coming and Coming

It's an app world after all, which is why GM has created a program to allow outside programmers to develop apps for GM vehicles.

And this program has already begun to generate great ideas, including one so simple that even the judges in a hackathon couldn't believe no one had thought of it before: Why not have a built-in vehicle application with two buttons – one reading Personal and one Business – that a driver could choose from when starting a trip?

The Business button would track mileage and fuel consumption for work-related trips that could be used for expenses or tax reporting.

While a non-business traveler might not care, many other apps being worked on within the GM Developer Portal could be just what another group of drivers are looking for inside their vehicles.

App ideas are being developed at a steady rate and could appear in a General Motors vehicle someday. Since January, nearly 2,300 developers have registered on the portal, choosing to engage in a test environment with either GM's Remote or In-vehicle application program interfaces (APIs).

Stefan Cross, OnStar communications manager, said the idea is to tap the expertise, experience and creativity of the larger IT world.

With GM's Remote APIs, developers can use simulated OnStar connectivity to develop apps that interact with the vehicle remotely, either from a smartphone, tablet or computer, Cross said.

GM's in-vehicle APIs allow developers to use simulated vehicle information, such as location data or vehicle diagnostics, to create apps that would be incorporated into the vehicle's infotainment system and would be available to download through a GM

AppShop that is being developed.

The GM AppShop would be built into the infotainment system and would allow customers to select from various GM-approved apps they want. Drivers would be able to personalize their vehicle, similar to smartphone personalization, Cross said. The infotainment system would be able to change over time as drivers' needs change and as new apps become available.

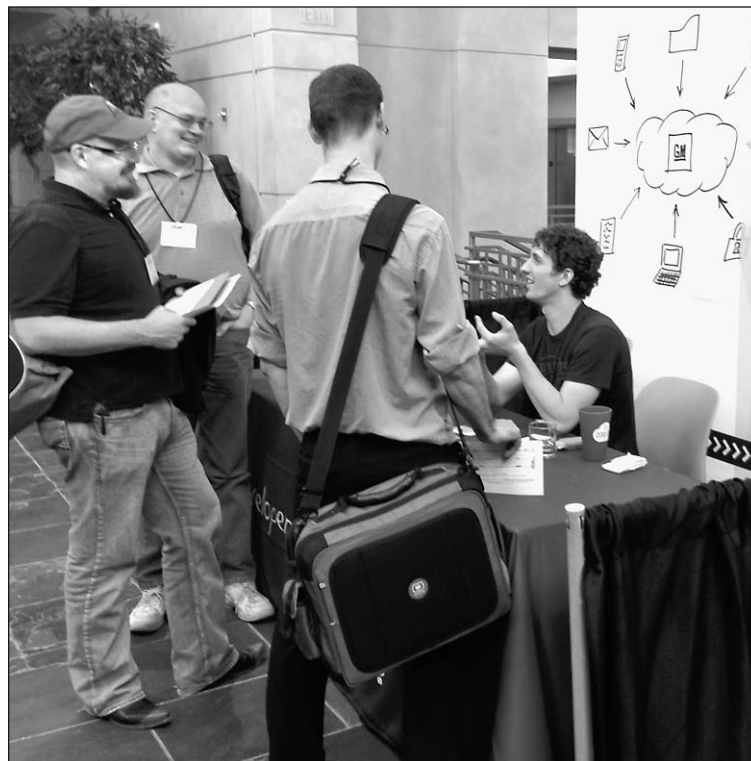
"We have developed and designed connected vehicles and with that connectivity there's tremendous range of what can be done with them," said Nick Pudar, GM director, Developer Ecosystems, Global Connected Consumer.

"There will probably be in-vehicle apps that are popular for everybody, but there will also be a range of apps useful to very targeted segments."

Creating apps for GM vehicles is an intriguing opportunity for developers. While the number of connected vehicles will never be as large as the smartphone population, today's vehicle app developers are early players in an uncluttered marketplace, Cross said.

"It can be very difficult for a new app developer to get noticed or become relevant," said Pudar. "Since our marketplace will be carefully curated for apps that are meaningful and appropriate for the driving experience, each available app will have much greater visibility. Couple that with the fact that on average we spend about 90 minutes a day in our vehicles, and you have a captive audience."

GM also allows developers to create apps in familiar HTML5 and JavaScript codes. Whereas creating apps for smartphones may vary by device, HTML5 allows developers to create one app that can reside in all GM info-



GM employees attend hackathons and technical conferences across the country to show their platform and engage with app developers.

tainment systems: Chevrolet MyLink, Cadillac CUE and Buick/GMC IntelliLink.

GM's flexible app platform is another advantage for both customers and developers. Developers benefit because it expands the types of apps they can create in vehicles.

"Since our future system is embedded, developers can create apps that use vehicle information. This will create a whole new category of 'car apps' we've never seen before," said Pudar.

"In addition, an embedded system is the only way to enable apps that can interact with the vehicle remotely. The range of embedded connectivity can be expensive."

Customers benefit from a built-in system because it enables personalization, allowing for downloadable apps that uniquely in-

teract with them based on the way they use their vehicles.

Even teens still waiting to get their driver's licenses can get into the act.

Another app idea from the recent TechCrunch Disrupt hackathon (an event where software developers collaborate and compete) in New York was a "Learn to Drive" app that allows the vehicle to act as a virtual driving instructor.

Sterling Heights Job Expo Helps Companies Hire

The Sterling Heights Career Expo is being held on Wednesday, July 31, at the Best Western Hotel at 34911 Van Dyke in Sterling Heights between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m. Companies looking for workers will have the chance to access 10,000 resumes from such sites as HiredInMichigan.com, JobFairGiant.com and OneStopHiringSolutions.com.

There is no cost for job seekers attending the fair, which is sponsored by JobFairGiant.com, and is expected to attract more than 1,000 job seekers.

Last year, HiredInDetroit.com drew more than 4,000 job seekers and there were more than 1,000 employers hiring. JobFairGiant.com promotes events via television, radio, newspapers and the Internet. It also has social media accounts on Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn. To learn more about the event and to sign up as an employer seeking job candidates, contact Tiffany Gilbert at 734-956-4550, or by email Gil@jobfairgiant.com.

TRW Launches New, Lighter, Smaller Weight-Saving Seat Belt Assembly

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the tensioning force to be generated more quickly than with conventional systems.

"Secondly, the damping behavior of the plastic snake allows the initial peak force, when impacting the pinion, to be significantly lower compared to conventional systems where two rigid steel elements impact on each other."

When vehicle sensors trigger the seat belt system, a pyrotechnical gas generator is ignited releasing a "green gas," which expands and builds up pressure in the guiding tube. This pressure acts on the snake-like plastic piston, which is forcefully propelled

into a pinion instead of the usual steel balls. The pinion then transmits a significant torque to the belt retractor spool to pre-tension the seat belt. The whole process takes ten milliseconds.

This kind of lighter seat belt system also makes sense for OEMs to adopt, Wilkerson said. With more stringent fuel standards coming into place, manufacturers are looking for ways to save weight. While a seat belt system might not add a lot of weight to a vehicle, any weight loss without sacrificing quality is considered a good thing. A pound or two here or there on different systems soon adds up to real weight savings.



The TRW SPR4

Additionally, Wilkerson said, OEMs are looking to save space with their vehicle interiors and making the seat belt system small helps them with that goal.

Ford Develops Improved Manufacturing Technology Method

Ford Motor Company is developing a new form of manufacturing technology that has the potential to reduce costs and delivery time for sheet metal parts needed in smaller quantities.

The development is based on Ford Freeform Fabrication Technology (F3T), a unique, patented manufacturing process developed at the Ford Research and Innovation Center.

Through this process, a piece of sheet metal is clamped around its edges and formed into a 3D shape by two stylus-type tools working in unison on opposite sides of the sheet metal blank.

Similar to a digital printer, after the CAD data of a part are received, computer-generated tool paths control the F3T machine to form the sheet metal part into its final shape, which then meets the required dimensional toler-

ances and surface finish.

"The technology behind F3T is yet another example of Ford leading in the advanced manufacturing space," said John Fleming, executive vice president, Global Manufacturing and Labor Affairs.

"As we forge ahead with cutting-edge technologies in manufacturing – like flexible body shops, robotics, 3D printing, virtual reality and others – we want to push the envelope with new innovations like F3T to make ourselves more efficient and build even better products."

Currently, traditional stamping processes are energy-intensive, and it often takes several months for the first part to move from concept to production, Fleming said. While traditional processes remain the most efficient method for high-volume stamping, he said, efficiencies for low-volume

production can be achieved with the flexibility F3T provides.

Benefits of F3T include low cost, said Fleming, because geometric-specific forming dies are completely eliminated, along with the high cost and long lead time associated with die engineering, construction and machining.

Then there is fast delivery time, Fleming said. The technology aims to enable the delivery of a sheet metal part within three business days from the time the CAD model of the part is received.

With the current technology, parts are delivered anywhere from two to six months using conventional methods – up to approximately 60 times longer than the potential turnaround time for F3T.

Once fully developed, F3T will

help to improve the vehicle research and development process, allowing for more flexibility in quickly creating parts for prototypes and concept cars, Fleming said.

Currently, creating a prototype die can take six to eight weeks, and developing a full prototype vehicle usually takes several months and up to hundreds of thousands of dollars. F3T could produce sheet metal parts for prototypes in just days for essentially no cost.

Fleming said Ford believes F3T has the potential to allow for greater personalization options, adding the ability for buyers to customize vehicle bodywork.

F3T is also expected to have broad applications outside of the automotive industry, including use in the aerospace, defense, transportation and appliance industries.