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Crowds of classic car aficionados spent time looking, lingering and kibitzing at this year's GM Tech Center Employee Car Show in Warren.

GM Employees Enjoy Classics at Tech Center's Car Show

by Jim Stickford

The Tech Center Employee Car Show, held at GM's Tech Center in Warren on July 24, gave today's car designers the chance to view some authentic Detroit steel and see how they did it the "old school" way.

The show is held every year at the Tech Center and gives current and retired GM Tech Center employees the opportunity to

show off their classic cars. It's sponsored by the Tech Center and UAW Local 160.

Among the GM employees taking a look at the classics on display were Lexi Scott, who is a Finance intern, and Mari Pine, who is a controller for Product Operations.

"We wanted to see these beautiful cars," Pine said. "We support the development of new products, so getting the chance

to see older cars is nice. The vehicles from the 1960s and 1970s are special. The more recent cars from the 1980s and 1990s are not so stylish, but the vehicles right now are. It's nice to see it all come back."

Scott said that she wanted to see the cars behind the production numbers.

"I think they're all so beautiful," Scott said. "To see that these vehicles are more than just

production numbers is great."

Steve Chaney is a designer who is working on the new Traverse, which uses the Lambda platform. He brings a practiced eye to the show.

"I look at the headlamps," Chaney said. "Right now, I'm looking at a 1967 Mercury Cyclone convertible, which is a rare car. When I look at the head-

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4-Year Degrees Now Closer for Macomb Students

The road was paved for Macomb County's first four-year college last week when ground was officially broken across the street from the Macomb Community College's Warren campus.

University and college officials, as well as local government representatives, attended the groundbreaking ceremony.

The Advanced Technology Education Center (ATAC), a collaboration between Wayne State University and Macomb Community College, will be completed and open to students in the fall of 2014. It will offer students the opportunity to obtain four-year degrees in a host of different majors.

At last week's ceremony, MCC president Jim Jacobs credited Ahmad M. Ezzeddine, associate vice president for educational outreach programs at Wayne State, for really pushing through the project.

The ATAC building will be situated on 12 Mile, where, as locals know, was the property of the former Farmer Jack store.

Ezzeddine called the groundbreaking ceremony a public celebration that was a couple of years in the making.

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Delphi Auto Offers Solution for the Sounds of Silence

Today's quieter, more efficient electric and hybrid electric vehicles have many positive qualities to recommend them, but their nearly silent approach has long been recognized by experts as a potential danger to pedestrians.

Delphi Automotive has offered a solution with the supplier's new Vehicle Sound Generator. With a pleasant, repeating short burst of tones, cars equipped with the Sound Generator warn pedestrians, cyclists and the visually impaired that a vehicle is approaching.

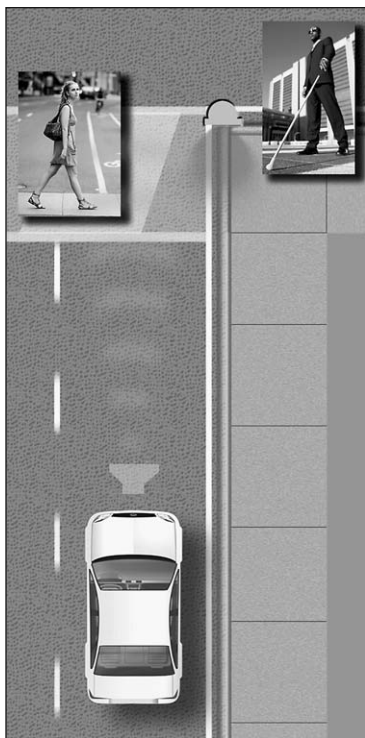
Compact and lightweight, Delphi's single-box sound generator – or sounder – is what Delphi presents as an environmentally friendly solution to comply with emerging safety legislation, while making it possible for the device to be integrated with other vehicle safety features.

"Delphi draws on decades of vehicle alarm system experience to develop this industry-leading sound generation technology," said Beth Schwarting, vice president of Delphi's Electronic Controls business unit.

"It will help automakers meet upcoming regulations designed to ensure that visually-impaired and other pedestrians are able to detect and recognize nearby hybrid and electric vehicles."

Delphi experts explain that vehicles that run on a partial or full electric drivetrain emit a much lower intensity sound at lower speeds compared to a similar size internal combustion engine powered vehicle.

For example, a pedestrian can hear an ICE vehicle moving down the road at 6 mph from 328 feet



Delphi product sounds warning.

away. In contrast, a near-silent vehicle like an electric or hybrid can be hard to detect even when it is close.

The Delphi Vehicle Sound Generator (patent pending) comes on the scene at a key moment. Schwarting says Japan already has guidelines for hybrid and electric vehicle warning systems in effect, and similar safety legislation is expected for North America and Europe in the near future.

"Industry experts predict that global legislation requiring warning signals is rapidly approaching," said Schwarting. "Delphi is committed to helping our customers address these market-driven challenges today with affordable, environmentally-friendly

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Survey Says: 66 Percent of Respondents Are Likely to Lease Their Next Vehicle

by Irena Granaas

If you've thought about leasing your next car instead of purchasing, you're in good company.

Swapalease.com recently conducted a car shopping survey that had about 66 percent of the 700 nationwide respondents saying they were "extremely likely" or "likely" to lease their next vehicle.

The lease marketing company said leasing should continue to rise over the next 12 to 24 months as pent-up demand continues to bring car shoppers into dealerships.

"Leasing will continue to be an attractive option for car shoppers looking for low monthly payments on their next vehicle," said Scot Hall, executive vice president of Swapalease.com. "Leasing's popularity will continue to rise as shorter terms and more flexible lease policies are introduced to consumers."

Leasing is a win for today's automakers and auto dealers as well, allowing people to drive home with more car for their money.

At Milosch's Palace Chrysler Dodge Jeep and Ram dealership in Lake Orion, leasing is a crucial part of vehicle sales.

"It's approximately 75 to 80 percent of our business, because (buyers) can get a lot nicer vehicle that fits their budget," said Paolo Persichetti, Palace general sales manager.

Persichetti said the percentage of customers choosing a lease is about the same as last year, but said business has picked up due to easier availability of credit.

"Buyer confidence is way up, as it should be," he said.

Persichetti said he expects leasing to grow as an option for consumers.

"People are seeing the benefit of leasing again because it's more affordable, when looking at a \$30,000 vehicle instead of buying it for a five-year loan or a six-year loan they can lease it for a two- or three-year loan for half the payment.

"And the truth of the matter is people think they're going to keep their car for a long time but nine times out of 10, after two or three years, people would like to change vehicles. Leasing is the best way to do that, and it keeps them coming back into the dealership every two or three years."

And, Persichetti noted, with a lease, their vehicle is covered bumper-to-bumper under warranty up to 36,000 miles.

"So nine times out of 10, all people have to do is make their payments (and a couple of oil changes) because now with the new Chrysler engines, they only have to change the oil every 10,000 miles," he said.

Leasing also accounts for more than half the vehicle sales at the Buff Whelan Chevrolet dealership in Sterling Heights. General Manager Jack Bos said at least 65 percent of the dealership's business is leasing. Dealership owner Kerry Whelan said, "It's important, obviously, because you're getting the customer back in a quicker cycle . . . also, everyone's needs continue to change throughout their life . . . If you get married and have a baby, and you have a three-year lease, you

can get out of that vehicle and get into another vehicle that's more conducive to your needs," she said.

She pointed out that after the GM bankruptcy "there was virtually no leasing" and it came back slowly, "but now we're definitely on the upswing, no question."

Bos can remember \$199 monthly car payments as far back as 1995 for a small car. Today, consumers can get lease payments that are even lower than that for vehicles that are twice the price.

"And the quality is so much better on the cars nowadays, so it makes customers happy to be able to get out of one vehicle and into another," he said.

"We feel the manufacturer likes to put more money into leasing in the Detroit area because employees and customers are happier with the cars, because they're under warranty."

Whelan said before the GM bankruptcy, people could actually be approved for a lease on a new car and not get credit for a used car, "which is crazy."

"Now it's back in line to where it needs to be. Credit was definitely a challenge at first. A lot of people went through a lot of hardships . . . But now we have different choices out there with GM Financial and with Ally and U.S. Bank, and they all do things a little bit differently, and so it's much easier to accommodate (people)."

"And with the high price of used cars right now, people can lease a brand-new car and not have any maintenance issues, as opposed to a used car," said Bos.

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