

Detroit Auto Scene

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2013 Ram 3500 ST Crew Cab Donated To Feed Hungry

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that Forgotten Harvest does to combat hunger," said Reid Bigland, head of U.S. Sales and president and CEO – Ram Truck Brand. "We welcome the opportunity to donate a new Ram 3500 truck to help their efforts to provide nourishment to those in our community who might otherwise go hungry."

In addition to farming Ore Creek Farm, Forgotten Harvest Farms also works with regional farmers and government agencies that have farm operations. Forgotten Harvest sends out its volunteers to harvest fresh, locally-sourced produce to deliver to agencies serving the hungry in metro Detroit, Goodell said.

In 2015, Forgotten Harvest will also begin harvesting 125,000 pounds of apples per year from the Forgotten Harvest Orchard of Hope on land donated by Blake's Farms in Macomb County.

New Lab to Give Ford a Battery 'Stepping Stone'

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He added, "Just as critical is the need for new chemistries to be assessed in a credible cell format," which means small-scale battery cells can be tested in place of full-scale production batteries without compromising the test results.

"It is way too early in the battery race to commit to one type of battery chemistry," said Miller. "In the span of 15 years, the industry has gone from lead-acid to nickel-metal-hydrate to the lithium-ion batteries used in Ford C-MAX and Ford Fusion hybrids on the road today. Others in the auto industry have placed their bets, but we are convinced a better solution will require input from a multitude of partners."

Ford's electrified vehicle line-up includes five models equipped with advanced lithium-ion batteries. Earlier-generation vehicles featured nickel-metal-hydrate batteries, which are about 25 percent to 30 percent smaller, and can provide about three times the power per cell of nickel-metal-hydrate batteries.

Miller said locating the lab on a university campus will be a draw for battery suppliers to work on complex problems in a common environment. "We need to work on these problems together in a neutral lab setting," he said. "This way, we all win. I think you are going to see a lot of companies in the battery supply chain come to Michigan to use this facility, in very short order."

"This is important for the state of Michigan, too," Miller added. "Previous investments have been focused on battery production, and now our state becomes a research core for batteries."

Contest: Viper Looking for a Few Good Color Names

Talk about a colorful contest, the Chrysler Group's Street and Racing Technology (SRT) brand is giving someone a chance to make their mark on automotive history as the color palette for the 2014 SRT Viper gains a new entry.

"The SRT Viper Color Contest" began on Oct. 17. Those wishing to participate should go to www.driveSRT.com/colorcontest, said Chrysler spokesperson Alyse Tadjewski.

The contest gives fans a chance to submit and choose an official new exterior color name of the 2014 SRT Viper. The fan who submits the winning name will win a trip to the "2014 Rolex 24 Hours of Daytona" at Daytona International Speedway and the opportunity to spend time with the Viper Design team throughout the race weekend.

"The SRT Viper Color Contest" gives our Viper enthusiasts an opportunity to be original, creative and contribute to the exterior design of our flagship American supercar," said Ralph Gilles, president and CEO of Chrysler's Street and Racing Technology Brand and Motorsports.

"Already available in a wide array of exterior color combinations – which provides our owners a way to personalize their cars – this contest is a great way for our dedicated fans to connect with the SRT brand and become an authentic part of Viper history."

Participants can visit www.driveSRT.com/colorcontest through Thursday, Oct. 24, where they can register and submit their name for the new exterior color of the SRT Viper. Once the sub-



2014 Viper

mission period ends, said Tadjewski, the top three color names chosen by the SRT design staff will be presented on [\[RT.com\]\(http://www.driveSRT.com\). Fans can then vote their favorite color name into SRT Viper history. Public voting will take place Nov. 4-11.](http://www.driveS-</p>
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GM's U.S. Sales Make Up for Decreases Internationally

Chevrolet sold a record 1.25 million vehicles around the world in the third quarter of 2013, up 0.6 percent over the same period in 2012, and the brand achieved its 12th straight quarter of year-over-year increased sales.

Overall, General Motors posted sales of more than 2.4 million vehicles in the third quarter of 2013, an increase of 5.5 percent over the same period in 2012.

"Chevrolet is focused on delivering technologies and features in every vehicle that add value and enhance the vehicle ownership experience," said Alan Batey, senior vice president of Global Chevrolet. "In the third quarter, we were able to attract more consumers to the brand thanks in large part to the launches of several new vehicles, including the Corvette, Silverado and Spark EV."

The top five Chevrolet sales markets in the third quarter of 2013 compared with the third quarter of 2012 were:

- U. S. – 478,000, 4.2 percent increase;
- Brazil – 171,000, 6.6 percent decrease;
- China – 151,000, 1.1 percent decrease;
- Russia – 48,000, 18.7 percent decrease;
- Mexico – 47,000, 7.8 percent increase.

GM spokesman James Cain said that while sales were down in some of the international markets, retail sales in North America more than made up for that decline.

"We've had great success in North America, especially in the

U.S., with our new product launches," Cain said.

Cain credited the improved U.S. sales to Chevy's launching of new products, starting with the Cruze three years ago.

And, Cain said, Chevrolet's in-

ternational portfolio is the strongest it has ever been.

The Onix in Brazil is a success, Cain said.

And in Asia, Chevrolet has done well with the Spin. Both vehicles are based on a common

platform – the GM Gamma II.

This is the company's global subcompact front-wheel-drive platform, Cain said.

The Gamma II is used with the Spark, Cobalt, Vauxhall Mokka, Spin, Onix, and Trax.

'Franchise Dealer System Benefits Consumer' – NADA Chief

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riety of financing options that dealers do, perform all warranty and safety recall work at no cost to the buyer, maintain the inventory of parts that dealers do (\$500,000 on average) and collect and pay all taxes associated with the selling of a new car.

"In other words, dealers provide essential services, either required by states or demanded by the customer," Westcott said.

The Internet has changed the way people shop and forced dealers to adopt new ways to interact with customers.

"That is why I can say unequivocally that the independent dealer franchise system is the most efficient and cost-effective way of selling and servicing vehicles anywhere, and that's why after more than 100 years, it is stronger than ever," Westcott said.

He also said he's worried about the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB). He said the agency's policy of creating a "fair lending" guidance program to eliminate dealer-negotiated financing and replace it with a flat fee would prevent dealers from discounting any financing they may offer.

The CFPB promised transparency in the setting up of

rules, but Westcott said he hasn't seen any. He understands the importance of giving every customer fair and equal treatment, but the regulating agency that decides policy needs to set that policy in a transparent way, and that's not happening.

"Our goal is to meet the transportation needs of all our customers in an open and honest manner," Westcott said. "And this includes working so that consumers can continue to have access to affordable credit."

After his speech, Westcott was

asked about the Tesla way of selling cars. He said that the Tesla is a good car but that even people at the company have admitted that once sales reach a critical mass, they will have to use some sort of franchise system.

Westcott was also asked about "Obamacare" and how it might affect the healthcare provided by dealers. He said some dealers might decide to eliminate healthcare and pay the fine, but that a dealership's employees are its best assets and that would be penny-wise, but pound-foolish.

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