# **Detroit Auto Scene** Tech Center News®

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### **General Motors Shuts Down Holden, Sells Off Thai Factory**

Building on the comprehensive strategy it laid out in 2015 to strengthen its core business, drive significant cost efficiencies and take action in markets that cannot earn an adequate return for its shareholders, General Motors is taking decisive action to transform its international operations, said GM spokesman Pat Morrissey.

GM's plan calls for winding down sales, design and engineering operations in Australia and New Zealand and retire the Holden brand by 2021. The company will focus its strategies for the market on the GM specialty vehicle business.

The company also signed a binding term sheet with Great Wall Motors to purchase GM's Rayong vehicle manufacturing facility in Thailand, and would withdraw Chevrolet from the domestic market in Thailand by the end of 2020.

"I've often said that we will do the right thing, even when it's hard, and this is one of those times," said GM Chairman and CEO Mary Barra. "We are restructuring our international operations, focusing on markets where we have the right strategies to drive robust returns, and prioritizing global investments that will drive growth in the future of of EVs and AVs.

"While these actions support our global strategy, we understand that they impact people who have contributed so much to our company. We will support our people, our customers and our partners, to ensure an orderly and respectful transition in the impacted markets.'

GM President Mark Reuss said the company explored a range of options to continue Holden operations, but none could overcome the challenges of the investments needed for the highly fragmented right-hand-drive market, the economics to support growing the brand, and delivering an appropriate return on investment.

"At the highest levels of our company we have the deepest respect for Holden's heritage and contribution to our company and to the countries of Australia and New Zealand," said Reuss.

"After considering many possible options - and putting aside our personal desires to accommodate the people and the market - we came to the conclusion that we could not prioritize further investment over all other considerations we have in a rapidly changing global indus-

"We do believe we have an opmobility, especially in the areas portunity to profitably grow the specialty vehicle business and

plan to work with our partner to do that," he concluded.

GM also undertook a detailed analysis of the business case for future production at the Rayong manufacturing facility in Thailand, said Morrissey. Low plant utilization and forecast volumes

have made continued GM production at the site unsustainable, he said, adding that without domestic manufacturing, Chevrolet is unable to compete in Thailand's new-vehicle market.

GM Senior Vice President and President of GM International Steve Kiefer said these decisions built on the announcement in January that GM would sell its Talegaon manufacturing facility in India; implement significant restructuring actions in Korea; and

**CONTINUED ON PAGE 4** 



As recently as 2018, the Holden Commodore was a popular sedan used by Australian police.

#### Ford Honors Its Dealers for Their Charity

United States overwhelmingly gave back to their communities last year, according to a survey taken of the dealers.

Ford Motor Company's annual survey on dealer giving showed that 30 percent of respondents said they gave more than \$50,000 per year while 35 percent committed between 10 and 20 hours each month to charitable giving.

The survey coincides with the 20th annual Salute to Dealers awards being held at the 2020 National Automobile Dealers Association Convention and Expo in Las Vegas last week.

The generosity of Ford and Lincoln dealers is reflected in how

Ford and Lincoln dealers in the much so many of them give, said Edsel B. Ford II, who chairs the Salute to Dealers awards program and is a member of the Ford board of directors.

The largest percentage of respondents, 30 percent, selected the highest giving category of donating \$50,000 or more for the year, said Ford. Most said they are driven to make a difference in their communities because giving is a part of their dealership tradition.

"Our dealers are valued partners in building trust for and lovalty to the Ford brand with our customers," said Ford. "They are the face of Ford and Lincoln in communities around the world, and today we are happy to applaud their commitment and dedication to building stronger, healthier, more connected communities.'

It was at this ceremony last year that Edsel Ford II introduced his son, Henry Ford III, as the future host of the Salute To Dealers event. With 2019 being a transition year in leadership for the Salute To Dealers event, Henry Ford III said he looks forward to continuing the tradition started by his father.

"My father spearheaded this initiative 20 years ago and I am grateful for the opportunity to

#### CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

#### **FCA Minority Development Effort Helps Virginia Lot**

number of minority dealers took a step forward this month when Winners Circle Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram in Hampton, Va., became the latest dealership to open as part of the Dealer Market Investment Program.

Jarryd Carver, 33, purchased the approximately 20,000-squarefoot facility, formerly known as Pomoco Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram, earlier this month with the help of the program,

said FCA spokesman Jeff Bennett. The Dealer Market Investment Program, launched last year, works to increase the participation of women and minorities in the company's network of about 2,600 U.S. dealers.

FCA's efforts to increase the er said. "This is my opportunity to repay them."

Phil Langley, head of FCA North America's Network Development, said Winners Circle underscores what can be accomplished when strong individuals are given that extra boost.

"Our program is not only about providing the financial resources, but also developing the person so they have the tools they need to run a profitable business," Langley said. "Jarryd brings the passion and commitment to community that will help him succeed.'

Candidates for the Dealer Market Investment Program apply through a process that requires demonstrated leadership skills, "This is a great opportunity for financial acumen and customer satisfaction, as well as a proven track record of exceptional sales performance, Bennett said. Candidates must also participate in FCA's dealer assessment and development program and invest their own start-up capital. The program, which also works with the Chrysler Minority Dealers Association and NAMAD, was instrumental in the opening of Northland Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram in metro Detroit and Russell Westbrook Alfa Romeo and Maserati in Van Nuys, Calif. Last month, FCA launched a new Dealer Diversity site designed to support and expand the number of dealerships owned and operated by minorities and women, Bennett said. The site, minoritydealers.com, provides a clearinghouse of information, including an online application process for joining the FCA dealer network.



Henry Ford III (left) and Edsel B.Ford (right) give Jim Koons his award at the recent 2020 Salute To Dealers.

me to plant my roots," Carver said. "I grew up poor in a singleparent household just outside of southeast Washington, D.C. My father, who by the way is a Dodge fan, encouraged me to join the National Association of Minority Auto Dealers (NAMAD). Thanks to his support and the help of NAMAD, I have undertaken the hard work to reach what I see as a significant achievement in my life.'

Carver said owning Winners Circle carries an extra special meaning since it sits in an area home to Langley Air Force Base, Norfolk Naval Station, NASA and the Virginia Air and Space Center.

"Hampton is a big military area and both the military and the local community were there to help my family deal with the loss of my aunt. Sharon Carver, who was killed at the Pentagon during the 9/11 terrorist attacks," Carv-

#### view this week's edition at DetroitAutoScene.com

## 2020 EyesOn Design Poster Recognizes Lost Auto Brands

by Jim Stickford

The Detroit Institute of Opthalmology (DIO) unveiled the poster for the 2020 EyesOn Design Car Show.

The unveiling took place on Feb. 20 at the DIO's office in Grosse Pointe Park.

The annual event, always held on Father's Day in June, is celebrating its 33rd show, said Dr. Philip C. Hessburg, founder and medical director of the DIO.

When unveiling the poster that will publicize the show, Hessburg said that the office where the DIO is used to be was a Chrysler dealership located on Jefferson in Grosse Pointe Park.

Hessburg said that the building's roof fell in about 35 years ago, so the DIO moved to another building next door that used to be AAA Michigan offices.

"So we've had a long history with the auto industry," Hessburg said. "When we moved, we needed to pay for new services and the idea for a car show was born."

Given the DIO's mission, it made sense for the theme of the show to be design because vision is the vital component to appreciate automotive design, Hessburg said. He credited Cadillac designer Dick Ruzzin for helping organize the first shows and tell the folks at the DIO on just how to put on a car show that would attract attention from across the country and around the world.

*USA Today* has written that there are more than 300 major car shows in the United States." Hessburg said. "They've listed us as number five in terms of importance. I say we're number one when it comes to posters.'

The history of the EyesOn Design show is shown through the posters commissioned every

year to promote the event, Hess- to be the subject of the 2020 burg said. These posters are more than informational, they are collector's items and they matter.

Which is why the DIO uses the services of automotive artist Tom Hale to pick the artists who draw the posters every year.

Hale said that this year he picked automotive artist Michael Goettner, who is especially known for his paintings of jets done for the Air Force.

"Many people don't understand the work that goes into creating a poster for an event like the EyesOn Design Car Show," Hale said. "I've done 65 posters myself so I know the work involved. The artist exists because of the fruits of his labor and creating a poster for us means having a lot of responsibility thrust on you. The artist has to work with a committee, and that's never easy. He must coordinate his painting with the theme of the show. This year it's honoring the designs of automotive brands that no longer exist."

Goettner said that he had a lot of fun creating the poster. It's a painting of the 1956 Packard Predictor.

"This car had a design that was a couple of year ahead of its time," Goettner said. "The mid-1950s was a time when cars went from boxy to sleek and like something from the jet age. Unfortunately, Packard had financial problems and the Predictor was a 'one and done' concept car design. Packard wasn't able to get the financing it needed and except for a couple of cars released under the Studebaker label, Packard was done by 1957."

Glen Durmisevich, chief judge and theme director of this year's EyesOn Design show, said that they chose the Packard Predictor poster because it was meant to be a test of what new designs would look like in the future.

Even though Packard never made the car, the Predictor was a classic example of how smaller car companies were able to do a lot with little in resources.

"Even brands that no longer exist have been able to have an impact on automotive design," Durmisevich said. "Because the Predictor was a concept car ahead of its time, we really like it and we're proud to say that it will be on the grounds of Eleanor and Edsel Ford Estate in Grosse Pointe Shores on the day of the 2020 EyesOn Design Car Show, which is Sunday, June 21.'



Goetter shows off his new painting, which is the basis of the 2020 EyesOn Design Car Show promotion poster.

#### Former UAW Official Gets Years in Prison for Corruption

DETROIT (AP) – A former United Auto Workers union official who received bribes and kickbacks from a vendor was sentenced to 28 months in prison.

Mike Grimes of Fort Myers, Fla. was accused of receiving more than \$1.5 million in bribes, including \$10,000 worth of cosmetic surgery for a relative while working at a UAW-GM training center. Grimes, 66, pleaded guilty

in September to money launder- tenced for their roles in a bribery ing and conspiracy charges.

The sentence imposed Feb. 18 by U.S. District Judge Bernard Friedman is longer than the two years sought by prosecutors. During his sentencing, Grimes apologized to UAW members and his family, acknowledging he "got into something I shouldn't have." Grimes is the first of three con-

victed UAW leaders to be sen-

and kickback scheme involving rigged bids, union vendors and contracts for watches other promotional merchandise.

Awaiting sentencing is former UAW vice president Joe Ashton, who served on the board of General Motors Co. and is the highest-ranking person convicted of a crime during this investigation of auto industry corruption.



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#### GM's Moves in Asia Make Sense in New Auto World

by Jim Stickford

When GM revealed plans to sell a facility in Thailand and get totally out of Australia, many expressed disappointment, while others called it a "gutsy" move.

The Associated Press reported that "Dave Smith of the Australian Manufacturing Workers'Union also expressed chagrin.

"Workers at Holden had thought they'd 'been through the worst of it, and that's not the case,' Smith said. 'For many of them their long-term workers have been very loyal to the company ... they've loved being part of the car industry, and now, it was such an iconic brand coming to an end; it'll mean an end to their jobs.'

John McElroy, host of the TV show "Autoline," said it makes sense for GM to have made the moves that it did in Asia.

"Here's how I see it," McElroy said. "For 30 years prior to the great recession in 2008, Detroit automakers destroyed billions of dollars of shareholder equity because they invested in regions where they were getting no return. Now they are in a time when they must invest billions of dollars to develop new technology, and these investments could pay off handsomely for them."

McElroy said that he feels that there is real justification for what GM has done and it's very possible for outside parties to look at the situation and say that it was the right move.

any other industry going to a company's board of directors and saying that they want to invest billions with the potential for that investment to provide very little in terms of Return On Investment (ROI)," McElroy said. "That's what the Detroit auto industry has done for a long time. And Those days are gone.

"Remember, last year GM sold more vehicles in the state of Texas than the company did in Australia and New Zeeland combined. So this move makes sense to me.

GM has 828 employees in Australia and New Zealand and another 1,500 in Thailand, the company said.

McElroy said he has long believed that Detroit automakers

Columbia. The honor recognizes ATD Net- for the quality of their work in work colleges that have lived their reform work over time and that have seen real improvements in student achievement across the institution, said Sean Patrick, manager of Media Relations for MCC. Macomb originally achieved Leader College status in 2013 and was recertified in 2016, Patrick said. Its 2019 recertification was announced today at the organization's annual DREAM conference, which is currently being held in National Harbor, Maryland. "Macomb Community College sees student success as the heart of what we do," said MCC President James O. Sawyer IV, Ed.D. "Achieving the Dream is a vital connection and resource for us and our colleagues throughout the country in advancing our knowledge and fostering the achievement of our students." Leader Colleges, which are certified for three-year terms, have shown progress in building institutional capacity to create a stu-

have done a great job of convincing the investing community that it is all right to invest in vehicles and companies that won't bring a profit. As a result, Detroit automakers have spent fortunes propping up product lines and subsidiaries that don't pay for themselves.

"I call this a gutsy, hard-nosed move on the part of GM," McElroy said. "Granted pulling out of Australia and ending Holden is a great shock to some. GM president Mark Reuss was even based in Australia for a while. But I have to respect the discipline on the part of GM to stick to a declared business strategy previously announced. In the past, executives has been unable to pull the trigger and it's cost the company.

McElroy said that making the decision to sell a plant in Thailand and get out of Australia no doubt caused some sleepless nights for executives, but it makes financial sense.

"The American car market is unusual," McElroy said. "We have wide open spaces and cheap gas prices, so the cars we like are different from places like Europe and Asia, where American cars don't work in that environment.'

As a result American car companies have to develop different vehicles for their primary market and that makes it difficult to use that engineering and design in other markets around the world.

McElroy said that GM's moves "I mean imagine someone in in Asia are part of the company's larger business strategy. The company is no longer trying to make vehicles, such as small sedans, that don't give a good ROI. And as the market share of sedans continue to drop, it makes sense for GM to put its money in vehicle niches, such as trucks and SUVs, that are growing in popularity and provide more profits than small sedans.

> "Even Rolls Royce is developing an SUV," McElroy said. "That should tell something. What I want to see, is what Ford will be doing in the future. That company's board has to ask itself the same questions as GM and come up with a business strategy as well. Ford has already pretty much gotten out of the sedan market.

#### (AP) DETROIT - Owen Bieber, who led the United Auto Workers union from the auto industry's dark days of the early 1980s to the prosperity of the mid-1990s, has died. He was 90.

Neither as charismatic as his predecessor, Douglas Fraser, nor as confrontational as his successor, Stephen Yokich, the low-key Bieber had an easygoing manner that belied his 6-foot-4, 265pound frame and the results he produced at the bargaining table.

Taking over as its president in 1983, Bieber shepherded the UAW through a recession, the Reagan era, industry downsizing and rapidly expanding global competition. Bieber led the UAW through contract talks that won its members wages, benefits and job and income security that were unmatched in other major U.S. industries.

"Owen Bieber's death is a loss for our union and all working people," UAW President Rory Gamble said in a statement. "He was not afraid of tough battles or taking a stand on controversial issues.

Under Bieber, the UAW also actively supported the Solidarity labor movement, which challenged Poland's Communist government, and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa. Bieber traveled to South Africa twice, raising the alarm about the imprisonment of labor activists and smuggling images of torture out of the country. In 1986, he was arrested while marching at the South African embassy in Washington D.C.

When former South African President Nelson Mandela toured the U.S. after his release from prison, Bieber stood at his side during a rally in Detroit. In 2003, Archbishop Desmond Tutu singled Bieber out during a visit to Grand Rapids.

"We came asking for help, and you gave that help and accomplished this extraordinary thing," Tutu said, according to the UAW.

Bieber was born Dec. 28, 1929, in North Dorr, Mich. He joined the union in 1948 when he went to work bending wire for car seats at McInerney Spring and Wire Co. in Grand Rapids and became a shop steward the following year. By 1956 he was president of his local.

In 1961, then-UAW president Walter Reuther made Bieber a



**Former UAW President Owen Bieber Dies** 

**Owen Bieber** 

member of the regional staff. He became regional director in 1974 and was elected a UAW vice president in 1980. Three years later, he succeeded Fraser as president.

General Motors Co., Ford Motor Co. and Chrysler Corp. had to get leaner during Bieber's tenure to compete with Japanese companies that were winning over American buyers with their smaller, more fuel-efficient cars. But the UAW was able to negotiate agreements that helped workers keep their pensions or kept their paychecks coming even if they were laid off.

posed to do," Bieber said shortly before Yokich succeeded him as president. "If you look at the rough road that workers have had to come over and live through since the late 1970s ... a worker who belonged to the UAW, who was a member of the UAW, probably that was the best thing that could have happened to them.

Union membership shrunk in size by about half between 1979 and 1995, Bieber's last year as president. Bieber had hoped to unionize Japanese and German carmakers when they opened U.S. plants, but he only had one success: a GM-Toyota joint manufacturing plant in Fremont, Calif. GM closed that plant in 2010; it's now owned by Tesla Inc., which is also not unionized.

U.S. union membership has continued to decline. In 2018, the UAW reported 395,703 members. down from 826,000 in 1995.

One of Bieber's sons, Ron Bieber, is now president of the Michigan AFL-CIO labor union.

"Owen Bieber left behind a world that is better off because of his activism and dedication to service to others," Ron Bieber said in a statement.

Owen Bieber is survived by his wife of 69 years, Shirley Bieber; five children; 19 grandchildren; 18 great-grandchildren; and two great-great-grandchildren.

We did what unions are sup-

#### Auto Insurance Company Losses Cash

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP) – State Feb. 20 reported fourth-quarter net income of \$32.7 million, after reporting a loss in the same period a year earlier.

The Columbus, Ohio-based company said it had net income of 72 cents per share.

Earnings, adjusted for investment gains, came to 29 cents per share.

The insurance holding company posted revenue of \$367.8 million in the period. Its adjusted revenue was \$343 million.

For the year, the company reported profit of \$87.4 million, or \$1.96 per share. Revenue was reported as \$1.33 billion.

State Auto Financial shares have declined roughly 3 percent since the beginning of the year.



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#### MCC Honored as a Top Community College

has been recertified as a Leader College by Achieving the Dream (ATD), a nonprofit focused on student success that leads a network of 277 community colleges in 44 states and the District of

Macomb Community College dent-focused culture and strong outcomes for all students. They play an important role in accelerating adoption of effective practices within the ATD Network and across the higher education sector.

> Leader Colleges are recognized whole college reform, resulting in increased completion rates for all students, Patrick said. Leader Colleges are expected to develop innovative ways to work with other colleges to share knowledge and facilitate an exchange nity colleges to so honored.

of ideas about evidence-based reform strategies.

We're proud to acknowledge the achievements of colleges in our Achieving the Dream Network," said ATD president and CEO Karen A. Stout, Ed.D. "These new Leader Colleges represent a group that has worked extremely

hard over the past few years to change the trajectory of their institutions. Their work impacts their students, communities, and the higher education sector." MCC was one of nine commau-



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#### **GM Pulls Out of Australia**, **Sells Factory in Thailand**

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invest in and continue to optimize South American operations. These are difficult decisions.

but they are necessary to support our goal to have the GM International region on the pathway to growth and profitability," said Kiefer.

"GM is well-positioned in our GM International core markets: South America, the Middle East and Korea.'

GM International Operations Senior Vice President Julian Blissett said that as well as implementing plans in international core markets, GM was continuing to optimize partnerships in markets like Uzbekistan by transferring assets and building strong supply chains to reduce costs in growth markets.

"In markets where we don't have significant scale, such as Japan, Russia and Europe, we are pursuing a niche presence by selling profitable, high-end imported vehicles – supported by a lean GM structure," said Blissett. "We will continue to imple-

ment these critical business strategies, while delivering a dignified and respectful transition in impacted markets."

In Australia, New Zealand. Thailand and related export markets, customers can be assured that GM will honor all warranties and continue to provide servicing and spare parts, Morrissey said. Local operations will also continue to handle all recall and any safety-related issues, working with the appropriate governmental agencies.

As a result of these actions in Australia, New Zealand and Thailand, the company expects to incur net cash charges of approximately \$300 million, Morrissey said.

The company expects to record total cash and non-cash charges of \$1.1 billion.

These charges will be incurred primarily in the first quarter and continuing through the fourth quarter of 2020. These charges will be considered special for EBIT-adjusted, EPS diluted-adjusted and adjusted automotive free cash flow purposes.

The Lincoln Motor Company continues to gain recognition for its impressive lineup of luxury vehicles, said Lincoln spokeswoman Anika Salceda-Wycoco. Both the Aviator and Navigator, she said, are being recognized for their versatility, features and overall performance at this year's Chicago Auto Show.

The event was open to the media last week.

Members of the Midwest Automotive Media Association voted Lincoln Aviator the winner of the 2020 MAMA Luxury Family Vehicle of the Year award, ahead of the BMW X7 and Cadillac XT6, Salceda-Wycoco said.

A nonprofit group of automotive journalists and public relations professionals, Midwest Automotive Media Association developed its award to assist carshopping families in making a wise, knowledgeable purchase decision.

"Choosing a family vehicle is an important decision," said Tim Healey, MAMA award coordinator. "Whether it's a premium brand or mainstream model, it should be versatile, reliable, efficient and reasonably priced. MAMA members pooled their expertise and experience to select the best family vehicles from an outstanding group of new and significantly refreshed models and ... Lincoln Aviator came out on top.<sup>3</sup>

New Lincoln Vehicles Proving Successful

To qualify for the award, vehicles had to have four doors, appear at one of MAMA's two annual rallies, and be new or significantly updated within a year of the 2019 Spring Rally, which took place last May, Salceda-Wycoco said. The MAMA Spring and Fall Rallies feature a broad range of manufacturer vehicles for journalists to drive and evaluate.

Voting took place at both rallies, and the field of contenders was then narrowed down for a last round of voting. Mainstream finalists were the Ford Escape, Ford Explorer, Honda Passport, Hyundai Palisade, Jeep Gladiator, Kia Telluride, Mazda 3, and Subaru Outback. The finalists in the luxury category were the BMW X7, Cadillac XT6, Lincoln Aviator, Lincoln Nautilus, and Mercedes-Benz AMG CLS 53 Coupe.

In each round of voting, three points were awarded for a firstplace vote, two points were given for a second-place vote and thirdplace votes were valued at one point each, Salceda-Wycoco said. MAMA media members then voted in one final round, and 99

automotive journalists participated. The 2020 Lincoln Aviator was crowned Luxury Family Vehicle of the Year with 192 points, edging out the 2019 BMW X7, which netted 148 points. The 2020 Cadillac XT6 rounded out the top three with 108 points.

That isn't the only good news about Lincoln, Salceda-Wycoco said. In addition, Consumer Guide, the leading publisher of authoritative, unbiased new and used car reviews for 53 years, named Lincoln Navigator an Automotive Buy in its premium Best large/SUV category.

Consumer Guide editors use objective criteria, such as price, features, performance, accommodations, fuel economy, reliability records and resale value, to assess each vehicle, Salceda-Wycoco said.

Key to the awards is the careful evaluation of every aspect of each vehicle as it relates to consumers' real-world driving experience.

"The new three-row Lincoln Aviator defines effortless performance among premium SUVs, offering impressive power and capability, while the full-size Lincoln Navigator continues to drive brand momentum as a client favorite," Salceda-Wycoco said.

#### Dan Gilbert Returns to Work

DETROIT (AP) Loans founder and Chairman Dan Gilbert is slowly returning to work eight months after suffering a stroke.

Gilbert, 58, returned to his Detroit office early this year. He's there one or two days a week, using a wheelchair and accompanied by a service dog named Cowboy.

He also spends three or four hours a day working with physical and occupational therapists at his home.

"When you have a stroke, here's the problem with it: Everything is hard. Everything,' Gilbert told Crain's Detroit Business in his first interview since the stroke. "Like you wake up, getting out of bed is hard, going to the bathroom is hard, sitting down eating at a table is hard. You name it. You don't get a break. You're like trapped in your own body.'

Gilbert was able to give his first public speech since the May 25 stroke on VFeb. 14 at the Crain's Newsmakers of the Year luncheon in Detroit.

It's a change of pace for the hard-charging executive, who also owns the NBA's Cleveland Cavaliers and several other

- Ouicken sports teams. Right before his stroke, Gilbert was texting Michigan's governor about a deal to get long-term funding for road repairs

> Gilbert was hosting a party just before Memorial Day when his vision seemed suddenly blur-

> His wife and a physician friend convinced him to go to the hospital after he started showing other signs of a stroke, including facial asymmetry, arm drift and speech difficulty.

> Gilbert said he had a blood clot in his carotid artery that was cutting off the blood supply to his brain. Doctors implanted seven stents inside his carotid artery to open the blood vessel.

> "If that artery was blocked more minutes than it was, it would have been much worse," Gilbert said.

> Gilbert spent eight weeks at a rehabilitation center in Chicago last summer. He is able to walk with a cane but still struggles to move his left arm.

> Gilbert said his current priority is the construction of a skyscraper in downtown Detroit. His real estate company, Bedrock Detroit, broke ground on the building in 2017.



2020 Lincoln Navigator

#### **Ford Honors Its Dealers for Their Charity**

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continue the very fulfilling work of recognizing our dealers for all they do to support communities across the globe every day," said Ford.

Dealers give to causes that address a broad range of community needs - from children's charities to the environment. from education and healthcare to parks, municipal services and disaster relief efforts.

a Salute to Dealers display in the lobby of Ford World Headquarters in Dearborn.

Ford's 2019 awards recognized the following dealers for their unparalleled generosity and commitment to their communities, and provided brief testimonials in their honor.

Gail Miller, Larry H. Miller Dealerships – Sandy, Utah. Gail Miller is committed to enriching lives in the many communities where she does business. Her dedication and leadership have helped instill that commitment in her employees. An annual Larry H. Miller Day of Service is an initiative where employees donate thousands of hours at more than 200 locations helping at-risk youth, families of critically ill children and domestic abuse victims, many in need of food, shelter and other critical services. Through support from the Larry H. & Gail Miller Family Foundation, she established a diabetes prevention program with the University of Utah. The initiative includes a wellness bus that serves vulnerable populations with free and lowcost screenings for diabetes and other chronic illnesses, as well as prevention efforts to identify and educate those with pre-diabetes. It includes a four-week curriculum for homeless families at a domestic violence shelter. Two clinical programs have been initiated

Church, Va. Koons is an inspiration to those around him. His enthusiasm is contagious, and his kindness and support for the community has a profound effect on those touched by his generosity. Koons has a long philanthropic history with Catholic Charities. Each year, he shows his compassion for the homeless by providing gift cards to all who attend a Thanksgiving and Christmas program for the displaced.

**Guss Pappas** 

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Children's causes top the list, with 76 percent of responding dealers donating, followed by 67 percent giving to education and scholarships. More than half of respondents ranked veterans' causes and municipal services such as police and firefighting efforts very high on their list of giving.

To demonstrate Ford's commitment to its thousands of dealer owners who step beyond their showroom doors to make a difference, in 2001 the company launched its Salute to Dealers awards. This year, Edsel B. Ford II said he and four other judges selected six winners from a global field of nearly 65 nominees. As part of the program, Ford Motor Company Fund and Community Services is donating \$10,000 to a charity of each dealer's choice.

A painted portrait of each honoree features a montage of the philanthropic and volunteer activities that led to the award. Duplicates of the portraits will join

Jim Koons, Koons Ford - Falls

He also makes significant financial contributions to a local Catholic high school, where he and his family attended. The contributions have enabled transformational changes and improvements to the school, including a new athletic center and a library

Having experienced firsthand the loving support and guidance of hospice services while caring for his mother, Koons and his wife Cece made a \$2 million donation to Talbot Hospice in support of its services. The Eleanor A. Koons Hospice House was designated in his mother's honor.

Gregory F. Daunhauer, Byerly Ford – Louisville, Ky. Daunhauer's commitment to community runs deep and wide.

Other honorees included Pham Ngoc Than, Ben Thanh Ford - Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, José Abraão Vinhal, Ford Caminho - São Paulo, Brazil and André Quakernack, FordStore Autohaus Hagemeier GmbH – Versmold, Germany.

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**FEBRUARY 24, 2020** 

DETROIT AUTOMOTIVE MANUFACTURING AND TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRIES

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#### **Global LiDAR Market Only Expected to Keep Growing**

The global LiDAR market size human efforts and increased effiis expected to reach \$2.9 billion by 2025, expanding at a CAGR of 17.9 percent, according to a new report by Grand View Research, Inc

The surging acceptance in environmental mapping and automobile safety application arenas expected to boost market is growth. The increasing acceptance in the construction and architectural sectors for monitoring and 3D-modeling applications is further anticipated to bolster market growth, said Sherry James, spokeswoman for Grand View Research.

Key suggestions from the report indicate that the global market is estimated to grow significantly over the forecast period due to automation in numerous industries, leading to reduced ciency. The technological superiority of LiDAR technology in several engineering projects of the large magnitude are estimated to trigger the demand by 2025

Airborne systems are expected to remain the dominant product segment over the forecast period. The segment is anticipated to gain prominence over the forecast period on account of surging adoption of aerial mapping devices. Mobile terrestrial scanning is a preferred survey method in monitoringand geospatial mapping.

North America is expected to emerge as one of the leading regional markets owing to the rising R&D spending coupled with high adoption in the automotive sector and environmental scanning & modeling operations.



Technicians soon will be trained how to service and maintain the all-electric Mustang Mach-E without need to access to a physical model - thanks to a new virtual reality (VR) training tool from Ford and Bosch.



#### Ford Technicians Use VR to Train on Mach-E

Coming up with new automotive technology to keep up with changing times is vitally important to Ford, according to Dave Johnson, director of Ford service engineering operations.

So is finding new ways to train the technicians that will have to maintain that tech once it hits the marketplace, he said.

And Ford has the ways and means to handle the problem of training those technicians by using virtual reality (VR) technology developed by auto suppler Bosch, said Bosch spokesman Tim Wieland.

Technicians soon will be trained how to service and maintain the all-electric Mustang Mach-E without need to access a physical model - thanks to a new virtual reality (VR) training tool from Ford and Bosch.

'Technicians will be immersed in a simulated and gamified world, meaning they won't need to rely on actual Mustang Mach-E vehicles to learn about its components, including the electric SUV's new high-voltage system,' said Johnson. "This new virtual reality training tool allows technicians to understand the components and steps required to service these high-voltage systems, then confidently perform diagnostics and maintenance."

son said. A technician wearing the virtual reality headset will learn how to diagnose and perform service related to the vehicle's high-voltage system. This includes tasks such as removal and installation of the main battery as well as service and maintenance on the battery pack itself.

Bosch also is developing future extensions where the technicians utilize VR to enter the vehicle and navigate through modules as if they were walking through rooms to learn the system. Navigating between modules enables the technicians to determine the issue to repair the vehicle.

"The virtual reality training solution is about new technology that builds efficiency," said Geoff Mee, director of Operations for Bosch. "By improving the diagnostic process, technicians are able to perform maintenance and make repairs faster and more easily.

This new virtual reality system can be used as an ongoing training tool, allowing technicians to learn niche skills in the Ford technical training program. Virtual reality training has the potential to attract new hires to the automotive repair world, rightly

Here's how it all works, John-framing the profession as a hightech, forward-thinking industry in which technicians can learn more efficiently in a state-of-theart environment, Johnson said. Additionally, technicians can tap into the system from any location.

Bosch developed a proof of concept in 2019 for automotive service training via virtual reality, then market-tested it with instructors, technicians and college students, Wieland said. Ford Motor Company is the first automaker to pilot the application in its service technician powertrain repair course, specifically with the new Mustang Mach-E, the company's first all-electric SUV. Ford could expand the technology to train on additional vehicles in the future.

The virtual reality training solution uses an Oculus Quest virtual reality headset from Facebook, Johnson said. Ford and Bosch are working with Oculus for Business to manage their fleet of headsets deployed to the Ford technician training program, as well as with PIXO VR. The company's proprietary virtual reality content distribution platform enables scaling and iterating virtual reality training software and applications.

#### **HELLA Introduces New Radar Technology**



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Lighting and electronics company HELLA will be bringing its latest 77 GHz radar technology into series production in spring 2020

In this area, the company has already acquired several major orders, said HELLA spokeswoman Madison Kielty. Initially, an Asian manufacturer of trucks and buses will be supplied. In this context, the market launch will take place within the framework of the strategic cooperation with ZF

Subsequently, HELLA will start series production for other international car manufacturers, thus further expanding its strong market position in the field of radar sensor technology. The radar sensors will initially be manufactured at the electronics plant in Hamm, Germany, and then also in China and the United States.

"Radar sensor technology is a key technology for the realization of assisted and automated driving functions," says Frank

Petznick, who, as a member of HELLA's Electronics Executive Board, is responsible for the global Automated Driving Product Centre. "Our 77 GHz radar sensors make a significant contribution in this context." On the one hand, HELLA's latest 77 GHz radar technology is characterized by its high performance and range as well as its compact design.'

This simplifies its integration into the vehicle body and enables 360 degree perception of the vehicle environment. On the other hand, HELLA's 77 GHz radar sensors are based on a modular, scalable platform concept that allows customer-specific requirements to be implemented flexibly and efficiently. Thus, NCAP requirements as well as functions for automated driving can be implemented.

"With our platform approach, our 77 GHz radar family covers all essential market requirements: from cost-optimized sen-

sors for basic assistance functions, for example for high-volume vehicle segments and commercial vehicles, to high-performance variants that are necessary for higher development stages of autonomous driving such as automated parking or highway pilots," said Petznick.

At the beginning of the year, HELLA also entered into a strategic partnership with the U.S. start-up Oculii. The aim of the cooperation is to further increase the performance of the 77 GHz radar platform by integrating software developed by Oculii. Results of the development partnership are expected to go into series production in 2023.

HELLA has been active in the radar business for around 20 years and was one of the first companies to start series production of 24 GHz radar sensors for rear applications. Today, HEL-LA is a global market leader in this field with more than 30 million sensors manufactured.

#### **FEBRUARY 24, 2020**

#### Michigan Outfit **Closing Its** Doors in a Year

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CAPAC, Mich. (AP) - A company that makes automobile parts plans to shut down a plant in Michigan next year, after promising to invest \$22 million into a new facility that would have provided 260 jobs.

Keihin North America announced the decision in a news release. The company said it has not been able to expand new business as quickly as hoped, giving no other recourse but to proceed shutter Keihin Michigan Manufacturing, the Port Huron Times Herald reported.

Founded in 2007, the Michigan facility makes automotive air conditioning systems and advanced engine components. Keihin Corp., a major supplier to Honda, is based in Tokyo. Its North American headquarters is in Anderson, Ind. Operations at the Michigan plant will cease in February 2021, giving the 165 people there a year's notice.

The company is providing severance packages that include transition of medical benefits and outplacement services.

"It's always unfortunate when a plant or facility closes," said Dan Casey, Economic Development Alliance of St. Clair County director. He says his agency has committed to helping the employees find jobs with services and job fairs. Casey hopes that Keihin will put the building on the market or up for lease.

"It's a highly marketable property," he said.

Capac Village President John Grzyb said in an email he doesn't think the facility will be closed for long.

"It's a fairly new plant, a great location, a good work force and good utilities available," Grzyb wrote.

Construction of FCA's new assembly plant in Detroit has been a journey of discovery, said Ryan Oswald, Building Project manag-

For the past several months, construction crews have found parts of old house basements, street pavement, and massive old stamping plant foundations and steel beams, Oswald said.

Since last spring, crews have removed more than 830.000 cubic feet of dirt and built a nearly 1.5-mile long, 10-foot-high concrete sound wall (15 feet in some places), in addition to creating three water-retention ponds that will hold more than 500,000 cubic feet of water.

"The biggest obstacle during construction, so far, has been the removal of massive concrete foundations that were once part of the old Michigan Stamping Plant, which later became part of the old Chrysler Mack Avenue Stamping Plant," Oswald said.

"During construction of the new plant's paint shop, contractors were continually digging through thick, heavily reinforced concrete walls that contained embedded steel beams and plates

"Although we knew about these obstructions ahead of time, determining the amount of time and effort that it would take to break and remove all of these obstructions was extremely difficult."

The company was aware that the massive, old dirt berms along the west side of St. Jean Street were built over what used to be dozens of old homes, Oswald noted.

The berms were built there in the late 1980s as part of the FCA Jefferson North Assembly Plant construction project.

"For this reason, we used his-



Construction of FCA's new Mack assembly facility has unearthed infrastructure going back 100 years.

torical maps and (ALTA) surveys to identify the likely locations of those old basements, and we designed our underground storm piping and underground detention systems to avoid them," Oswald said. "In some locations, we did find old brick/block, but for the most part we were successful in avoiding the old residential basements.'

An ALTA survey is a detailed survey performed by a registered licensed surveyor, prepared in accordance with the standards specified by the American Land Title Association (ALTA) and the American Congress of Surveying and Mapping (ACSM), Oswald said.

Crews have not encountered any old streetcar rails in construction as the city apparently removed all of them during repaving projects that have taken place over the years since the streetcars stopped rolling in Detroit

However, the company is reusing part of the existing St. Jean Street pavement as part of the employee parking lot and a large trailer marshalling lot at the construction site.

In February of last year, FCA

announced that the compoany was investing more than \$1 billion as part of its efforts to to build the first new assembly plant in Detroit in nearly 30 years, bringing 3,850 new jobs to the city.

The new plant will produce the next-generation Jeep Grand Cherokee and all-new, three-row, full-size Jeep SUV, along with their electrified models, said Oswald.

Global sales of Nissan vehicles

have plunged. Nissan recorded

red ink for the quarter through

December, the first such quarter-

such as electric vehicles and au-

tomated driving, will be featured

Also up for approval at the

in planned models, Uchida said.

meeting was the appointment of

Nissan COO Ashwanti Gupta, who joined Renault in India in

2006, and has since worked for

the alliance, which also includes

smaller Japanese automaker Mit-

The appointment of Nissan's

production expert Hideyuki Sakamoto and Pierre Fleuriot, a

risk management specialist and

independent director at Renault,

Renault owns 44 percent of

Nissan and so the proposals

were certain to pass. The ap-

pointments were welcomed by

clapping at the end of the two-

and-a-half hour meeting, and the executives took a bow on stage.

subishi Motors Corp.

was also up for vote.

Nissan's prized technology,

ly loss in 11 years.

#### Shareholders Tell Nissan Board They're Unhappy

TOKYO (AP) - Nissan shareholders vented their outrage at the Japanese automaker's top management Feb. 18 for crashing stock prices, zero dividends and quarterly losses after the scandal-ridden departure of former Chairman Carlos Ghosn.

They got up, one by one, at an shareholders' extraordinary meeting, demanding that Nissan Motor Co. quickly fix diving car sales, work harder to repair its battered brand and have executives give up their pay.

Ghosn, had led Nissan for two decades, was arrested in November 2018. He was awaiting trial on financial misconduct charges in Tokyo when he skipped bail last year and fled to Lebanon.

New CEO Makoto Uchida apologized to shareholders for having "allowed the misconduct" of Ghosn and promised better governance, transparency and financial results, but asked for time.

He said a turnaround plan will be announced in May, which one shareholder immediately criticized as too late.

But hanging over the entire



**FCA Mack Construction Project Digs Up History** 

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"We are in a disastrous situation," Uchida said of the Ghosn scandal. "It was shocking, and I denounce it."

Uchida is among the four directors whose election was up for vote at the meeting held at a conference center in Nissan headquarters Yokohama.

Uchida was tapped in December to replace Hiroto Saikawa, who was Ghosn's successor.

Saikawa resigned last year after allegations surfaced about his own dubious personal income. Saikawa's resignation becomes final at the end of the shareholders' meeting.

One shareholder asked if Saikawa was giving up his retirement pay. Another asked why Jean-Dominique Senard, chair of French alliance partner Renault and Nissan board member, was seen leaving an earlier shareholders' meeting in a Toyota.

Saikawa did not reply. Senard apologized and said it was a mistake that had upset him as well.

meeting was Nissan's plummeting fortunes, its reputation tarnished over not only the Ghosn scandal but the shaky way it was handled at the company.

Shareholders said they saw confusion in management. One argued no one would buy a car from a company that looked as disorganized as Nissan. .

Another shareholder proposed putting a bounty on Ghosn's head so he could be brought back from Lebanon to stand trial. Japan and Lebanon do not have an extradition treaty.

Ghosn, who has insisted on his innocence, has said he was targeted with trumped up charges because of what he called a conspiracy at Nissan to block a fuller merger with Renault.

Hazim Bahari, equity analyst at CFRA Research, said Nissan's latest quarterly results were worse than expected, with further sales declines expected because of outdated models and its shrinking market share.





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# **Magazine Names Top Automotive Interiors**

While the outside of a car can bocharged engines, making eicatch the attention of the public, Autotrader.com believes it's important to pay attention to what's inside a vehicle.

With that thought in mind, the organization just released its "10 Best Car Interiors Under \$50,000 for 2020" list. And its results might surprise some as the Jeep Gladiator and the Ram 1500, along with the Lincoln Corsair, were among those honored.

Autotrader judges wrote, "Since you spend most of your time on the inside of your vehicle, interiors are important. An otherwise exceptional, high-performance sports car can feel cheapened by a lackluster interior, while an economy car with an above-average cabin can feel much more expensive than it really is.

"Sure, you can shell out big money and get an interior that fits the price tag, but what about vehicles that cost less and give you more when it comes to cabin fit and finish? To highlight some of our favorites, we've put together this list of the 10 best car interiors for under \$50,000 for 2020 '

Judges had nice things to say about the 2020 Corsair. In their description of why the Corsair made their list, they wrote "One of the newest compact luxury SU-Vs on the scene for 2020 is the new Lincoln Corsair, which looks to build on the success of the full-size Navigator and midsize Aviator, and looks to be a hit right out of the gate. This is due in large part to its upscale interior that shares many design cues with its larger brethren.

"The 2020 Corsair incorporates clean horizontal lines across its dashboard and a pleasing mix of glossy and matte surfaces. There are even five different interior colors available: black, beige, brown, gray and believe it or not - blue. The Corsair is available in either frontwheel drive or all-wheel drive and comes powered by your choice of two different tur-

ther 250 or 295 hp. The all-new 2020 Lincoln Corsair starts at about \$36,000 and tops out at just over \$55,000."

Autotrader judges also acknowledged the fact that many people might find it unusual that the Jeep Gladitor made their list.

They wrote that it "may come as a surprise to find the rugged Gladiator on this list, but allow us to explain. Jeep models of the past were all about compromise. In exchange for their go-anywhere capability, buyers were forced to settle for interiors with poor fit and finish, loads of wind noise and sub-par feature content.

"This is no longer the case with the Gladiator and the Wrangler, which share much of their basic design, including their interiors. Wrangler and Gladiator buyers are now treated to higherend materials in the form of a soft-touch dashboard, rubberized controls and aluminum trim pieces. Additionally, Chrysler's excellent 8.4-inch UConnect infotainment system is available throughout much of the model range and comes encased in a water-resistant rubberized frame.

"Finally, leather seating surfaces, great storage solutions (such as lockable compartments under the Gladiator's rear seat) and loads of USB and USB-C connectivity ports round out the offering. Sure, the modern 2020 Gladiator and Wrangler won't have you feeling like you're behind the wheel of a Range Rover, but you certainly won't mistake them for the Jeeps of yesteryear either.'

Autotrader judges haven't overlooked the increasingly popular pickup truck market. They admired what Ram has done with the 2020 1500, writing that the 1500 "has long been the number three player in the U.S. full-size truck segment, firmly entrenched behind Ford and GM when it came to overall sales.

"In redesigning its line of full-



The interior of the 2020 Lincoln Corsair.



The interior of the 2020 Jeep Gladiator.

size trucks for 2019. Ram clearly prioritized interior design and comfort, and as a result, Ram trucks are now known for offering the nicest interiors in the segment. While all full-size trucks can be had with premium leather seating and high-end audio systems, Ram focused on the little things when it comes to its new truck interior.

"Materials quality, touchpoints and ergonomics are all top-notch in Ram's recent lineup, including in the 2020 Ram 1500. The capstone is the available 12-inch infotainment screen, which can display both a smartphone interface and the truck's native infotainment software at the same time. It's pretty slick."

#### Renault Informs **Public of Bad** Financial News

PARIS (AP) - France's Renault saw its sales and earnings drop last year and says 2020 will be tough due to the need for investment in new technologies just as the market is shrinking.

The company said Feb. 14 that it sold 3.8 million vehicles last year, down 3.4 percent, with revenue dropping about the same rate to \$60 billion. That almost wiped out its net earnings, which amounted to just 19 million euros last year compared with 3.4 billion euros a year earlier.

Interim chief Clotilde Delbos said "the visibility for 2020 is limited due to an expected volatility in the market.'

Those uncertainties include EU limits on car emissions, which will require car companies to sell more battery-powered vehicles, as well as the impact of the virus outbreak from China, which has disrupted supply chains.

Renault, which is in a global alliance with Japan's Nissan and Mitsubishi, said it expects the European car market to shrink at least 3 percent this year.

Beyond market turbulence, Renault has been shaken by the scandal over its former chief, Carlos Ghosn, who was arrested in Japan in late 2018 on allegations of financial wrongdoing and then fled the country about a vear later.

Ghosn, who denies wrongdoing, was the head of Nissan, too, in which Renault holds a stake. y.

Ghosn had wanted to merge Renault and Nissan and now their alliance is viewed as weakened at a time when key rivals are merging and gaining in heft.

In a sign of its caution, Renault slashed its dividend, to 1.10 euros from 3.55 euros in 2018.

GM Getting Ohio Tax Break ers union, but it won't make up for the lost jobs at the small-car

LORDSTOWN, Ohio (AP) -General Motors Co. will receive a tax break to build a new electric battery cell factory in Ohio next to the site of a much larger assembly plant it shut down last year.

Village leaders in Lordstown approved a 75 percent tax abatement that will extend over 15 years and allow the company to move forward with the plant.

What we had to get done and needed to get done for General Motors, we did," Mayor Arno Hill said after the vote Feb. 18.

GM and Korea's LG Chem announced in December that they had formed a joint venture to share of income tax from the new work together on battery technology and build the new plant near Youngstown. GM has said it will be among the largest battery factories in the world. Lordstown assembly plant last March after more than 50 years of production. It later sold the factory to a newly formed company that wants to make electric pickup trucks.

plant. The joint venture also likely will pay less than what GM pays unionized assembly plant workers

The battery plant will create about 1,100 jobs, while GM employed 4,500 workers at the assembly plant when it was running three shifts until about three years ago.

Most of those employees at the assembly plant either retired or transferred to other GM factories.

The village of Lordstown is seeking more than its typical plant by asking for the school's income tax, which is about \$225,000 annually, the Warren Tribune Chronicle reported. Hill said that the village needs GM stopped making cars at its the money because of the loss of GM's car plant and income tax and that the school district could receive about \$600,000 in property taxes once the plant is built. The Lordstown school board has not decided whether to give nounced last fall during contract up its income tax from the GM



The battery plant was antalks with the United Auto Work- battery plant.

#### **Autorama Show Coming to Detroit**

The 2020 Autorama Show is coming to Detroit's TCF Center (formerly known as Cobo Center) on Friday, Feb. 29; Saturday, Feb. 29; and Sunday, March 1.

Tickets are \$21 for adults, \$8 for children ages six through 12 and free for children ages five and under.

The event, sponsored by

O'Reilly Auto Parts and Meguira's. It will feature a host of classic hot rods as well as celebrities such as Rutledge Wood, a host of the American version of "Top Gear."

To learn more about the event, go to the Autormama Web site at https://autorama.com/attend/detroit.

#### World Auto Supply Chain is Now Recovering **From China Virus Quarantine Shutdowns**

by JOE McDONALD AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) - Automakers are reopening factories in China that were idled by anti-virus controls as they try to reverse a sales slump in their biggest market.

Local officials have orders from the ruling Communist Party to get businesses functioning again while still enforcing antidisease curbs that shut down much of the world's secondlargest economy.

"Local governments are putting their full weight behind helping businesses open," the president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai. Ker Gibbs, said in a statement.

Toyota Motor Co. said two factories reopened Feb. 17 with one of the usual two daily shifts working. Volkswagen AG, Ford Motor Co., Mercedes Benz and Chinese brand Geely resumed some operations last week. General Motors Co. said a "staggered start" across its factories began Feb. 15. Nissan Motor Co. plans to restart this week.

Automakers say they are checking employees for the virus's telltale fever, barring visitors and telling employees to stay home if they have been in Wuhan, the city at the center of the outbreak, or other areas that have imposed travel curbs.

The outbreak prompted the government to extend the Lunar New Year holiday to keep factories and offices closed and workers at home.

The government has told employees who can work from home to stay there, but China's vast manufacturing industries that supply the world with smartphones, toys and other goods need workers in factories.

Obstacles include a requirement for workers who return from other areas - as millions are doing after the holiday - to make sure they are virus-free by staying at home for its 14-day incubation period.

"Most factories have a severe shortage of workers, even after they are allowed to open," said Gibbs. "This is going to have a severe impact on global supply chains that is only beginning to show up."

Automakers are under pressure to reverse a 2-year-old sales decline in a Chinese market they hope will propel global revenue.

Sales of SUVs, minivans and sedans hit an annual peak of 24.7 million in 2017 and have declined since then. Last year's sales tumbled 9.6 percent to 21.4 million.

The virus "adds to the challenges that the sector is already facing," said Fitch Ratings in a report.

Groupe Renault said one of its factories in the southern city of Guangzhou, near Hong Kong, reopened Feb. 17 but the French automaker gave no indication of the status of another factory in Wuhan.

Sales of vehicles are likely to be depressed through April, Fitch said. It said production might fall by the high single digits in the first half of 2020 compared with a year earlier.

GM, Toyota and others said the pace of production depends on how fast they can restart the flow of components from thousands of Chinese suppliers that also shut down.

That disruption could have global repercussions: UBS estimates China supplies 8 percent of auto parts exports worldwide.

#### **Thieves Drive Off** With Two SUV Lamborghinis

WAYLAND, Mass. (AP) – A pair of Lamborghini SUVs worth a total of about \$400,000 were stolen early Feb. 18 from a Boston-area dealership, police said.

Officers responded to an alarm at Herb Chambers Lamborghini Boston in Wayland at about 3 a.m. It appears the thieves threw a rock through the glass front of the dealership, found the keys inside somewhere and took the vehicles from the front lot, Lt. Sean Gibbons said. He said one of the missing vehicles was a light color and one was a dark color.

A patrol officer stopped a vehicle that may have been involved in the break-in and detained two people, who are currently at the police station being questioned, Gibbons said. The Lamborghinis, however, have not been found. They were last spotted heading east on Route 20.





With Michigan beginning its first year as a legalized recreational marijuana state, AAA is raising important traffic safety concerns for state motorists based on recent research concerning fatal crashes from the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safesaid Howard Hughey, tv. spokesman, AAA-The Auto Club Group.

According to the research, the share of drivers who, after a fatal crash, tested positive for active THC - the drug's main psychoactive ingredient - has doubled since the state of Washington legalized marijuana in December 2012. Including Michigan and Washington, recreational marijuana use is now legal in 11 states and Washington, D.C. and another 22 states have legalized marijuana for medical use.

The latest AAA Foundation research found that between 2008 and 2012 - the five-year period before the drug was legal - an estimated 8.8 percent of Washington drivers involved in fatal crashes were positive for THC. That rate rose to 18 percent between 2013 and 2017.

Marijuana use can inhibit concentration, slow reaction times and cloud judgment, Yang said. Its effects vary by individual, but a number of studies have concluded that marijuana use impairs the ability to drive safely. Previous research suggests that users who drive high are up to twice as likely to be involved in a crash.

Eleven states and Washington, D.C. have legalized marijuana for both recreational and medical use. Another 22 states have legalized it for medical use only. State legislative sessions for 2020 are getting underway and recreational use is expected to be a popular topic, Hughey said. The legislative interest combined with likely November ballot measures could result in additional states taking a hard look the issue.

In an attempt to curtail drugimpaired driving, seven states have set legal non-zero, or "per se," limits on the amount of THC drivers can have in their system, Yng said. While well-intended, AAA believes imposing such limits is problematic because no data reliably shows what level of The average number of THC- THC impairs driving, the chemi-



#### 2020 BLAZER FWD 2LT 2020 SILVERADO DBL DOOR CUSTOM

positive drivers increased, too. In the five years before legalization, an average of 56 drivers involved in fatal crashes each year were THC-positive. In the five years after legalization, the average jumped to 130. The new numbers bolster the findings of a similar report the AAA Foundation released in 2016. The study did not attempt to determine if marijuana contributed to the crashes included in its latest research. It focused only on the prevalence of drivers who tested positive for active THC.

This study enabled us to review a full 10-years' worth of data about the potential impact of marijuana on driving safety - and it raises significant concerns,' said Dr. David Yang, executive director of the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety. "Results from the analysis suggest that legalization of recreational use of marijuana may increase the rate of THCpositive drivers involved in fatal crashes."

cal's effects vary by user, and THC testing often cannot be done until hours after a crash.

AAA believes that states that have legalized the drug should not rely solely on an arbitrary legal limit to determine if a driver is impaired.

They should adopt a twopronged approach that requires a positive test for recent marijuana use; behavioral and physiological evidence of driver impairment; regardless of the drug's legal status – and limits in any state - all motorists need to avoid driving while impaired.

"Simply put, if you've used marijuana, don't drive," said Jake Nelson, AAA's director of traffic safety advocacy and research. "And if you plan to drive, don't use marijuana."

Last year, a Foundation survey found that nearly 70 percent of Americans think it's unlikely a driver will get caught by police for driving shortly after using marijuana, Hughey said.



\*See dealer for details. Photos may not represent actual sale vehicle. All rebates and incentives, including GM loyalty & Conquest incentives have been deducted from the price and are included in the lease payments ,and are subject to change by the manufacturer without notice. Leases are through GM Financial and are based on A1 approval. There is a \$395 disposition fee, if you do not release or purchase thru GM Financial at lease termination. GM Employee discount is required unless otherwise noted. All leases are for 10k miles per year. GM Lease Loyalty requires a Buick, GMC or Chevrolet lease in the household. Silverado or Sierra loyalty requires a 2014 Silverado or Sierra lease in the household. Those leases do not have to terminate. 1st payment, tax, title, plate fee and \$24 CVR fee are due at signing. All prices are plus tax, title and plate fee, and \$24 CVR fee. See dealer for complete details on all incentives and offers. All deals are only good while supplies last. Deals good thru 03/02/2020

#### **Car Seller Going to Prison**

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP) - A former salesman at a Florida Porsche dealership has been sentenced to  $6 \ 1/2$  years in prison for scamming more than 30 customers out of about \$3 million by creating fake sales orders for rare cars.

U.S. District Judge Rodney Smith sentenced Shiraaz Sookralli. 45. in Fort Lauderdale federal court last week, according to records. He pleaded guilty in September to conspiracy to commit mail fraud and wire fraud. He had faced up to 20 years in prison.

Sookralli, who had been a salesman at Champion Porsche in Pompano Beach, created a shell corporation with a similar name in 2017, prosecutors said. Sookralli made bogus sales orders for non-existent future exotic Porsche models and took deposits from customers, which he put into the shell company's bank account.

The majority of the vehicles were rare, highly sought-after, Carrera 911 models, investigators said. Sookralli required deposits from his victims that he later deposited into his shell company's bank account. The buyers relied on Sookralli's longtime employment at Champion Porsche and the seemingly legitimate bank account that he used. Sookralli spent the money on luxury vehicles, jewelry, nightclubs and restaurants.

Champion Porsche did not authorize Sookralli to conduct these transactions.

When the dealership discovered what Sookralli was doing, it contacted his victims and began cooperating with law enforcement.



Oscar-winning actress King was made part Cadillac's ad campaign that was kicked off at this year's Oscars.

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Cadillac Ads Using Some Hollywood Glamor

It was the allure of Hollywood and its stars that prompted the Cadillac brand to use the 2020 Academy Awards to help introduce the 2021 Escalade to the

Oscar-winning actress and acclaimed director Regina King showed Cadillac's new "Make Your Way" ad campaign during ABC's presentation of the 92nd Oscars on Feb. 9, said Cadillac spokeswoman Katine Minter. King spoke of the "Make Your Way" story of success achieved boundary-pushing strength and determination in a special spot with the all-new 2021 Cadillac Escalade, which had been introduced Feb. 4 in

'Cadillac has always represented success," said King. "...

the vehicles. There's also a realness and a sense of ambition that I identify with.

"Through sheer perseverance, I have found my way through doors some never thought possible.

"There's a real connection for me with Cadillac, and that is why I wanted to get involved.'

Two additional Cadillac spots -"No Barriers" and "Finish Line" -- aired during the Oscars broadcast, said Minter, each highlighting Cadillac's new vehicle lineup, while celebrating the grit of those who make their own way to success.

"Cadillac is inspired by those who have a passion for what's next," said Melissa Grady, Cadillac chief marketing officer.

"They make their way by going through obstacles, not around

Cadillac says "Hooray for Hol- there's a swagger, a sexiness, to them. Such unwavering self-determination pushes them to succeed and inspires others to do the same. That's the heart of 'Make Your Way' and the soul of Cadillac."

Cadillac has been part of the Academy Awards and its celebration of hard work and creativity for seven years, using the ceremony's broadcast - which is second only to the Super Bowl in global viewership - to launch new products and brand campaigns, Minter said.

The 2021 Escalade highlighted in Regina King's spot is a redesigned edition of the luxury SUV icon, ssid Minter.

It offers more passenger and cargo space, along with the firstof-its-kind curved OLED screen technology, with more than 38 total inches-diagonal of vibrant displays.

#### **Nissan's Troubles Continue in Year 2020**

AP Business Writer

TOKYO (AP) - Nissan, reeling from a scandal over its former superstar executive Carlos Ghosn, sank into red ink in the latest quarter as its vehicle sales fell around the world, and the Japanese automaker slashed its profit forecast for the year.

Nissan Motor Co. reported Feb. 13 a loss of 26 billion yen (\$237 million) for October-December, a reversal from the 70 billion yen profit recorded a year earlier.

Quarterly sales slipped nearly 18 percent to 2.5 trillion yen (\$23 billion), as Nissan's vehicle sales fell in Japan, the U.S., Europe and China.

Chief Executive Makoto Uchida told reporters at Nissan's Yokohama headquarters that a turnaround plan was in place, with cast for the fiscal year through March 2020, to 65 billion yen (\$592 million), falling far short of its earlier forecast for a 110 billion yen (\$1 billion) profit.

It now expects to sell 5.05 million vehicles globally for the fiscal year, a decrease of 4 percent from the previous forecast.

Shareholders will get zero yen in dividends for the latest quarter.

Nissan's brand has been badly tarnished by Ghosn's arrest in late 2018 on charges of under-reporting future compensation and of breach of trust in diverting company money for personal gain.

Ghosn, who has repeatedly said he is innocent, skipped bail late last year and is now in Lebanon. He held a news conference and accused Nissan officials of a conspiracy against him.

He has said Nissan and some Japanese government officials

Ghosn has said he fled because he could not get a fair trial. The conviction rate in Japan is higher than 99 percent.

Uchida took over the helm of the manufacturer of the Leaf electric car, Infiniti luxury models and the X-Trail SUV in December, replacing Ghosn's successor, Hiroto Saikawa.

Saikawa tendered his resignation last year after acknowledging dubious income, although he said he did not know about the pay until later.

#### China's Biggest **Auto Show Postponed**

BEIJING (AP) – China's biannual auto show, one of the industry's biggest international events, is being postponed in re-

details to be released in May.

"The situation has worsened, but there is no moment to waste as we must keep investing in future products," he said. "We are headed in the right direction, but it will take time.

He acknowledged Feb. 13's results didn't take into account possible damage from production halts in China caused by the new virus outbreak. and further downward revisions may be coming.

Nissan's plants in China have halted, although preparations are underway to resume production later in the month. But whether such restarts can happen remains uncertain, not just for Nissan but also other manufacturers in China.

Some production was being scaled back at Nissan's Japan plants, although that was to be made up when the supply chain recovers, possibly next month, according to Nissan.

Nissan slashed its profit fore-

sought to block his attempts to realize a fuller merger with alliance partner Renault SA of France.

Nissan has sought to distance itself from the allegations against Ghosn. It filed a civil suit this week against him seeking damages. His lawyers have not yet commented on the suit.

In it, Nissan is accusing Ghosn of improperly using Nissan money for such things as overseas homes, use of corporate jets and consulting fees paid to Ghosn's sister.

Nissan as a company must also stand trial in the criminal case in Japan.

Japan does not have an extradition treaty with Lebanon and so Ghosn's trial likely won't go forward here.

Greg Kelly, an American former executive at Nissan who was implicated in the charges against Ghosn, will stand trial.

A date for the trial has not been set.

sponse to the continuing spread of a new virus.

The organizers of Auto China 2020 said in a statement dated Feb. 17 that the sprawling event originally scheduled for April 21-30 in Beijing would be moved to an undetermined date. The Auto China show has taken on increasingly heft as global manufacturers seek to grow their sales in China's massive, but recently slowing, market for cars, trucks, vans and luxury vehicles.

That makes it the latest major event in China and other nations to be canceled or postponed out of virus fears, including the Shanghai Forumula 1 Grand Prix, other sports events, a major art festival in Hong Kong and a key telecoms conference in Spain.

China is also considering whether to postpone the meeting in March of its ceremonial parliament, the most important political event of the year for the Communist government.



#### Detroit Group Honors Area's Auto History

Detroit is the Motor City and it's rich history is being celebrated and honored by the organization MotorCities.

In addition to supporting the Motor City's heritage, the group is offering three great opportunities to hear from subject matter experts, get practical advice and network with other nonprofit professionals as part of its 2020 Lunch & Learn Series, said MotorCities spokesman Bob Sadler.

The first session is called "Nonprofit Social Media Strategies" and takes place on Wednesday, March 11 from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. at GM Factory One, 303 W Water St. in Flint. You can pick up valuable pointers from the group's panel, featuring:

- Promoting Events and Attractions – Colleen Robar, Principal, Robar Public Relations;
- Updating Communications Strategies – Emily Wiegand, Communications Specialist, Gilmore Car Museum;
- Promotional Opportunities Available Through MotorCities – Bob Sadler, Communcations Manager, MotorCities National Heritage Area.

The second session is entitled "Financial Basics and Grant Opportunities for Your Organization" and takes place Wednesday, June 10 from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the Michigan Firehouse Museum, 100 W Cross St. in Ypsilanti. Help your organization's bottom line with assistance from the panel, including:

- Financial Basics for Nonprofits Ramona Oliverio, Accounting Services;
- Grant Writing Tips & Grant Opportunities from the Michigan Council for Arts & Cultural Affairs – Jeff Garrett, Operational Support Program Manager, MCACA;
- MotorCities Grant Procedures Update – Brian Yopp, Director of Programs & Operations, MotorCities National Heritage Area.

The final session is called "Preserving Your Collections and Surviving Disasters" and takes place Wednesday, Oct. 14 from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. at the Benson Ford Research Center, part of The Henry Ford in Dearborn.

Each Lunch & Learn session is \$20, or you can register for all three in advance at a cost of \$50. Lunch is included, so please inform us of any dietary or mobility restrictions at the time of your registration.

Reserve your spot by clicking on motorcities.org/2020-lunchlearn-series.



#### Schools Using Propane Buses

MORIARTY, N.M. (AP) – Three New Mexico school districts will be rolling out the state's first propane-fueled buses for the upcoming school year.

Districts that serve schools in Los Lunas, Magdalena and the Moriarty area have purchased propane buses as part of a partnership with the state Public Education Department.

Officials say the 17 new buses will help cut costs since propane prices average 50 percent less than diesel and maintenance costs are expected to be less. Manufactured by Georgia-based Blue Bird Corp., the buses also emit less pollution.

Teresa Salazar, the superintendent of the Moriarty-Edgewood School District, said the district has had to dip into operational funds to supplement transportation costs over the last several years.