

# Auto Show raises city's image — for some

Up to now, the Detroit Auto Show has been scheduled too late after New Year's Eve to let you wear your tux twice before you give it back to the rental company, and was mainly a kind of cross between a midwinter tent sale and a casting call for a remake of "Chorus Line."

"This year, however, Detroit hosts the North American International Auto Show, which might explain why I got one invitation to a press conference that offered a chance to see the "Famous Detroit River" — the sort of thing that might appeal to a visiting group of international motoring journalists.

Frankly, I've become a little sensitive to the image the old hometown conjures up in the far corners of the

world. Maybe it is time we did something about it.

I still remember having breakfast in a Japanese hotel when the Tigers won the World Series and having our host burst into the room, obviously panicked, saying, "There's a riot in Detroit!"

"What do you mean, a riot?" I said, still struggling with the fish flakes on rice. "Everybody's going like this," he says, and starts doing a dance that resembled the Twist, while holding his index fingers in the air.

SOME OF THIS kind of thing might be our own fault, of course. Like when they discovered the stolen squad cars pressed into service as



auto talk  
**Dan McCosh**

taxis during the Republican National Convention. Or figured the Grand Prix cars ought to be able to take a couple of potholes like everybody else.

On the other hand, sometimes I find the old hometown's civic image kind of handy, having chased off a potential mugger in London by snarling, "I'm from Detroit."

Mainly, though, I take this image-building thing seriously. In the company of the international motoring press I'm careful to use the correct pronunciation of our local landmarks (da-ya-a, bell ee, cad-joe, etc.). No more raised French eyebrows for me.

I also make up stories about the tire on the expressway and mention Greenfield Village as something you really should see sometime, which I've found is a nice safe thing to recommend to out-of-towners, since they can never find the place, and it grows in their imagination every year.

I try not to snicker when they talk about taking a cab anywhere.

But I digress. The new, expanded, international auto show is getting off to a good start, even before the black-ice affair on Friday.

CHEVROLET'S Bob Burger managed to get a little misty-eyed at Chevrolet's fête, while snarling a bit at Ford. Chrysler's Tom Gale brought out six new styling exercises, including a particularly weird rumble-seat pickup truck.

The international motoring press is being shown the launch of two new Japanese luxury carlines, a four-wheel drive Porsche and a new two-seat roadster. Toyota even managed to create something of a stir by losing a lawsuit and title to the name

for its Lexus luxury-car division.

The new Detroit show thus sets some kind of record for new-car introductions and events of potential newsworthiness at a single auto show.

But will it do much for civic pride?

An old friend from Norway, in town for the show, shrugs aside the new auto news, and gets to the point. "Tell me," he says. "Is Detroit safe?"

"Don't worry," I tell him. "If anybody looks at you the wrong way, just tell him you're from Oslo."

Dan McCosh is the automotive editor of *Popular Science*.

# Rising health care costs have employers struggling

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Such pre-certification has a "sentinel effect," said Ellias. Pre-certification makes the physician aware that a knowledgeable party is overseeing the process and is likely to allow payment for unnecessary procedures.

But medical case management is more than getting prior approval, Ellias said. "In many cases, case management provides an advocate for the patient, somebody who will challenge the doctor, if necessary."

With case management, for example, the company health care benefits may require — and pay for —

the services of a visiting nurse rather than allowing longer stays in the hospital where average costs are approaching \$700 per day.

There are many specifics to case management, said Ellias. But they boil down to having an objective party looking for ways to contain costs without sacrificing patient care.

WHILE SOME companies are looking for ways to cut costs, others hope to save money by encouraging healthy living.

These are the so-called "wellness" plans under which employees are encouraged to quit smoking, lose weight, reduce stress or otherwise modify behavior so they lead health-

ier lifestyles, said Gelman.

"If a company can encourage employees to quit smoking," he said, "they can save enormous medical bills later on."

While people point to the possibility of AIDS causing financial difficulty for a health care system (the "average" AIDS case costs about \$150,000, according to some experts), there are other preventable problems that can be equally expensive, Gelman said.

The cost of treating a premature baby, for example — or one born with birth defects — can be very high, Gelman said. "Some wellness plans recognize that possibility by

encouraging good prenatal care among pregnant women," he said.

Such programs are worth well more than their costs if they persuade expectant mothers to curtail drug or alcohol consumption during pregnancy, Gelman said. "Not only does that give their baby a better shot at a healthier life, such programs reduce the need for very expensive medical care," he said.

When asked to name the "Cadi-

lac" of wellness programs, Ellias cited those companies that pay all or part of the membership in an employee's health club. "They believe that a worker who exercises regularly will require less medical care as well as being a more productive employee," he said.

According to a survey taken in October and November by the Michigan Health Benefits Network, about 15 percent of the companies in mid-

Michigan responding said they're going to or are considering some kind of wellness program as a cost-containment measure, said Andrew J. Hogan, director of personnel development.

Virtually every company responding said they are concerned about escalating health care costs, said Hogan. "Everybody agrees about that. But they aren't sure about how that can be done," he said.

## datebook

- **SALES TECHNIQUES**  
Saturday, Jan. 7 — Sales techniques for Mary Kay salesmen 8:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. in Troy. Fee: \$50. Information: 370-3120. Sponsor: OU.
- **GRE PREPARATION**  
Saturdays, Jan. 7-28 — Workshops for graduate record examination begins at 9 a.m. in Rochester. Fee: \$125. Information: 370-3120. Sponsor: OU.
- **GMAT PREPARATION**  
Saturdays, Jan. 7-21 — Workshops for graduate management admissions tests 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in Rochester. Fee: \$155. Information: 370-3120. Sponsor: OU.
- **BUSINESS CLIMATE**  
Tuesday, Jan. 10 — Birmingham-Bloomfield Chamber of Commerce meets at 7:30 a.m. in Birmingham. Non-member fee: \$12. Information: 644-1700.
- **GM RETIREES**  
Tuesday, Jan. 10 — General Motors Salaried Retirees and Surviving Spouses Organization meets in Troy. Information: Charles Carothers, 477-7271.
- **WOMEN IN SALES**  
Tuesday, Jan. 10 — Professional

- Women in Sales meets at 6 p.m. in Bloomfield Hills. Non-member fee: \$20. Information: 473-2253.
- **MEDIA RELATIONS**  
Tuesdays, Jan. 10 through April 11 — Media relations seminar 6:35-8:15 p.m. in Farmington Hills. Information: Vivian Dicks, 927-1173. Sponsor: U of D.
- **FINANCIAL PLANNING**  
Wednesday, Jan. 11 — Free seminar on GI's personal financial planning certificate program begins at 7:30 p.m. in Rochester. Information: 370-3120.
- **BUSINESS COMMUNICATORS**  
Wednesday, Jan. 11 — International Association of Business Communicators meets. Information: Kim Welch, 588-7600.
- **WHARTON ALUMNI**  
Wednesday, Jan. 11 — Wharton Alumni Association meets at 5:30 p.m. in Birmingham. Information: Mary Ellen Sanko, 358-4420.
- **PROFESSIONAL REMODELERS**  
Wednesday, Jan. 11 — Profession-

- al Builder Remodelers Council meets 9 a.m. in Troy. Information: Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan, 737-4477.
- **BUILDING OWNERS**  
Thursday, Jan. 12 — Building Owners and Managers Association of Metropolitan Detroit meets at 8:30 a.m. in Southfield. Information: 984-4000.
- **COMMERCIAL INVESTORS**  
Friday, Jan. 13 — Commercial investment division of South Oakland County Board of Realtors meets in Southfield. Information: 588-1283.
- **WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT**  
Saturday, Jan. 14 — Women in Management Institute seminar on networking 9 a.m. to noon in Southfield. Information: Renee S. Lipson, 1-517-482-3455.
- **MANAGEMENT COORDINATION**  
Monday, Jan. 16 through Feb. 20 — Communication Skills for Managers course offered 6:30-9:30 p.m. at 2232 Rutland Drive, Southfield. Fee: \$175. Information: 552-2600. Sponsor: OCC.

## business people

Dale F. Swift, Edward P. Lemke, Gerald A. Stehla and Elaine Campbell were elected executives at American Ventures Inc. Swift was elected executive vice president of American Ventures and president of Bentz Tool & Machine Division. Lemke was elected vice president of Bentz Tool & Machine Division. Stehla was appointed vice president — proposals and procurement of Bentz Machine & Tool Division. He is also the assistant general manager of Bentz Campbell was named vice president and general manager of the Martin Electric.

Harold A. Polling and Charles T. Fisher were named 1988 recipients of the Harvard Business School Club Detroit's Business Statesman Award. Thomas Fodell of Rochester Hills was promoted to territory sales manager — automotive region for Associates of Spring. He has been with Associated Spring since 1985. Robert Wilson of Bloomfield Hills was named director of the Trauma Service at Detroit Receiving Hospital and University Health Center. Wilson is also chief of surgery at the hospital.

Frank L. Schelbold of Birmingham was appointed director of medium-duty truck operations for the General Motors Truck & Bus Group. Steven J. Harris was promoted director, brand and product communications. Formerly he was director of public relations. Maria Fomin of Farmington Hills has joined Hermanoff & Associates as an assistant account executive. Beth Grossman joined Private Banking Group as a second vice president at Michigan National Bank of Farmington Hills.

## DuMouchelles January Estate Auction

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