

Beyond Grand Rapids

Mitsubishi plant in trouble

For much of this decade Mitsubishi's Normal, Illinois, plant, which builds the Galant sedan, Eclipse sports car and Endeavor SUV, has struggled as Mitsubishi's U.S. sales have collapsed. The plant was built to produce 240,000 cars a year and employ 3,000. It will turn out about 68,000 units this year. Earlier this year, Mitsubishi offered some employee buyouts in an effort to trim the plant's 1,600 person work force by another 100 people.

Source: Automotive News, July 17, 2008

Russia now Europe's #1 auto market

Ford reported sales of Ford-brand vehicles in Russia jumped nearly 20% in the year's first half, besting 16% growth in the U.K., its top European market. General Motors Chevrolet brand saw 52% growth in the period, and Toyota enjoyed a 23% gain.

Fueled by foreign brands, Russia's overall new-car sales jumped 41% through June to 1.65 million units, surpassing Germany as Europe's biggest auto market. The growth is attributed to the surge in demand for models produced by U.S. and Asian manufacturers.

The most successful of the large foreign auto makers in Russia this year have been Hyundai, General Motors and Honda, all of which have seen deliveries double in the period. Chevrolet remains Russia's best-selling brand, followed by Hyundai and Ford.

Source: wardsauto.com, July 17, 2008

GM learns its lesson and perfects a winner

[I've made] the discovery that General Motors has moved quickly to improve its hot-selling Chevrolet Malibu sedan — now offered as a 2009 model with a four-cylinder engine mated to a six-speed automatic transmission, and dressed in premium Malibu LTZ trim.

If proof were needed that GM is serious about challenging Toyota's dominance of family sedan sales in the United States, the 2009 Malibu LTZ used on this journey suffices. It's a first-class, affordable, four-cylinder, front-wheel-drive, mid-size family sedan now equipped with a transmission worthy of the name.

This is major. This is a breakthrough. This is the new GM.

It is a fine car, one that won approving nods in this community, where fine cars are common. Fit and finish are impeccable. The interior is one of the best-looking, most comfortable, most ergonomically sensible in the business. And the Malibu runs nicely.

Source: Washington Post, July 17, 2008

Chrysler to bring Chevy Volt rival to market by 2013

Although Chrysler will soon launch hybrid versions of the Dodge Durango and Chrysler Aspen, the automaker is still lagging behind the top automakers in hybrid technology and offerings. However, Chrysler is aiming to flip the script and could have a Chevrolet Volt-rivaling model to market as early as 2011.

Chrysler is working on a vehicle to take on the Volt, with an estimated sale date between 2011 and 2013.

Source: leftlanenews.com, July 15, 2008

Toyota expects U.S. sales to drop

Toyota expects its annual U.S. auto sales to fall for the first time in 17 years, reflecting a severe downturn that sideswiped its Tundra pickup and other big vehicles. The troubles in the U.S. auto market led Japan's biggest carmaker to cut its overall sales forecast for 2008, but Toyota said last week that it still expects to sell more vehicles worldwide this year than it did in 2007 because of solid demand in emerging markets.

Source: Detroit News, July 29, 2008

Compact cars to retain most value

Compact cars such as the Honda Fit and Chevrolet Aveo are now expected to retain more of their value than trucks and sport utility vehicles once prized for the resale demand, according to a car value tracking firm. Automotive Lease Guide Inc., which provides residual value forecasts, attributed the reversal to soaring gas prices and a weak economy that have steered consumers away from SUVs and trucks and toward more fuel-efficient cars.

Source: The Associated Press, July 29, 2008



AutoKnow



General Motors Vision Statement: GM's vision is to be the world leader in transportation products and related services. We will earn our customers' enthusiasm through continuous improvement driven by the integrity, teamwork and innovation of GM people.

GRMP Has Health & Safety Audit

The Grand Rapids Metal Plant had its annual Health & Safety Audit last week. The auditors (Tom Kinman (UAW) and Ca-Sandra Tutt (GM)) reviewed 39 UAW/GM Health & Safety modules. In their draft report they identified three areas of "needs improvement" and one "repeat needs improvement":

Needs Improvement:

- 1. Fall Hazard:** We have ladders being used on top of elevated work platforms, but we don't have the proper fall hazard controls in place when employees are performing the work. We also have several fall hazard concerns on the roof that need to be addressed. The concerns need to have short-term and long-term corrective actions put in place to address each concern.
- 2. Health & Safety Training:** There were several questions about the required training for our employees and their supervisors. We need to clean up our records and make sure we meet the required UAW/GM safety training requirements.
- 3. Material Storage & Stacking:** The auditors witnessed some storage and stacking violations on the floor. The auditors also had some concern with the way our employees handle material—employees were not "squaring" the load before handling the load.

Basically squaring means making one movement at a time. For example, a fork lift driver must not pick up a load with the vehicle's forks and turn the wheels and start traveling with the load at the same time. Picking up the load needs to be one movement. Turning the wheels and traveling is a second movement to be performed only *after* the first movement is complete.

The auditors also pointed out that we need to work on clarifying our Orange Crush Zones. They

said we have some areas in the plant where it's hard to tell where the zone starts and stops.

Repeat Needs Improvement (this means the problem was brought up last year but still has not been fixed):

1. There were four vehicles operating on the plant floor that had lights that weren't working properly. This is an indication that we aren't properly filling out the pre-operation checklists. We may be filling them out, but we are not really looking at the items to make sure they are working properly before operating the equipment.

The auditors noticed that the above infractions were witnessed by plant leadership but that no one took the time to address the issue. This unfortunately showed the auditors that this was a normal practice at our facility.

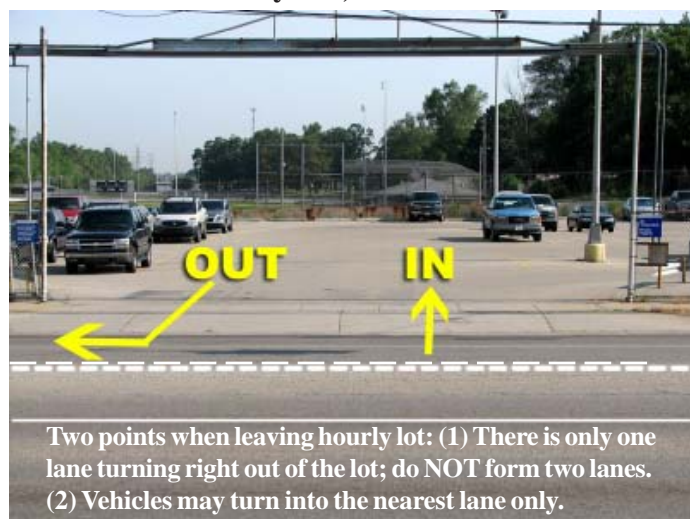
The auditors did say the plant looked better than last year and that we are doing a lot of good things in safety. One thing auditor Tom Kinman encouraged us to do is to write down every safety hazard in the plant. He commented that while the hazards we know of are often hard to resolve, the hazards we don't know about are impossible to resolve. In other words, identification of hazards is the first step to creating a safe work environment.

Plant Manager **Max Miller** commented at the audit's closing meeting, "Most of what happens in safety is observable, so we can get after those things. But it's behavioral changes that will allow this plant to be even safer than it is today. The most important thing about this week's audit is not how many 'needs improvements' did we get, but what did we learn and how will we react to what we learned?"

Contact Gary Evey (616-246-3132) or Rick O'Rourke (616-246-3124 - UAW). Fax 616-246-3150.
Grand Rapids GM Metal Fabricating Plant, 300 36th Street SW, Grand Rapids, MI 49548.
E-mail: gary.d.vey@gm.com, or rick.orourke@gm.com

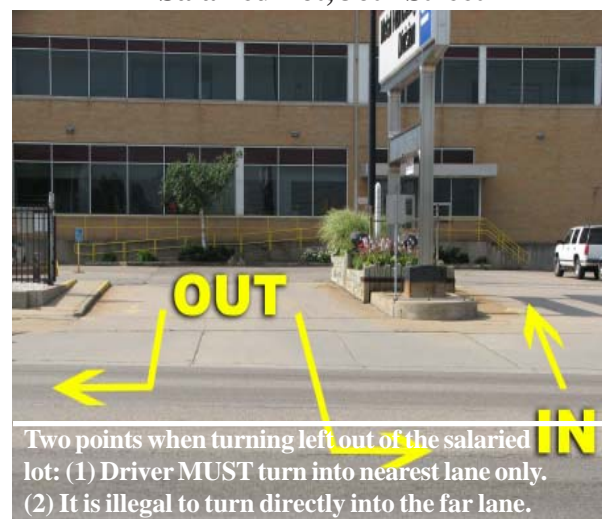
Safety Issues at 36th Street Parking Lots

Hourly Lot, 36th Street



Two points when leaving hourly lot: (1) There is only one lane turning right out of the lot; do NOT form two lanes. (2) Vehicles may turn into the nearest lane only.

Salaried Lot, 36th Street



Two points when turning left out of the salaried lot: (1) Driver MUST turn into nearest lane only. (2) It is illegal to turn directly into the far lane.

We're having some problems with traffic exiting the hourly and salaried parking lots onto 36th Street. Where these two lots meet is considered an intersection, which means that certain laws exist to keep traffic moving safely and efficiently.

From the hourly lot: (1) Please note that there is only *one* lane exiting right (west) out of the lot. (2) When turning right, you *must* turn into the nearest lane. Only after establishing position in that lane can you legally switch into the left lane heading west. (3) A left turn out of this lane is not safe and not permitted. **From the salaried lot:** (1) When turning left onto 36th Street, you *must* turn into the nearest lane heading west. Only after establishing position in that lane can you legally switch into the right lane. Please keep yourself and your coworkers safe by adhering to these traffic laws. We don't want ANYONE to get hurt!

PMN / UAW Golf Outing 4-person, 18-hole Scramble Proceeds go to Make-A-Wish Foundation

When: August 23, 2008

Where: Whitefish Lake Golf Club

Time: 8:30 a.m. shotgun start

Cost: \$260 per team (includes meal) -- must have at least one GM person per team

Prizes: 1st-, 2nd-, 3rd-, and last-place awards; also 50/50 drawing, novelty holes, skins, barter holes, closest-to-the-pin, longest drive, and door prizes

Free: Arrive early for free use of driving range

Contact Jim Store, Erik Stahl, or any UAW or PMN representative to get a form. Outing is limited to the first 30 teams that sign up. Deadline is August 18. Make checks payable to Erik Stahl.

GM Reports Second-quarter Financial Results

Last week GM reported a net loss for the second quarter of 2008 of \$15.5 billion, which included significant charges and special items. This is compared with net income from continuing operations of \$784 million in the second quarter of 2007. On an adjusted basis, GM posted a net loss of \$6.3 billion, compared with net income from continuing operations of \$1.3 billion in the same period last year.

Here are the most significant points from last week's announcement:

- Adjusted net loss of \$6.3 billion, reported net loss of \$15.5 billion
- Results impacted by \$9.1 billion of predominantly non-cash special items
- Sales records set in three of four regions
- Q2 liquidity position of \$21 billion, plus credit lines of additional \$5 billion

Around Grand Rapids

PMN / UAW Gate Collection

The PMN (Professional Managers Network) and UAW are joining up for a Make-A-Wish Gate Collection on August 22. The collection will take place at each of the four entries/exits to the plant between all three shifts. Checks should be made payable to Make-A-Wish Foundation. If you're unable to contribute at the gate collection, you can give your contribution to any of the following PMN board members:

- **Kevin Johnson** Vice Chairman
- **Jeff Staniszewski** Treasurer
- **Julia Hoskin** Secretary
- **Brandon Taylor** Divisional Representative

Safety Corner

Our Recordable Injury Rate stretch goal for 2008 is 2.20.



Know Safety, No Accidents

	2007	Through 8/1/08
First-aid Injuries	454	189
Recordable Injuries	65	24
Lost Work Days	6	2
Near Misses Reported	232	256

Safety Equipment

During a recent floor safety tour several obsolete and/or outdated items were discovered. They were as follows: several of the old style safety shields, lifting rings without recent inspections performed (this year's color is white), several unlabeled containers, and a few harnesses and slings without a 2008 inspection tag on them. Please take the time to check out your own safety equipment to ensure you have not forgotten to have them inspected properly. If anything is found and you are unsure what to do, contact your supervisor or leader for assistance.

UAW-GM QN Suggestion Corner

	07/19/08-07/25/08	YTD
*Awards Paid:	29	712
\$ Paid Out:	\$ 3,664.89	\$175,993.56
Savings to GM:	\$ 12,859.21	\$789,701.66
*Tangible and intangible awards		

Last Quarter's Winners

A drawing for \$500 was held last week. Every employee who was part of a team quality suggestion during the second quarter of this year was entered into this random drawing. The following employees were on teams that won \$500 in the first-quarter drawing:

Team One: Jack Vredevoogd; Bruce Kalee; David Steele; Mark Freeman; Wayne Beltz, Jr.; Jerry Poelman, Walter Schmidt, Michael Knappen, James Elzinga, David Heinicke; Robert Creager; Donald Smith; William Richardson; John DenBoer, Jr.; Curtis Kale; Thomas Pierson; Loren Godfrey

Team Two: Robert Beaudry, Dave Osburn, Jeffrey Ekkel, Phillip Collins, Brian Boldt, Charles Lemery, Harry DeMeester, Michael Cook, Thomas DeBoer, Thomas Evink, Mike Cusack, Wayland Haskell, Ernest Gilson, Joseph Hird

Team Three: Steven VandenBosch, Donald Phillips, Jason Versluis

Team Four: Same as Team Three

Diabetes Awareness--August 5 and 6

Stop by and get your sugar tested and find out more information about diabetes at the following times:

August 5	August 6
9:00 a.m. - noon	8:00 a.m. - noon
1:30 - 5:30 p.m.	1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

