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Chicago Auto Show's charity benefit amps up with live music, more

While the Chicago Auto Show's First Look for Charity is well known as a top-tier evening on the Windy City's social scene, there's always room to make it better—and that's what show organizers have done with the addition of multiple live music acts.

Those who attend the Feb. 10 evening affair are used to strolling the show floor with extensive hors d'oeuvres, champagne and other speciality foods and drinks. But this year's attendees also will be entertained with live music from the legendary KC and the Sunshine Band, the North Mississippi Allstars and jazz impresario Rick Braun.



"First Look has always been great fun," said show chairman Kevin Mize, "When we're able to give away two great cars (this year a sporty Honda CR-Z and a stylish Hyundai Sonata Turbo), it makes it even more fun by

boosting up the live entertainment for the show, too.

"KC and the Sunshine Band have had major venues rockin' for decades. We can't wait to have them bring their special brand of hits we all know to McCormick Place. I

don't know anyone who can't sing along with all the hits they've had over the years."

KC and the Sunshine Band is as widely popular today as when they burst onto the music scene and became part of America's musical lexicon. Theirs was the first band since The Beatles (in 1964) to have four No. 1 singles in a 12-month span, and they had an astonishing four chart-topping albums in a row.

Also performing that night will be blues-rock jammers, the North Mississippi Allstars. After touring as an opening act for a variety of artists and honing their blues

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CATA-DealersEdge partnership offers Webinar training at slashed prices

Dealers are encouraged to take advantage of a newer partnership between The Chicago Automobile Trade Association and DealersEdge to provide high-quality training and informational Webinars to dealers at a significantly discounted rate.

The rate for CATA members for the weekly presentations is \$149, half what is charged to users who do not subscribe

to DealersEdge. Webinars premiere on a near-weekly basis.

Even for dealers who hold an annual membership with DealersEdge, the new relationship with the CATA represents a savings because DealersEdge offers its Webinars to its own members for \$198. Regular annual membership fees are \$397, and normal Webinar fees are \$298 for non-DealersEdge members.

Once purchased, DealersEdge Webinars and accompanying PDF files can be downloaded and viewed later—and repeatedly. No matter how many people watch at your location, each connection costs a CATA member just \$149. The fee includes both PowerPoint slides and audio; a telephone connection is not needed.

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Form 8300 notice due Jan. 31

A reminder: Dealers by Jan. 31 must contact any purchaser for whom they were required to file a Form 8300 (Cash Reporting) in 2010, and tell them that the form has been filed with the Internal Revenue Service.

Potential language of the written statement:

Dear Customer:

We are required by the Internal Revenue Service to report transactions involving more than \$10,000 in cash and “cash equivalents,” under the provisions of 25 U.S.C. 60501. We have filed a Form 8300 with the IRS on (month, day, 2010), indicating that you provided us with (dollar amount) in connection with the purchase of your (year, make, model). We wanted you to know that we have complied with this federal reporting requirement. Again, we thank you for your patronage.

Dealerships should make sure they are using the most recent Form 8300.

Webinars

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To register for any of the DealersEdge Webinars, go to www.cata.info. On the tan bar across the top of the screen, click on Education/Careers and follow the drop-down menu to CATA-DealersEdge Webinars.

Coming topics:

Thursday, Jan. 27 at 12 p.m. CST

“Dealership Expense Evaluation and Control Process” Sandi Jerome is a wizard at devising systems and procedures to take the complexity out of dealership accounting functions. Sandi will explain her methods for boiling down tons of expense data points to create a clear picture of just what the dealership is spending — and on what. Her method helps you get past the pulling of mountains of invoices and documentation yet still lets you accurately compare your expenses to known metrics. If you are looking for a process to take the complexity and confusion out of expense measurement and comparisons, then learn from Sandi how to get hold of that paper tiger and tame him!

Thursday, Feb. 3 at 12 p.m. CDT

“Reducing Exposure to Spiraling Health Insurance Costs” It seems as if every time Washington tries to “simplify” and “reduce the costs” associated with health insurance, just the opposite occurs. As health care solutions get more and more complex, our only practical business solution is to know as much about these systems as possible so we can find ways to blunt increases and—miracle-of-miracles—maybe even save some money. Find ways to reduce the pain of increased costs by better understanding the system and how it works.

First Look

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chops as a unit, the Allstars issued their debut album, “Shake Hands with Shorty,” in spring 2000. It earned them a Grammy nomination for Best Contemporary Blues Album. Bringing their hill country blues-infused Rock & Roll to stages the world over, including multiple tours in Europe and Asia, the Allstars gained a loyal fan base, and show organizers think that base will expand after the band’s auto show appearance.

Rounding out the spectrum of live acts for the night is jazz. And nobody on today’s contemporary urban jazz scene knows more about the power of perfect, timely partnerships—or what it takes to keep the No. 1 hits coming—than Rick Braun. His partnerships with other musicians, including Tina Turner, Natalie Cole, Ricki Lee Jones and Glenn Frey, plus noted composers and producers have made Rick a household name in the world of jazz music.

Braun set a record at the 2002 National Contemporary Jazz Awards in San Diego by winning a total of five trophies, including Best Male Artist, Best Album (“Kisses in the Rain,” which hit No. 1 on Billboard’s Contemporary Jazz Chart), Song of the Year (the title cut) and Best Brass Player.

Understating his impact on his colleagues and thousands of fans across the globe just slightly, Braun says: “I am one of the luckiest guys in the world. I mean, when you really think about it, I make my living blowing into plumbing.”

Marking its 20th year as an event, First Look for Charity benefits 18 local worthwhile organizations and over the years has raised more than \$28 million in donations. This year’s theme follows The Greatest Auto Race on Earth, which in 1908 began in New York City and ended in Paris. The show floor will boast special cuisines that traces a path from the Big Apple to the City of Lights. Guests will be able to sample food and drink offerings from San Francisco, Japan, Berlin and, of course, the City of Big Shoulders.

Tickets for the black-tie event are \$250 each. For a list of benefiting charities and to order tickets, go to www.chicagoautoshow.com. Discounted tuxedo rentals are available at Men’s Wearhouse and MW Tux locations.

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Listings of items for sale are subject to the approval of the CATA. Candidates for employment must submit a full resume to the Editor.

Review past editions dating to 1998 or search by subject at www.cata.info.

David E. Sloan
Erik K. Higgins

President, Publisher
Editor, Director of Dealer Affairs

CATA embarks on relationship with Aflac

Directors of the Chicago Automobile Trade Association have approved an opportunity for dealer members of the association to benefit by accessing Aflac insurance coverage for their employees

Paul Jackson, who previously worked in advertising with several local dealer groups, now is Aflac's lead agent in the new program that benefits dealers, the CATA and, most importantly, dealership employees.

For those not aware, Aflac coverage is completely funded by the employees who choose coverage. Aflac is a safety net of cash paid directly to the employee to cover out-of-pocket expenses associated with any accidents or illnesses that happen to them or their immediate family.

The CATA board of directors voted to promote the Aflac program and Jackson as its designated agent for several reasons:

- The AFLAC program costs dealers absolutely nothing. In fact, dealers can realize additional money to their bottom lines by not having to match FICA on the employee payroll deductions. The employees pay for 100 percent of the coverage they select.

- Paul Jackson has over 23 years of experience working with dealers including as vice president at J. Walter Thompson on the Chicago Ford Dealer Advertising Association (FDAF) account; and as a senior vice president



Paul Jackson

at Campbell Ewald servicing several Chevrolet Dealer Associations in the North Central Region, including Chicago. Paul understands dealerships and how to most efficiently/effectively administer the Aflac program.

- Jackson is part of the largest Aflac office in the country. This office has the critical support necessary to effectively administer the program to CATA dealer members. His Chicago office has more than 70 agents. Among many accomplishments at Aflac, Paul won the coveted Illinois State Rookie of the Year award.

- AFLAC has agreed that, by working through Jackson, *every policy written for dealership employees will generate revenue back to the CATA.* That will, in turn, help support the Chicago Auto Show and other charitable events in which the CATA is involved. The revenue also will help the CATA recuperate lost manufacturers revenue during the economic downturn.

Paul will be contacting each CATA Dealer Principal to request a short meeting to provide details on the program and to help determine if it makes sense for your dealership at this time.

Paul and his team has been enrolling the dealerships of CATA directors in January; other dealers can expect a call from Paul shortly thereafter.

If you have any questions in the meantime, please contact a CATA director, or call Jackson at (313) 808-0221.

Xchanging deflects unemployment claims

One hundred forty-five CATA dealer members reported a combined 1,064 unemployment claims during the fourth quarter of 2010 to Xchanging, which has been serving CATA dealers under various names since 1979. The company's efforts saved those dealers a total of \$950,703 in benefits by contesting the claims.

Xchanging monitors any unemployment claims against its clients and contests all unwarranted claims and charges. The company counts about 250 CATA dealers among its clients.

Claims that can be protested and subsequently denied help minimize an employer's unemployment tax rate. The rate can vary between 0.7 percent and 8.4 percent of each employee's first \$12,740 in earnings. The 2011 average unemployment tax rate among Illinois employers is 3.8 percent, or about \$485 annually per employee (\$420 in 20010).

"With the downturn in the economy, unemployment remains at record highs (10 percent in Illinois) and a drain on the Illinois Department of Employment Security trust fund, markedly higher tax rates for 2011 and probably for a couple of years after that," said Paul Schardt, an Xchanging senior vice president.

"The unemployment tax is really the only controllable tax, in that it's experience-driven," Schardt said. An ex-employee's claim affects the employer's tax rate for three years.

For new enrollees, client fees amount to \$2.60 per employee, per fiscal quarter. For the fee, Xchanging monitors all unemployment claims; files any appeals; prepares employer witnesses for hearings, as necessary; represents the client at any hearings; verifies the benefit charge statements; and confirms the client's unemployment tax rate.

To discuss retaining the company, call Schardt at (773) 824-4325.

AIADA annual meeting, luncheon is Feb. 7

"In the Driver's Seat" is the theme of the 41st Annual Meeting & Luncheon of the American International Automobile Dealers Association, Feb. 7 in San Francisco.

International nameplate dealers and industry insiders discuss what lies ahead for the U.S. international auto retail industry. It is important that dealers of those cutting-edge brands stay informed on the issues impacting their bottom line. Issues the AIADA monitors, including taxes, trade, and new safety legislation. To register, go to www.AIADA.org/events.

Franchised New-Car Dealers in the 8-county CATA area as of 1 January 2011

| Car Line | Chicago only Ill. | Rest of Cook Cty. Ill. | Lake Cnty. Ill. | DuPage Cnty. Ill. | McHenry Cnty. Ill. | Kane Cnty. Ill. | Will Cnty. Ill. | Lake Cnty. Ind. | Porter Cnty. Ind. | Total [prior] 7/1/2010 | Total [present] 1/1/2011 |
|----------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Acura | 0 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 9 |
| Aston Martin | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Audi | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 8 | 8 |
| Bentley | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| BMW | 1 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 11 | 11 |
| Bugatti | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Buick | 2 | 10 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 32 | 31 |
| Cadillac | 1 | 7 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 16 | 16 |
| Chevrolet | 4 | 15 | 5 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 6 | 4 | 2 | 54 | 51 |
| Chrysler | 3 | 9 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 32 | 32 |
| Dodge | 4 | 11 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 35 | 36 |
| Ferrari | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Ford | 3 | 14 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 48 | 48 |
| GMC | 1 | 10 | 2 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 27 | 27 |
| Honda | 4 | 10 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 25 | 25 |
| Hummer | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 1 |
| Hyundai | 2 | 10 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 23 | 23 |
| Infiniti | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 7 |
| Jaguar | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 8 | 8 |
| Jeep | 3 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 2 | 31 | 31 |
| Kia | 1 | 9 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 19 | 21 |
| Lamborghini | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Land Rover | 1 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7 | 7 |
| Lexus | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 9 |
| Lincoln | 1 | 7 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 22 | 20 |
| Lotus | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Maserati | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Maybach | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Mazda | 0 | 7 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 17 | 17 |
| Mercedes | 1 | 5 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 11 | 11 |
| Mercury | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 25 | 0 |
| Mini | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| Mitsubishi | 0 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 12 | 13 |
| Nissan | 2 | 12 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 27 | 27 |
| Panoz | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Pontiac | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 29 | 0 |
| Porsche | 0 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 5 |
| Rolls-Royce | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Saab | 1 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 9 | 9 |
| Scion | 4 | 11 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 28 | 28 |
| smart | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| Spyker | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Subaru | 1 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 15 | 15 |
| Suzuki | 0 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 10 | 9 |
| Toyota | 4 | 11 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 28 | 28 |
| Volkswagen | 2 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 19 | 19 |
| Volvo | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 8 | 8 |
| # of Car lines | 53 | 227 | 84 | 100 | 35 | 30 | 34 | 48 | 21 | 692 | 632 |
| # of Outlets | 31 | 159 | 52 | 74 | 18 | 20 | 20 | 33 | 14 | 426 | 421 |

NOTE: The difference between car line and outlet figures is the result of outlets that handle more than one car line.