

THE WANADA BULLETIN

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR AND ABOUT FRANCHISED NEW CAR DEALERS IN THE WASHINGTON AREA

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Washington, DC Auto Show: Opening Exceeds Expectations



Even while the challenges mounted, the producers of the 2022 Washington, DC Auto Show forged ahead. Several manufacturers backed out, citing lack of available inventory. The Christmastime surge of the Omicron variant loomed threateningly, and then DC Mayor Muriel Bowser announced that the District would be verifying vaccinations for show attendees in addition to the mask mandate that was already in place. “With all the headwinds we were facing, we honestly didn’t know if anyone was going to come out,” said WANADA President & CEO John O’Donnell. “Thankfully,” he continued, “people did.”

While opening weekend attendance was not on pace with previous “non-pandemic” auto shows, the crowds were surprisingly strong, particularly on Saturday. “You can’t tell me auto shows don’t work,” O’Donnell said, surveying the crowd. “People have to present proof of vaccination & photo ID, we increased the ticket price, there are fewer manufacturers exhibiting, masks are required, Metro is on a limited schedule, and yet they’re still willing to pay \$15 to look at cars they are interested in buying.”

When the doors were opened on Friday, Jan. 21 at noon, a line of people stood waiting, excited to come see the latest models. “I love the auto show, we come every year!” one customer exclaimed.

In the lower hall, DC Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development John Falcicchio was on hand with Greg O’Dell, CEO of Events DC, and members of the local media to declare the show open and review some of the highlights. “The Auto Show is something there we’re really excited to have back,” Falcicchio said. “We missed it last year because of the mitigation efforts that were in effect, but we’re back this year.” As the largest annual indoor event in DC, city officials hope that the arrival of the auto show will prove to be the bellwether for a better year in the nation’s capital.



DC Deputy Mayor for Planning & Economic Development John Falcicchio looks at cars with Auto Show Chairman Jamie Darvish.



Kevin Reilly and John O’Donnell present \$50,000 checks to representatives from Georgetown Lombardi and Children’s National.

In addition to the DC Deputy Mayor and sizable Saturday crowds, the auto show’s opening weekend also featured a presentation from Hyundai’s “Hope on Wheels” foundation. While show guests are usually treated to a “hands-on” contest that has been sponsored by Hyundai for many years and was changed into a charitable competition between Georgetown Lombardi Comprehensive Cancer Center and Children’s National Hospital in 2020, the contest portion was not held this year. This helped to ensure the safety of contestants and keep much needed

hospital personnel available to fight the pandemic. The Washington Area Hyundai Dealers, however, continued the \$100,000 in financial support to Georgetown Lombardi and Children’s National.

On Saturday, January 22nd, at 2 p.m., in the Hyundai display, The Washington Area Hyundai Dealers presented each hospital with a \$50,000 check to support their most critical needs during the pandemic. Former Auto Show Chairman and President of Alexandria Hyundai Kevin Reilly was on hand to present the checks on behalf of Hyundai. “Hyundai has a long history of supporting the fight against pediatric cancer and the Hyundai Hands on Hope Contest contributes to that fight, benefiting two innovators in this field, Georgetown Lombardi and Children’s National,” Reilly said. “The Washington Area Hyundai dealers are proud to support their great work with \$100,000 total in grants, especially during such challenging times.”

The final highlight of the show’s opening weekend was the annual VIP Exotic Car & Luxury Lifestyle Reception, sponsored by Jet It and The Keats Group at RBC Wealth Management. Several area exotic dealers and Competizione & Sports Cars contributed nearly 30 exotic vehicles for the show’s lower level. In return, they invited a number of their top clients to view the show in a private setting. Guests included Redskin great Fred Smoot and Cedric Davy, Chief Operating Officer of Bugatti of the Americas, pictured here with a \$3.8M Bugatti Chiron Pur Sport.



Cedric Davy, Chief Operating Officer of Bugatti of the Americas

Finally, this is the last chance to sign up for the WANADA Member Reception, sponsored by Merrill Lynch The Kirvan Group and BG Crovato Products & Services. The WANADA Member Reception at the 2022 Washington, DC Auto Show is scheduled for Thursday, January 27th, from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. Registration for the member reception is currently open [here](#) and the cost is \$50 per person.

For more information on the show, visit www.washingtonautoshow.com.

Public Policy Day at the DC Auto Show Features New Models & Strong Attendance

Before the auto show opens to the public, members of the automotive press, political officials and auto industry insiders are treated to a preview event. Since The Washington, DC Auto Show is the “Public Policy Show” on the international auto show circuit, the preview day is branded as “Public Policy Day” and took place on Thursday, January 20. This year’s public policy day featured brand new product reveals, keynote addresses, and policy-focused panel discussions that centered primarily around the theme of electrification.



Toyota's all-new bZ4X waits under a silk drape while gathered members of the media and industry await the reveal.

The day was kicked off just after lunch by Toyota, who did a “regional reveal” for their first full battery electric vehicle, the bZ4X. Toyota Group Vice President for Sustainability and Regulatory Affairs, Tom Stricker, made the presentation, noting that the model would be in showrooms in a matter of months.

Immediately following the bZ4X reveal, National Climate Advisor Gina McCarthy, who some have called the most influential politician for the automotive industry, delivered an energetic keynote address. After being

introduced by NADA President Mike Stanton, Ms. McCarthy, President Biden’s top environmental official, sat down with Joe White from Reuters for further elaboration on her remarks in the form of a conversational fireside chat. Among other notable statements, Ms. McCarthy had exclaimed that “I love auto shows!” and that she had never “been at an auto show where so many environmentally friendly technologies were on display.”



National Climate Advisor Gina McCarthy delivered remarks just before the audience was treated to their first look of the 2023 McLaren Artura.

Following Ms. McCarthy’s remarks, Amir Hadzimehmedovic, General Manager of Sterling Motorcars’ exotic lines, presented a pre-production McLaren Artura, the company’s first “hybrid supercar.” Closing off the first portion of the Public Policy Day programming, David Bilger of Form Policy then introduced a brand-new Karma GS6. Between the Toyota bZ4X, remarks from the National Climate Advisor, and the first-ever regional introductions of a McLaren and Karma, the 2022 Public Policy Day was already a smash hit and was only halfway through.

For the second half of the program, the audience moved from the show’s EV Pavilion in the lower level of the show, to the MobilityTalks Main Stage on the upper level, which was strategically located between the Chevrolet and Stellantis exhibits. Kicking off the agenda was Chris Urmson, the co-founder and CEO of Aurora, the world’s leading self-driving car company. Mr. Urmson sat down with Joe White and discussed the future of autonomous driving, to include

Aurora's latest initiative in the freight industry, to the continued development of ADAS technologies that will ultimately lead to self-driving passenger cars.



Following Mr. Urmson's keynote, the audience was treated to a five-minute video that Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg had recorded specifically for Public Policy Day. There was then a panel discussion on infrastructure featuring the states of Virginia and Michigan along with a representative from Electrify America, followed by keynote remarks from Cars.com CEO Alex Vetter. Mr. Vetter notably addressed the trend of industry "disrupters" like Tesla and Rivian who plan to continue to

deliver vehicles direct to consumers. "The best distribution network is already in place," he explained. "Why a company would not want to leverage an existing distribution network like the nation's franchised car dealers, who already have facilities and deep ties to local communities, is beyond me."

Following Mr. Vetter's remarks another video was presented, this time from British Ambassador to the US, Dame Karen Pierce. A final panel discussion delved into the topic of international automotive policy trends, and then John O'Donnell introduced Senator Chris Van Hollen to close the "MobilityTalks" portion of the



program. Senator Van Hollen used his keynote address and Q&A with Bloomberg's Kevin Tynan to discuss Build Back Better and other challenges related to the nation's supply chain and related infrastructure concerns. Senator Van Hollen was then treated to a special ride in one of the show's premier exhibits: an electric three-wheel vehicle from Arcimoto, an Oregon-based EV company hosting a fully interactive ride & drive on the lower level of the show.

After Senator Van Hollen left the stage, the program closed with what has become a Public Policy Day staple: U.S. News & World Report's "Best Cars for the Money" awards. Of the eleven awards, five were from Hyundai (Santa Fe, Kona, Tucson, Tucson Hybrid and Elantra

Hybrid), and three were from Honda (Civic, Odyssey and Accord). The Kia Telluride, Nissan Versa and Toyota Avalon rounded out the remaining awards.

To cap it all off, the show's annual "Sneak Peek Preview" reception was held from 5:00 – 8:00 p.m. The Sneak Peek is an area favorite where staffers from Capitol Hill and many federal agencies come down to the convention center for their chance to see the auto show before the public opening the following day. As with the other events throughout the day, the attendance was much stronger than expected, with thousands donning their masks and verifying their vaccination status to come in and enjoy one of the world's premier automotive exhibitions.

WANADA Law Enforcement Update

On Friday, January 21, WANADA issued a warning supplied to us by a dealer in Alexandria about a suspicious individual who was suspected of attempted auto theft. After sending the individual's photo and a description of his tactics, it was later reported to us that the individual had been apprehended in Fairfax County. We consequently notified the dealer body and included details on another vehicle that Montgomery County Police had confiscated and was presumed to be a dealer car.

This situation exemplifies one difficulty that law enforcement officers face in our region. With so many jurisdictions in a relatively small area, criminals can avoid or delay capture by staying in constant motion. This problem has been compounded recently by department budget cuts leading to situations like the disbanding of the Montgomery County Auto Theft Task Force.

While WANADA is obviously not a law enforcement agency, we can assist in the communication of auto theft related incidents between members of the dealer community and local law enforcement officers. The recent scenario described above reveals how effective this enhanced communication can be. Please continue to send information to Joe Koch (jk@wanada.org) or John O'Donnell (jod@wanada.org) so that more effective information dissemination can lead to more thieves being taken off of our streets.

WANADA Insurance: Now Accepting ACH Payments

The WANADA Insurance Department is pleased to announce that ACH payments can now be accepted for all WANADA Trust products. The WANADA Trust utilizes volume discounts for certain employee benefits, including dental, life, disability and vision, to offer the most affordable pricing in the marketplace from nationally recognized carriers and providers. "Because we specialize in car dealerships and have these exclusive deals within our Trust, there is truly no competition for pricing and service when it comes to these benefits," said WANADA Vice President of Insurance Ed Mullaney. "Even if a dealership gets their medical coverage through another broker, they should look at the WANADA Trust for dental, life and disability and/or vision insurance because we're confident we can save any dealership a lot of money."

For more information about the WANADA Trust or, if you are an existing client and would like to set up ACH to pay your WANADA Trust invoices, please contact Ed Mullaney or Connie Ryan at 202-237-7200 or em@wanada.org and cr@wanada.org respectively.

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