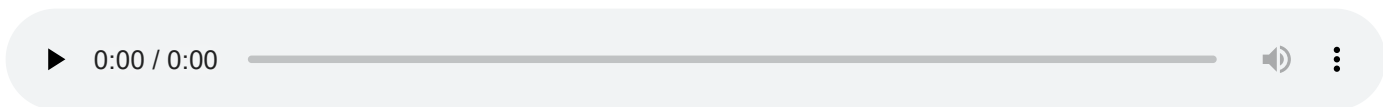


MotorCities National Heritage Area marks 25 years

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By Ted O'Neil on October 18, 2023



GROSSE POINTE SHORES — Tickets are now available for the MotorCities National Heritage Area’s 25th Anniversary Gala, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 8, at the Ford House Visitors Center.

Mark Heppner, president and CEO of Ford House, has been on the board of the organization since 2012 and is its current chair.

“The main goal of this anniversary event is to gather people together to celebrate the only National Heritage Area in Michigan and to recognize those who had the vision to create it and those who have worked so hard to ensure it will be here for the future,” he said. “It’s a celebration of the National Heritage Area, which is a celebration of our history and our role as the automotive and labor center of the world.”

Tickets, available through Oct. 24, are \$100 for MotorCities members and \$125 for nonmembers. The evening will include dinner, drinks and a silent auction, as well as the presentation of the 25th anniversary Awards of Excellence and the annual Milestone Award winner.

Roy D. Chapin is the Milestone Award winner. The Farms resident is the grandson of Roy D. Chapin Sr., founder of the Hudson Motor Car Co. and son of Roy D. Chapin Jr., former president and CEO of American Motors Corp. Chapin is one of the founders of the MotorCities National Heritage Area and former president of the Automotive Hall of Fame in Dearborn.

The keynote speaker for the evening will be Frank Markus of Motor Trend magazine. He will discuss trends that are driving the future of automobiles.

“MotorCities is not one physical location but a large geographic area which is hard, at times, to explain to people,” Heppner said. “MotorCities helps preserve the many rich automotive and labor stories in our area, like Ford House, while helping support partner organizations through grants, communications and engagement.”

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MotorCities National Heritage Area,” he added. “MotorCities is often the quiet partner that helps support and advocate for all the museums and heritage sites in our area.”

The Automobile National Heritage Act was co-sponsored by former Congressman John Dingell and former Sen. Carl Levin and signed by President Bill Clinton on Nov. 6, 1998. The law created what is now known as the MotorCities National Heritage Area Partnership, one of 62 organizations that are part of the National Heritage Area System of the National Park Service.

Each year, MotorCities generates \$489.7 million in economic impact, supporting 5,343 jobs and producing \$40 million in tax revenue in Michigan. Over its 25-year history, MotorCities has awarded more than 300 grants for a total investment in local programs of more than \$1.7 million.

“I want to bring people together for a fun evening, to meet new people, learn about the important work that MotorCities has done and is doing, but also to celebrate the many heritage partners in our communities,” Heppner said. “For me, Michigan and, particularly southeast Michigan, is the American story and one told through the evolution of the automotive industry. This is something we own. Something we are proud of. Something we should be proud of. MotorCities is the champion for this story and continues to leverage it and celebrate it for all.”

See motorcities.org/25th-anniversary-events for more information.

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