



U.S. ARMY TANK-AUTOMOTIVE AND ARMAMENTS COMMAND
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U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command

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Military, private and commercial vehicles cruise the Detroit Arsenal

WARREN, Mich. –The Detroit Arsenal was the place to be for car enthusiasts Sept. 20 as the Army installation held its first Cruisin' at the D spectacular.

The event, modeled after the famous Woodward Dream Cruise, was hosted by Maj. Gen. Clark LeMasters, Commanding General for the TACOM Life Cycle Management Command, headquartered at the arsenal. The Dream Cruise is the world's largest one-day celebration of classic cars that takes place annually just a few miles away.

According to Donna Edwards, the cruise organizer, the general's goal was for installation workers to simply have fun.

Cruisin' at the D featured more than 125 vintage and contemporary military, commercial and private vehicles and motorcycles. In addition to displaying their vehicles, more than three quarters of the drivers that registered for the event drove two laps around a predetermined route of the arsenal's main streets so employees could see them on the road and, in some cases, hear the engines roar. The motorcycles led the cruise, followed by the general's pace car, classic and contemporary vehicles, and vintage military vehicles. The big guns, a Bradley Fighting Vehicle and an M1A1 Abrams tank, brought up the rear.

Vintage military entries included WWII- and Vietnam-era Jeeps, a 1952 Dodge M37 truck, and a 1981 armored personnel carrier. Contemporary military vehicles included the Bradley and Abrams; and mine-resistant, armored-protective vehicles, known as MRAPs.

Detroit Arsenal workers provided the majority of the vehicles on display. Private vehicles ranged from a 1947 Buick Roadmaster, 1949 Packard and 1957 Ford Thunderbird to a slew of Corvettes dating to 1959, a 1981 DeLorean, a 1986 Ferrari, and a variety of other makes and models representing the past several decades.

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After opening remarks and a blessing of the vehicles, three grill master teams fired up their barbecues for a good old-fashioned cook-off. After a blind taste test, the judges selected Corey Woodruff, John Hazelton, Jessica McGivens, Kurt Hunsanger, and Charles Ferrigno, all from the MRAP Product Support Integration Directorate, as having the best dry ribs. Barry Tabron, Combat Maneuver and Recovery PSID, Integrated Logistics Support Center; Walter Hilliard, Weapons, PSID, ILSC; and Shatorya Modkins, Combat Maneuver and Recovery PSID, ILSC; were named as having the best wet ribs and chicken; they were also named best overall chefs.

Attendees were asked to vote for their favorite vintage, classic and overall vehicles. Winners were:

- * Best Classic Foreign Vehicle: a 1986 Ferrari Testarossa owned by James Ealy from the Tank Automotive Research, Development and Engineering Center.
- * Best Classic American Vehicle: a 1961 Chevrolet Impala owned by Sarah Benkoff, Child & Youth School Services.
- * Best Overall Vehicle: Benkoff's Chevy Impala.

According to Edwards, the primary organizer, "General LeMasters wanted to conduct a one-day event for the workforce to create esprit de corps among the Soldiers and civilians working on the installation. By the overwhelming feedback we have received from the attendees, I'd say we did that."

Many of the onlookers agreed.

"I thought it was awesome," said Staff Sgt. Michelle Royall, Army Contracting Command-Warren. "It was nice to see all those vintage cars and the not-so-vintage, but those have really loud engines so they compensated. I liked that," she added.

Catherine Gardner, who works in the Program Executive Office for Ground Combat Systems, Main Battle Tank Systems, said, "It was one of the best things they've ever done here. It was very exciting and very well done. Classic cars are always a big draw and they didn't disappoint."

"I had so much fun! We must do this again next year. The energy from both the cruisers and spectators was outstanding," Tiffany R. McCants, PEO for Combat Support and Combat Service Support, posted on Facebook.

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Lou Gorenc, TACOM Integrated Logistics Support Center, didn't hold back his praise in an email. "In my opinion, yesterday's Cruisin' was the BEST event I have participated in, in the 17 years at TACOM!!!!!! EVERYTHING was perfect -- the vehicles, the food, the weather, but best part were the people. Everyone was happy, friendly, great natured ... and seeing old work friends who I haven't seen in years made it that much greater. I thank everyone who made this happen!!!"

LeMasters, a car enthusiast who entered his own Corvette into the cruise, said, "I thought it was an awesome success, and that's what everyone else is saying. It turned out perfectly. I loved it. The whole team did a great job and I appreciate everyone coming out. That was awesome."

The U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command is the only active-duty U.S. Army installation in the tristate area of Michigan, Ohio and Indiana. A global enterprise headquartered here, its 19,000 military and civilian acquisition, logistics and technology professionals research, develop, procure, field, maintain, upgrade, modernize and sustain approximately 65 percent of the equipment an Army Brigade Combat Team uses.

The enterprise is on track to award nearly \$8 billion in contracts by the end of FY 16, which concludes 30 Sep 16. It awarded in excess of \$6 billion in contracts in FY 15 -- of which, \$1.5 billion were contracts awarded to Michigan companies.

-30-

(Note: Authored by Cathy Segal, this originally appeared on www.army.mil)

