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Mopar to Celebrate 50th Anniversary of the Iconic 426 HEMI in 2014

Mopar Unveils Logo, Special Product Line and Plans Marketing Events

- 2014 marks 50th anniversary of the introduction of the Gen II 426 Race HEMI®
- Mopar unveils 50th anniversary HEMI logo celebrating the iconic engine
- Engine made its legendary debut in February 1964 by dominating the Daytona 500
- A version of the Gen II 426 HEMI still powers NHRA Funny Car and Top Fuel vehicles
- Special 50th anniversary HEMI merchandise product line available on WearMopar.com
- Marketing events planned for fans throughout the year

January 8, 2014, Auburn Hills, Mich. - Throughout 2014, Mopar will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the introduction of the iconic second generation (Gen II) 426 Race HEMI® engine to motorsports competition and its eventual initiation to production vehicles.

To kick off the year-long commemoration of the legendary engine, Mopar has created a 50th anniversary logo. The design incorporates an elephant in reference to the engine's moniker, which resulted from the powerplant's imposing size, strength and power. The logo also features the trademark HEMI-orange color that covered the engine and made it even more recognizable.

"Mopar is proud to mark the 50th anniversary of the introduction of the Gen II 426 HEMI, a revolutionary engine that inspired a long line of quality products in our brand's portfolio," said Pietro Gorlier, President and CEO — Mopar, Chrysler Group LLC's service, parts and customer-care brand. "The 426 HEMI is such a vital part of our heritage and a key ingredient in helping make Mopar what it is today. The success of the Race HEMI launched a unique brand of sought after muscle cars that had fans began to refer to as Mopars, and that is something we are very proud of."

While Chrysler engineers initially introduced the original hemispherical combustion engine design for passenger cars in 1951 and celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2011, the iconic and revolutionary second generation HEMI engine, so closely associated with the muscle car era, made its memorable debut in 1964.

The new second generation HEMI measured 426 cubic inches and was built specifically to win races. Two versions of this 426 race engine were built – one called the "Circuit" or "Track" engine and the other the "Acceleration" or "Drag" engine.

The Gen II 426 Race HEMI was first introduced at the Daytona 500 in February 1964 with legendary driver Richard Petty winning the race handily in his Plymouth, while a dominating performance by three other HEMI-powered entries gave four of the top five finishing positions to the new powerplant. Petty drove to eight victories and earned the NASCAR championship in 1964 with HEMI-powered cars amassing a total of 26 race wins. The HEMI used for the season was rated at 400 horsepower and had a compression ratio of 12.5:1.

That same year in National Hot Rod Association (NHRA) drag racing competition, Don Garlits broke the 200-mph barrier in the Gen II 426 Race HEMI-powered car travelling the quarter-mile straight-line distance in 7.78 seconds at 201.34 mph.

For the following season, NASCAR's sanctioning body changed the rules mandating that all engines used for its races must be available in production vehicles. This led to the withdrawal from NASCAR competition for the 1965 season and saw Chrysler engineers concentrate their efforts in drag racing.

A new lighter drag racing package, referred to as A-990, debuted in the NHRA Super Stock class in 1965 in Dodge and Plymouth vehicles with altered wheelbases, launching the popularity of Funny Cars. To this day, a version of that engine still powers every single Funny Car and Top Fuel engine regardless of being badged by other manufacturers.

With the introduction of the 426 “Street” HEMI in 1966 for production vehicles, the HEMI made a return to NASCAR racing. During the next several years, vehicles with HEMI engines won countless races, numerous championships in various professional categories and were feared by competitors.

With the availability of a Street HEMI, Chrysler no longer offered a special drag racing engine. Instead, drag racers were provided with the street version, which they could modify at their discretion. The only exception was the limited edition 1968 Dodge Dart and Plymouth Barracudas that remained powered by the 426 Race HEMI, with only 75 of each model produced.

The heritage of those special vehicles is celebrated each year by Mopar with the HEMI Challenge that takes place in the Sportsman class at the NHRA’s prestigious U.S. Nationals in Indianapolis. The HEMI Challenge made its debut in 2001 and features these classic muscle cars, which contributed to the brand’s legendary reputation and success at the drag strip.

In anticipation of the 50th anniversary of the 426 Race HEMI engine, Mopar also established the “Tom Hoover Sportsman Challenge” at the start of the 2013 season, with a winner selected from the Sportsman Stock or Super Stock classes by amassing the most points at the wheel of a Chrysler Group vehicle in the course of a season during NHRA sanctioned races nationwide.

Since its1964 debut, the second generation Gen II 426 HEMI remains a legend due to its reputation and performance on and away from the racetrack, the dedication and skill that Chrysler designers put into it, as well as its rarity since availability was discontinued in production vehicles in 1971.

The innovative engine’s offspring live on, not only in the NHRA within all Funny Car and Top Fuel machines, but also within both new production and classic heritage vehicles thanks to the availability of current day products (including the installation of a crate engine), to transform them into a “Mopar”-machines.

To mark the 50th anniversary celebration, and complement the availability and continued development of these engines, a unique product line of HEMI merchandise has been created and will be launched throughout the month of January at WearMopar.com. This new product line features the HEMI 50th anniversary logo and will include items such as clothing, decorative lighting, clocks, a pub table, stools, and much more.

Numerous marketing initiatives and events surrounding the 50th anniversary, designed to encourage Mopar fans to partake in the celebrations nationwide, are also planned for 2014 and will be announced shortly.

Mopar Brand

Mopar is Chrysler Group LLC’s service, parts and customer-care brand and distributes 280,000 parts and accessories. With the creation of the industrial alliance between Chrysler Group and FIAT SpA, Mopar is extending its global reach, integrating service, parts and customer-care operations in order to enhance dealer and customer support worldwide. Mopar’s global portfolio includes more than 500,000 parts and accessories that are distributed in more than 130 markets. Mopar is the source for genuine parts and accessories for Chrysler Group brands as well as FIAT brands.

Mopar parts are unique in that they are engineered with the same teams that create factory-authorized vehicle specifications for Chrysler Group and FIAT vehicles – a direct connection that no other aftermarket parts company can provide. A complete list of Mopar accessories and performance parts is available at www.mopar.com.

Mopar-first Features

Mopar has introduced numerous industry-first features including:

- **Vehicle-information apps**: first to introduce smartphone vehicle-information applications, a new channel of communication with customers

- **Electronic owner manuals**: first to introduce traditional owner manuals in a DVD and brief user-guide format. First to offer complete vehicle-information kits in Spanish
- **Wi-Fi**: first to offer customers the ability to make their vehicle a wireless hot spot
- **Wireless charging**: first to introduce in-vehicle wireless charging for portable devices
- **Electronic Vehicle Tracking System (EVTS):** first to market with interactive vehicle tracking device that sends owner a text when vehicle is driven too fast or too far based on pre-set parameters
- **wiAdvisor**: first to provide factory-connected tablet technology in the service lane for instant vehicle diagnosis
- **wiTech**: first to support vehicle diagnosis and software updates leveraging off-the-shelf personal computers and a dedicated wireless tool network
- **2011 Mopar Challenger Drag Pak**: first to introduce a 500-plus cubic-inch V-10 drag-race package car

More than 75 Years of Mopar

Mopar (a simple contraction of the words Motor and PARts) was trademarked for antifreeze product in 1937. The Mopar brand made its mark in the 1960s – the muscle-car era. The former Chrysler Corporation built race-ready Dodge and Plymouth “package cars” equipped with special high-performance parts. Mopar carried a line of “special parts” for super-stock drag racers and developed its racing parts division called Mopar Performance Parts to enhance speed and handling for both road and racing use. The brand has expanded to include technical service and customer support.

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