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Contact:

Klaus Gleich
SPE Auto. Composites Conf. Chair
SPE Composites Div. Chair-Elect
Johns Manville.
Phone: +1.720.934.0758
eMail: gleichk@jm.com

or

Peggy Malnati
SPE Auto. Composites Conf. Publicity Chair
SPE Auto. Div. Communications Chair
Malnati and Associates
+1.248.592.0765
p.malnati@sbcglobal.net

***SPE® ANNOUNCES THEME, LOCATION, DATES FOR 5TH-ANNUAL
AUTOMOTIVE COMPOSITES CONFERENCE & EXPOSITION***

***Show Expands to 3rd Day with Greater Exhibit Space, More Panel Discussions,
Keynote Addresses, & Papers***

TROY (DETROIT), MICH. – The organizing committee for the SPE Automotive Composites Conference & Exposition (ACCE) today announced the dates, theme, and location for this year's show. Now in its 5th year, the ACCE has become known as a must-attend event for the North American composites industry, although it draws exhibitors, speakers, and attendees from Europe, the Middle East, and Asia / Pacific as well.

Dr. Klaus Gleich, who is the 2005 ACCE conference chair, announced this year's theme as *Composites: Providing Global Vehicle Solutions*. "We selected this theme because composites are providing real engineering solutions in the global transportation industry. Both thermoplastic and thermoset composites offer a unique combination of performance, low mass, improved safety, and pricing advantages that often cannot be matched by any other materials technology. We are very pleased that our conference has become the place to see many of these leading-edge innovations for the first time and talk with their inventors first hand."

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As it has been for the past 4 years, the conference will once again be located at the MSU Management Education Center in Troy, although this time the conference will expand to take up the entire facility. According to conference Sponsorship Chair, Tim Simko of Polywheels, “We’ve had a good but troublesome challenge the last two years in that we’ve had more organizations that wanted to exhibit at our show than we had room to put them. It’s a terrible thing to have to turn away potential sponsors, so this year we booked early enough to reserve the entire conference facility. This will allow us to accommodate far more sponsors and exhibitors, and it will also help us solve another challenge, namely reducing background noise from the main exhibit floor that could sometimes be heard inside the session rooms where papers were being presented.”

Technical Program Co-Chairs, Brian Grosser and Dr. Jackie Rehkopf explained that this year they were taking steps to be able to accommodate a greater number of presentations and panel discussions. “We’ve reserved the Management Education Center for 3 days this year – September 12th through 14th – hoping this will give us enough extra time to accommodate a greater number of papers, keynote speakers, and panel discussions,” said Grosser. Rehkopf added, “Last year’s very successful OEM panel discussion will return, and we’re also planning a second panel discussion on *Materials Solutions for Low-Volume Vehicles* that will feature key members of the supply community.” Other sessions already being planned for this year’s conference include:

- New Composite Materials,
- New Composite Processes,
- New Composite Applications,
- Enabling Technologies for Composites,
- Natural-Fiber Composites,
- Structural Composite Applications,
- Nanocomposites, and
- Advances in Long-Fiber Reinforced Thermoplastics (LFT or LFRT).

Grosser continues, “We’re asking authors to submit their abstracts to us by the end of April, and – assuming their topic is accepted – papers by the end of June so our committee has time to peer review them, get comments back to the authors, and the authors have time to get their final manuscripts to us by August 1st so they can be added to our conference CD.” Rehkopf noted that the technical program committee was also hard at work planning keynote addresses for this year’s conference, which will be announced in future updates on the conference.

“Over the last 5 years,” adds Fred Deans of Azdel, Inc., former ACCE conference chair and current planning committee member, “the use of composite-intensive components and modules on passenger vehicles, light trucks, and other mass-transit applications has increased remarkably. More recently, we’ve seen some particularly interesting applications in the hybrid materials arena – composites with metals, or composites with thermoplastics – discussed at the ACCE. These are applications that could not have been done in metals or thermoplastics or even composites alone. In fact, many of these applications have gone on to win awards at the SPE Automotive Division’s annual *Innovation Awards Gala*. That’s a true testament to the nature of the innovation being displayed at the Automotive Composites Conference each year.”

SPE Announces Details for 5th-Annual Automotive Composites Conference
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This year's conference once again will have a broad offering of exhibits from industry leaders in the U.S., Canada, Europe, and the Far East. Simko concludes, "Sponsors view the SPE Automotive Composites Conference as a great opportunity to see OEM and Tier customers in an environment solely devoted to the composites industry. They repeatedly tell us that this event brings them genuine value, which is why we have such a high repeat rate for exhibitors. In fact, half of our current sponsors have been with us since our first year."

The mission of SPE is to promote scientific and engineering knowledge relating to plastics. SPE's Automotive and Composites Divisions work to advance plastics and plastic-based composites technologies worldwide and to educate industry, academia, and the public about these advances. Both divisions are dedicated to educating, promoting, recognizing, and communicating technical accomplishments for all phases of plastics and plastic based-composite developments, including applications, materials, processing, equipment, tooling, design, and development.

For more information about the SPE Automotive Composites Conference, visit the Composites' Division website at www.4spe.org/communities/divisions/d39.php, or the Automotive Division's website at www.speautomotive.com, or contact the group at +1.248.244.8993, or write SPE Automotive Division, 1800 Crooks Road, Suite A, Troy, MI 48084, USA.

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