

# BUSINESS

**Perspective:** Connecticut Comptroller Kevin P. Lembo’s decision not to seek the Democratic nomination for governor is one more signal that this is the Republicans’ race to lose, writes Editorial Page Editor Paul Choiniere. **B3**

In Harvey’s aftermath, interest is growing in portable dams **Page B2**

## The *art* of car design



COURTESY OF GENERAL MOTORS VIA AP  
Buick Design Studio creative sculptors mold the clay on a model GM automobile in 1954. Clay is still used by every major carmaker.

## In a high-tech world, automakers remain old-school

By DEE-ANN DURBIN  
Associated Press

Car designers have every kind of software and virtual reality tool. But when they want to make sure a car’s curves look just right, they rely on one of the world’s oldest materials: clay.

Every vehicle by every major carmaker, from Mercedes to Tesla to Toyota, is formed in clay long before it ever hits the road. Automakers hire sculptors to make scale models and full-size clay vehicles. They sculpt every detail, from windows to door handles to slight creases in the hood. They sculpt interiors, too, in such fine detail that focus groups can’t always tell they’re looking at a clay dashboard.

Car companies have tried other

materials, like plaster. They’ve tried designing cars on computers. But without the hand-sculpting process, designs tend to look stiff and stale, said Bob Boniface, the design director for global Buick exteriors at General Motors Co. “Clay is still the best. It’s a very flexible medium,” Boniface said. “We can put the clay on and take it off very quickly.” Clay has been used in car design studios since at least the 1930s. Legendary GM designer

Harley Earl is thought to be one of its pioneers. Now, in the same light-filled studios Earl once used, GM designers and sculptors still use thousands of pounds of reddish-brown clay each year from Kolb, a German supplier. Design is more critical than ever to car companies, Boniface said. Brands are now basically equal when it comes to crash performance, fuel economy, road feel and price. Design is the great differentiator.

“A car is a product, yes, but it’s a very emotional purchase,” he said. “So the work we do here in design is very, very important in terms of distinguishing our product from the rest of the competitive landscape.” Car design begins with designers’ sketches. Once the designers have narrowed down some ideas, sculptors make one-third-scale clay models of their drawings. One design is eventually chosen **SEE DESIGN PAGE B2**

## Mystic couple opens shop with finds from coast to coast



By ERICA MOSER  
Day Staff Writer  
**Mystic** — Reclaimed wood swings come from Pennsylvania, backpacks from Nebraska and baskets from Maine. There’s a sea-clay scent for the soap from Connecticut, and neck ties made from textiles in New York. The contents of Amma Pozzi and Tomas Gates’ new shop read like a stanza of “Rhode Island Is Famous For You” — a 1940s Broadway tune that names the most famous products of various states — and for good reason: Mystic Supply Co. only sells items that are 100 percent made in America. “We just wanted to support America, just because everything is imported nowadays,” Gates said. Pozzi and Gates, a couple in their late 20s, opened Mystic Supply Co. at 47 Holmes St. in July. They purchased the building, which Gates said previously operated as a Maytag store, then a high-end art gallery, then a photography studio, and then an antique shop, in November. In late August, their online storefront went live at mysticsupplycompany.com. Along with running the store, they also rent

out four bikes, two scooters and one Vespa. “The scooter rentals definitely took off, and we’re getting a steady flow of people,” Pozzi said, reflecting on the last two months. “Our community’s been great.” The couple is looking to revamp the back of the store and add more artisan foods; Pozzi envisions bike renters buying healthy snacks there to take along for a picnic. Finds at Mystic Supply Co. include button-downs from New England Shirt Company for \$120, neckties from General Knot & Co. for \$88 and leather baby-moccasins for \$34. Pozzi said one of the most popular sellers has been teddy bears, which cost \$12 for **SEE MYSTIC SUPPLY PAGE B2**

### GAP TO SHIFT FOCUS TO OLD NAVY, ATHLETA

**New York** — Gap Inc. says it will shift its focus to its growing brands Old Navy and Athleta, and away from the Gap and Banana Republic. The company said Wednesday that it will close about 200 Gap and Banana Republic stores in the next three years and open about 270 Old Navy and Athleta stores during the same period. Low-priced Old Navy has been a bright spot for the clothing retailer, posting rising sales even as they fell at the Gap and Banana Republic. The San Francisco company says Old Navy is on track to surpass \$10 billion in sales in the next few years. And Athleta, which sells athletic clothing, is expected to exceed \$1 billion in sales. — Associated Press

### McCAFE DRINKS COMING TO STORE SHELVES

**New York** — McDonald’s said it will sell bottled McCafe drinks at supermarkets and other stores early next year, following in the footsteps of coffee rivals Starbucks and Dunkin’ Donuts. The fast-food giant said it signed a deal with Coca-Cola Co. that will bring three flavors of its McCafe Frappe drinks to stores. Dunkin’ Donuts signed a similar deal with Coca-Cola in 2016. And Starbucks has sold bottled Frappuccinos with soda maker PepsiCo for years. McCafe already has a presence in grocery stores: its ground and whole coffee beans are sold there. McDonald’s Corp. also said it plans to remodel McCafes in its restaurants and is rolling out new espresso drinks. — Associated Press

### KOHL’S PLANS TO OPEN AMAZON SHOPS INSIDE SOME OF ITS STORES

**New York** — Kohl’s said that it will open up Amazon shops in 10 of its stores, making it the latest department store operator to make a deal with the e-commerce giant. Kohl’s shoppers will be able to buy Amazon Echos, Fire tablets and other gadgets from the 1,000-square-foot Amazon shops. Customers can also ask to have an Amazon employee come to their home and install a device. Kohl’s Corp. said the Amazon shops will open next month in Chicago and Los Angeles stores. The Menomonee Falls, Wisc.-based company has more than 1,100 across the country. The Kohl’s deal comes a few months after Sears said it would sell its Kenmore appliances on Amazon.com. — Associated Press



WILFREDO LEE/AP PHOTO  
Kohl’s shoppers will be able to buy Amazon Echos, Fire tablets and other gadgets from the 1,000-square-foot Amazon shops.