The Cleveland Auto Show runs through this Sunday, March 4 at the I-X Center. Tickets are $12.50 for adults, and $10.50 for preteens and seniors.

Cleveland, OH (March 2, 2012) — With fuel prices rising dramatically in just the past two weeks, it comes as no surprise that the number one purchase criterion from Cleveland Auto Show attendees so far is fuel economy. The Cleveland Auto Show runs through this Sunday, March 4 at Cleveland's I-X Center.

"Fuel economy is definitely what we are hearing about at the Cleveland Auto Show," says Bob Serpentini of Serpentini Chevrolet in Strongsville. "Show attendees are not only shopping for fuel-efficient vehicles, they are also showing up in dealerships to make purchases. I sold three Chevy Volts this week."

Among the Chevy booth product specialists, the buzz is all about interest in the Chevy Cruze Eco and Malibu Eco, and of course the new Spark mini-car that is due out later this year. While not yet rated by the EPA, the latter has a targeted fuel economy rating of over 40 miles-per-gallon on the highway.

The talk at the Cleveland Auto Show by product specialists, show attendees and dealers is also backed up by some hard sales numbers released yesterday by General Motors. The

fuel-sipping Sonic had its best sales month ever. The Cruze topped 20,000 units for the sixth straight month. As for the entire General Motors lineup, the fuel-friendly Sonic, Cruze, Volt and Buick Verano were up a combined 43 percent in February of this year, compared with the same month a year prior. And February 2011 is a month that General Motors has described as "strong."

The Chevy booth is not the only display on the show floor where consumers are seeking vehicles that are more fuel-friendly. Ford brought several new fuel-efficient vehicles to the Show, including the Ford Focus Electric.

"There is no doubt that consumers are looking for more fuel efficient vehicles at the Show," says Jim Herrick, owner and dealer principal of the Liberty Ford Auto Group. "And it's not just about electric vehicles and hybrids. Too often, people hear about the fuel economy of hybrids, but what they don't understand is that many times the fuel economy of a more traditional gasoline engine will actually offer fuel economy that is as good, if not better than a hybrid. And gasoline vehicles are still the preponderance of the vehicles sold."

Ford is on the cutting edge of gasoline engine design, "especially with the EcoBoost Engine," Herrick adds. "And that is a technology that was developed right here in Cleveland--and will soon be spread around the world."

Of course, brands like Honda and Toyota are also recognized for fuel efficiency as are brands like Kia, Hyundai, and Subaru. Even upscale European brands such as Audi are touting the benefits of alternative fuel vehicles like the A3 TDI clean diesels, part of the company's display.

This year, due to the overwhelming number of new green technologies trying to get into the Cleveland Auto Show before it opened, show management could not fit them all into one booth as they did last year. Instead, the Cleveland Auto Show instituted the "Green Tour" - a virtual self tour activated by scanning a QR code found in the Auto Show program or on signage around the show floor.

"As fuel costs continue to rise, the American consumer will be pleased to see that automakers are well positioned in terms of both product and manufacturing to meet the growing consumer demand for vehicles that get better fuel economy," says Lou Vitantonio, president of the Cleveland Auto Show. "Just about every booth on the Auto Show floor has a vehicle that can achieve fuel economy of nearly 40 miles-per-gallon on the highway or beyond."

The Cleveland Auto Show runs through this Sunday, March 4 at the I-X Center. Tickets are $12.50 for adults, and $10.50 for preteens and seniors. Children six and under get in free. Parking is always free for the duration of the show, courtesy of your franchised new car dealers.