

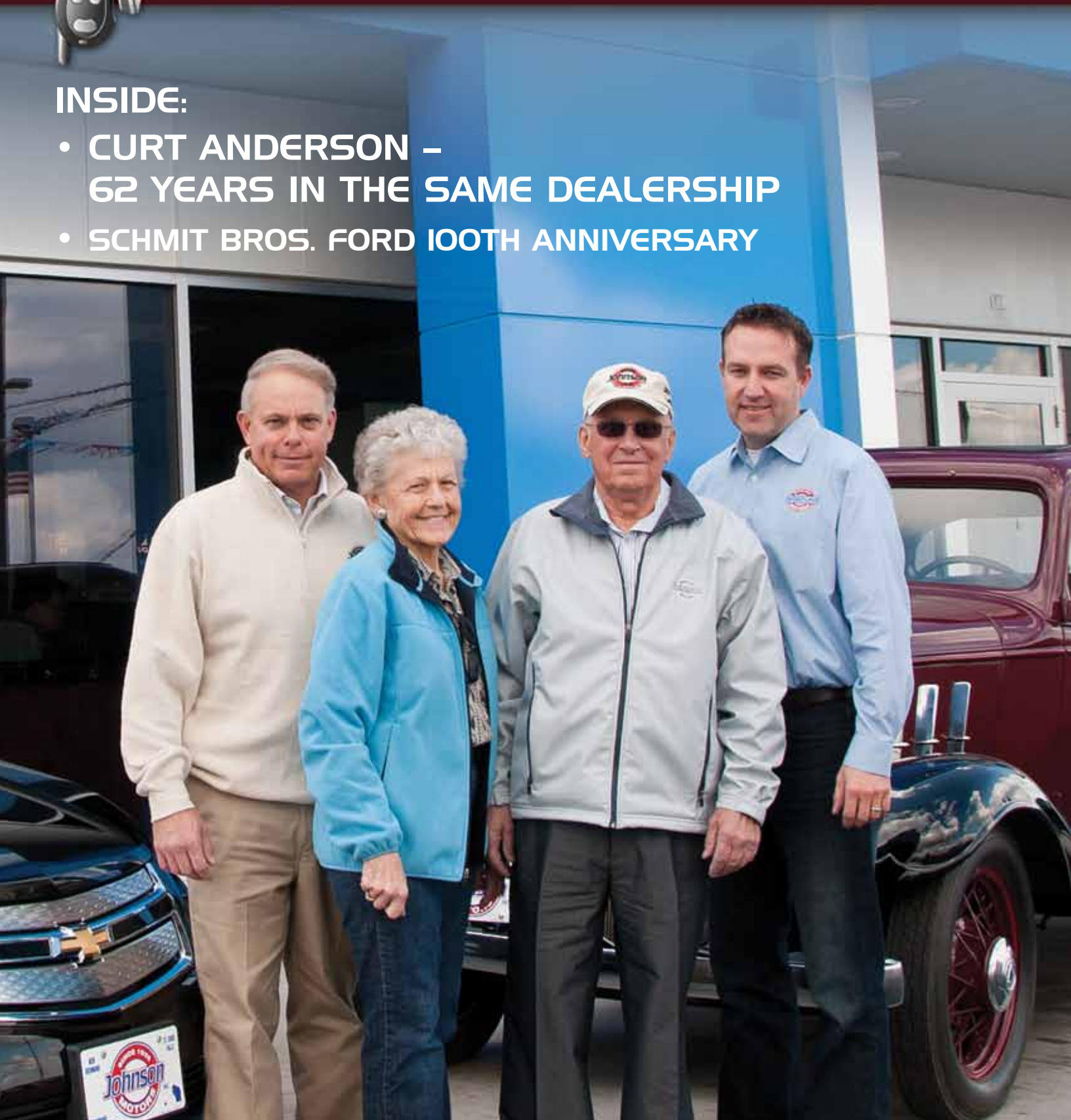


DEALERPOINT

Official Publication of the Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers Association | 1928-2012 | Volume 29 Fall 2012

INSIDE:

- CURT ANDERSON – 62 YEARS IN THE SAME DEALERSHIP
- SCHMIT BROS. FORD 100TH ANNIVERSARY



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**A publication of the
Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers
Association focusing on the human side
of the membership and trade.**

Our Mission:

The Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers Association, an organization of licensed dealers of new and used motor vehicles, is dedicated to advancing the common good of its members, consumers and their communities by promoting professionalism and prosperity through education, advocacy, information and service.



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Editor

Julie Farmer
jfarmer@watda.org

Contributing Writers

Gary Beier
Julie Farmer
Chryste Madsen
Susan Miller, CAE
Bill Sepic
Chris Snyder
Ken Vance

Art Director

Kristin Mitchell
Kristin Mitchell Design, LLC

Advertising Sales

Julie Farmer • 608.251.5577
jfarmer@watda.org

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Cover photo (l-r) Mick, Elaine, Curt and Greg Anderson of Johnson Motors. Photo courtesy Michele Anderson Hermansen details on page 4.



Curt Anderson – 62 Years in the Same Dealership

Hired at Johnson Motors as a 21 year old mechanic in 1950, Curt Anderson is still one of the first people at the New Richmond dealership each morning six days per week. While he officially cut back to half days several years ago, he is often around the dealership at some point in the afternoon as well to repair a piece of equipment or meet with a customer. Before that early arrival, he and his wife Elaine will have started their day with an outdoor walk. It's all rather unusual for someone turning 83 on December 1. Perhaps the Wheaties tagline "Breakfast of Champions" is more than just a marketing slogan, as it was Curt's breakfast choice as far back as his family can remember.

Joye Johnson, who started the company in 1925, heard about Curt when he was an industrious young man with his own repair shop in Star Prairie. He could fix anything, from lawnmowers and chain saws to tractors and cars. It was 1950 and Chevrolet had just introduced the Powerglide transmission, the first automatic in its class. Joye needed someone who could adapt to the new technology. He sought Curt out to join the growing business. "He hired me to do everything," Curt said, "and I did all the transmission work for a long time."

Curt started as a mechanic, sold and repaired McCulloch chain saws at the dealership, and was on call 24/7 for years for customers in need of a tow. The wrecker stories could fill a small book, including the night he pulled one young customer out of the ditch three times, and the night he got to the scene of an accident with the car from a previous call still hooked to the wrecker.

By 1963 Curt had worked his way into sales and in 1968 became General Manager with approximately 30 employees. Curt encouraged Joye to relocate the business from the store front on New Richmond's Main Street to the cornfields join-

ing Polfus Implement as the first businesses at the northern edge of the city. In 1970 Johnson Motors built the new facility at the intersection of two major highways, well-positioned for decades of growth, visibility and changing trends. At the time of this publication, they are completing a major remodel and expansion to conform with General Motors' new standards. The choice of location proved to be a good one, as it is now also home to the Ford and Chrysler Dodge dealerships.

It wasn't until 1983 that Curt officially purchased the dealership from Joye. His son Mick had started working with Curt in 1970 and, like him, got a feel for all aspects of the dealership before getting into sales and then becoming General Manager. Mirroring his dad's love for the business, energy and work ethic, Mick led the acquisition of two additional stores in Menomonie and St. Croix Falls. Mick succeeded Curt as Dealer in 2002. Curt and Mick have now been joined in management by Mick's sons Greg and Chad, both graduates of Northwood University, ensuring the continuity of the family's business philosophy and community involvement.

Because the Anderson family has been synonymous with the company for so many years, people often ask why they retained the company name Johnson Motors. Curt modestly says, "Joye's spirit, work ethic and customer service philosophy remain at the core of the company. Mick and I worked side by side with Joye for decades, we've carried on his operating principles, and it is important for us to keep this history and name."

General Sales Manager Chris Wheeler described Curt as "The hardest worker I've ever met. He knows every job in the place, he has seen most everything and demonstrates the importance of taking care of our customers. It is not uncommon for him to wash a customer's car himself when it is in for service. I remember one morning when we were talking about business and he



said, 'It's not about the cars you sell or the money that is generated from those sales. It's about the pride you have in helping someone with the big decision of purchasing their vehicle and maintaining it well. It's meeting their changing needs at all the stages of their life.'"

Curt is unassuming and ready to pitch in wherever needed, as confirmed by salesman Dick Donatelle. "When it is cold and snowing and Curt is out on the lot cleaning off cars, it's pretty hard for anyone to feel like something's not their job, especially when he's a lot older than any of us." He adds, "Every morning Curt asks me what's ahead in my day. He is always interested in who I am working with and what I am selling. He keeps me on my toes."



We asked Curt what he loves most about the business, and his answer was instantaneous. "The people! Both customers and employees." He is indeed a people person, taking a genuine interest in their lives and activities. His concern for the welfare of others

is manifested in his lifelong commitment to community service. Whether he is ushering or clearing snow at church, coordinating children's games with Kiwanis before July 4th fireworks, or sponsoring a child for medical care at Shriners Hospital, his unwavering work ethic and principled leadership is embedded in everything he does.

Curt and his wife Elaine are well-matched in their genuine concern for others. When asked separately what was the most rewarding thing about being associated with Johnson Motors for 62 years, Elaine responded, "The people we've worked with and become friends with. It is rewarding to be able to be of service to people." A nurse by profession, Elaine is quiet, attentive, organized partner who continues to make it possible for Curt to keep his busy schedule.

Their daughter Michele said one of the most important things she learned from Curt as she was growing up is, "The ability to achieve whatever we set our mind to. Dad taught me that we can do anything we want, as long as we're willing to work for it."

Anyone who knows him recognizes "Excellent!" as his classic response to the question "How are you?" This optimism and drive, along with the close and supportive family, helped Curt fight cancer this past year. Diagnosed in Stage IV in July 2011, Curt is now in full remission and appreciates the opportunity to "get up each day and do what there is to get done."

Both Curt and Elaine are life-long learners who appreciate the value of education. They sponsor scholarships each year for students entering the automotive or nursing fields. They stay up on current events, business and social issues. Curt reads the *Wall Street Journal* daily, and they regularly pass on pertinent articles to their children and grandchildren. They are parents to Mick Anderson, Michele Hermansen, and Marin Hansch.

With 62 years in the business, Curt Anderson is a humble leader and a great ambassador for our industry. His philosophy is integrated in the way he lives and shows how this small town dealership has remained strong:

"To remain vibrant as individuals, businesses and a community, we have to constantly be learning, growing, changing and contributing. You have to keep your head up and keep going."

Skill Building with the Future Makers

BY GARY BEIER

One hundred years ago, the industrial revolution changed the professional fabric of this country. Society moved from agriculture to manufacturing. Suddenly success required a strong back and a strong mind and 20th century skill meant having a solid combination of both.

The dawn of the 20th century in Wisconsin saw birth of an educational system aimed at building employable skills across a wide variety of career programs. 1911 ushered the beginning of what we know today as the Wisconsin Technical College System.

Many of the 16 WTCS campuses have either begun or are in the midst of celebrating their centennial of service to their communities. The system educates approximately 380,000 students each year. It provides them with a wide variety of career technical education pathways to success. Transportation has, of course, been at the center of one of these pathways for most of the history of the system.

Today, all 16 of Wisconsin's Technical Colleges are National Automotive Technicians Education Foundation (NATEF) certified to meet the precise standards of our industry with a wide range of courses including automotive maintenance; diesel diagnostics and maintenance and collision-restoration.

A number of the WTCS schools have gained national recognition for their advances in classroom technology that develops marketable skills for their students. We salute the Wisconsin Technical College System for a century of service to our industry and all of the people of Wisconsin through its 16 campuses which are Blackhawk, Chippewa Valley, Fox Valley, Gateway, Lakeshore, Madison Area, Mid-State, Milwaukee Area, Moraine Park, Nicolet Area, North Central, Northeast Wisconsin, Southwest Wisconsin, Waukesha County, Western, and Wisconsin Indianhead.

Congratulations to the Wisconsin Technical College System, the "Future Makers." ●

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WISCO Cooperative

BY JOHN HACKMAN

Tax Savings Available for Dealers



The Federal Tax Relief Act of 2010 includes provisions designed to stimulate our economy through tax incentives aimed at encouraging businesses to increase their investments in equipment by the end of 2012. The act expands the additional first-year depreciation deduction (bonus depreciation) to equal 50 percent of the cost of quali-

fied equipment placed in service on or before December 31, 2012. On January 1, 2013 bonus depreciation is no longer available. In other words, for 2012 you can purchase equipment, and if it is advantageous for your tax situation, you can expense 50% of the cost of the equipment in 2012 within certain dollar limits.

NOW is a good time to check with your tax consultant and to review your equipment needs. If you are in need of equipment for your shop what better place to look than your own co-op? WISCO's equipment lineup includes names known



industry-wide. We have Challenger lifts, Hunter and Snap-On alignment systems, wheel balancers, tire changers, and brake lathes. Pro-Cut and Ammco brake lathes are also part of the WISCO offering. We have Coats and Corgi tire changers and wheel balancers, Borroughs, Shure, and Equipto shelving, bins, and work benches. Orion energy saving lighting, Robinair recyclers, and NitroFill nitrogen tire filling machines are offered by your co-op. You can save money on this winter's high heating costs with a Firelake waste oil furnace or a MacroAir fan from Black Gold. The list continues. Check us out at www.wisco.com to view our entire product offering.

WISCO's entire reason for existing is to save its members money on their purchases. We have several excellent equipment programs in place. Call 800-274-2319 for information, demos, or pricing. By acting now WISCO members can not only save money on their equipment purchases, but may also save on this year's tax bill. ●

RawhideProfile

Each month a young man is selected as the Student of the Month by the staff of Starr Academy, Rawhide's private school. Winners are selected for their scholastic efforts, maintaining the high rank, helpfulness to others, and exhibiting a positive attitude.

Student of the Month: Richard My Rawhide Success

My name is Richard, I'm 16 years old, and have been at Rawhide for two months. My favorite things to do are skateboarding, wrestling, football, lacrosse, fishing, and hanging out with friends.

I've begun to enjoy school at Rawhide and really like doing math. Because of the extra help received at Rawhide, it has gotten much easier for me! I also like job training and haven't had a job that I didn't enjoy. This is due to how awesome the Rawhide job trainers are!

I hope to graduate high school, join the military, and then go to college. I'm not sure what to major in at college yet, but I would like to be on the wrestling team. It's my favorite sport. I even have dreams of becoming a wrestler on the United States Olympic Team.



Upon leaving Rawhide, I plan on returning to public school and wrestle on the varsity team. While in high school, I will work on obtaining a job in the construction field or something similar.

Being at Rawhide has taught me that going up in rank is important. When you progress in your rank, you earn more privileges and staff trust is developed. This is something I will need to remember when I return home. Making the right choices gives you more freedom as well as receiving trust from my parents, teachers, and others in the community.

~Richard

The above testimonial was written by our current Student of the Month. Personal notes of encouragement are welcome.



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CenterStage

AWARDS, HONORS, MILESTONES

Cortney Ewald-Ihde, was installed at the Executive Women International (EWI) 65th Leadership Conference & Annual Meeting on September 15th as the Corporate General Director of Executive Women International, in Salt Lake City, UT. Ewald-Ihde, representing **Ewald Automotive Group** and EWI of Milwaukee, looks forward to this new leadership role in one of the world's top associations for business-women.

"It is very important that business professionals are involved in organizations like EWI," Said Ewald-Ihde. "Not only do they gain access to a variety of leadership opportunities, they are also able to expand their business network and gain access to unlimited information resources. I look forward to serving the organization and helping our members in their roles as business leaders and community volunteers."

Friday, October 5 at the State Capitol, on King Street side was the kick-off of Justice for a Cure. The ceremony began with a joint Law Enforcement Honor Guard posting the flags to the music of bagpipes, and singing of the National Anthem. Guest speakers included WI Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen; Dane County Sheriff Dave Mahoney; South Milwaukee Police Chief Ann Wellens; Dane County Executive Joe Parisi; and Susan G. Komen for the Cure South Central WI Executive Director Michelle Heitzinger.

Sheriff Mahoney unveiled a very special "PINK" Sheriff squad car, sponsored by long time Komen supporter **Middleton Ford**; followed by a parade of squad cars, fire trucks, and EMS vehicles around the Capitol, while breast cancer survivors and supporters walk around the Capitol.



The 3rd Annual SMART Women Care Celebration in partnership with Susan G. Komen South Central Wisconsin affiliate was held at Smart Motors in Madison! Over 300 people were in attendance as they celebrated and recognized 31 SMART Women Care Ambassadors (31 local women who are breast cancer survivors). The night included a Silent Auction; live entertainment; a cake contest where 5 local bakeries displayed their best breast cancer themed creations and guests then were able to taste and vote for their favorites; a photo booth; wine & beer sampling; two local research physicians who are funded by Susan G. Komen and PINK everything – from a special themed cocktail that evening to all of the lights in the dealership (inside & out) turned pink. The event raised \$15,000 that evening.



Wehrs Chevrolet in Bangor is celebrating their 77th year in business. Brothers Carl and Harry started in business in 1935. Harry's son Larry, now 73 still owns the business. Two of Larry's six children, Barry, who runs the service department; and Scott, who is in the sales department are the third generation is the family business. The Wehrs family also operated two popular local short track speedways. The LaCrosse track closed in 1986 and the Wisconsin Dells track closed in 1992.

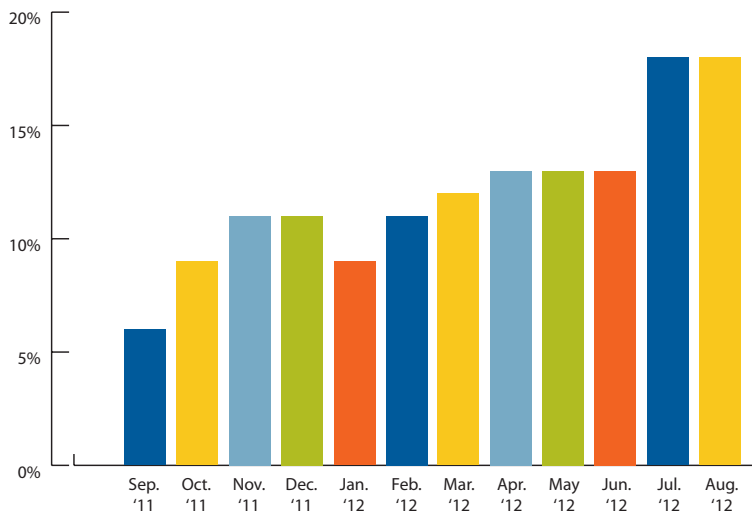
River Valley Ford hosted the "High Five Tour" which is a nationwide effort to raise awareness and money for the Wounded Warriors Family Support project. "It was an extreme honor," said Andy Lamb and Corey Hawkins, dealership co-owners. "We were one of only two Ford dealerships in the state with the privilege of hosting the tour and the outpouring of support from the Baldwin area was fantastic." People attending a tour event are given the opportunity to sign a special-edition 2012 Ford Shelby Mustang GT-500 "SuperSnake" and share a message of hope for our wounded warriors. The Shelby is auctioned off at the end of the tour. ●

New Vehicle Sales Trends

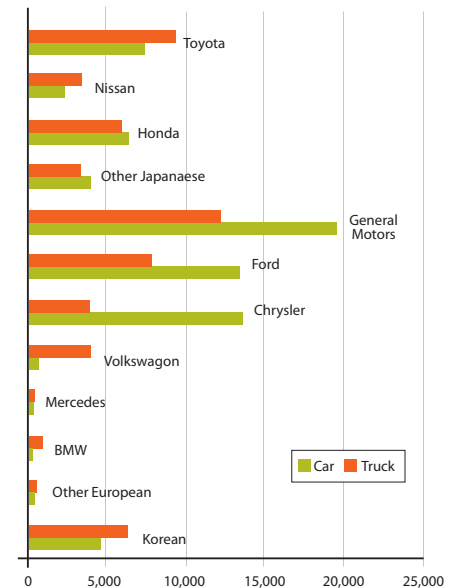
Wisconsin New Vehicle Trends: August 2012

	Previous Two Months			Year to Date			Year to Date Market Share		
	7/11 -8/11	7/12 -8/12	% change	'11 YTD	'12 YTD	% change	'11 YTD	'12 YTD	change
Industry Total	29,837	36,382	21.9%	114,602	132,006	15.2%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Car	12,549	16,010	27.6%	50,722	58,701	15.7%	44.3%	44.5%	0.2%
Truck	17,288	20,372	17.8%	63,880	73,305	14.8%	55.7%	55.5%	-0.2%
Japanese	8,996	11,817	31.4%	36,279	42,389	16.8%	31.7%	32.2%	0.5%
Toyota	3,625	4,847	33.7%	13,898	16,865	21.3%	12.1%	12.8%	0.7%
Honda	2,163	3,216	48.7%	10,622	12,387	16.6%	9.3%	9.4%	0.1%
Nissan	1,444	1,743	20.7%	5,350	5,782	8.1%	4.7%	4.4%	-0.3%
Other	1,764	2,011	14.0%	6,409	7,355	14.8%	5.6%	5.6%	0.0%
Domestic	16,590	19,264	16.1%	62,173	70,838	13.9%	54.2%	53.7%	-0.5%
General Motors	7,596	8,503	11.9%	29,718	31,899	7.3%	25.9%	24.2%	-1.7%
Ford	5,157	5,942	15.2%	19,573	21,331	9.0%	17.1%	16.2%	-0.9%
Chrysler	3,837	4,819	25.6%	12,882	17,608	36.7%	11.2%	13.3%	2.1%
European	1,781	2,261	27.0%	6,476	7,784	20.2%	5.6%	5.9%	0.3%
Volkswagen	948	1,445	52.4%	3,590	4,713	31.3%	3.1%	3.6%	0.5%
BMW	379	354	-6.6%	1,318	1,294	-1.8%	1.2%	1.0%	-0.2%
Mercedes	212	216	1.9%	728	826	13.5%	0.6%	0.6%	0.0%
Other	242	246	1.7%	840	951	13.2%	0.7%	0.7%	0.0%
Korean	2,470	3,040	23.1%	9,674	10,995	13.7%	8.4%	8.3%	-0.1%
Other	2,470	3,040	23.1%	9,674	10,995	13.7%	8.4%	8.3%	-0.1%

**3 Month % Change –
and view annual trend**
*Compares most recent 90 days vs. same
90 day period from last year*



**YTD Registrations
by Vehicle Type**



From Around the State

Please send your news From Around the State to jfarmer@watda.org.

Heiser Chevrolet Cadillac is proud to announce the completion of their newly renovated dealership on West Washington Street in West Bend. Heiser's new 31,000 square foot complex features a GM-approved design and includes energy efficient and recycled content using regionally-manufactured materials. The 6,500 square foot facility contains many "green," features and has 16 service and two quick-lube bays, expanded waiting room and a large parking lot. Amenities include free WiFi, televisions, and multiple customer lounge areas with free coffee and cappuccino.

"Our mission is to see every customer satisfied," said Mary Ann Scaffidi, one of the Heiser family owners. "Our goal is to be the number one destination for auto shoppers in West Bend. It's a commitment we can only achieve by offering the very best customer experience. Our new facility will certainly help take us in that direction," Scaffidi added.

The expansion of the Chevrolet Cadillac store will lead to the hiring of additional personnel, something Heiser is committed to accomplishing. The investment in the building is just the first step in their commitment to the West Bend community. Local contractors and construction workers were employed over the six-month renovation. Now, Heiser is staffing up to better serve customers in both the sales and service areas.

Russ Darrow KIA of Appleton has moved to its new location at 4400 W. College Avenue, Appleton, near Fox River Mall. The new facility is over 23,000 square feet situated on nearly four acres and features 16 service and two quick-lube bays, an expansive showroom, and provides double the parking lot space of the previous location.

The new location will include an in-house auto body shop employing dedicated repair specialists for all makes and models of vehicles. Heated, down-draft paint booth and prep stations were constructed to protect the environment.

Dupont Waterborne 'green' paint will be used. The shop will be capable of repairing up to ten vehicles at once with technologically advanced equipment. Darrow auto body repair will feature free loaner cars, insurance claims service, and a lifetime workmanship warranty.

"We believe in the economy of the State of Wisconsin and the economy of the Fox Valley," said Mike Darrow, President of Russ Darrow Group. "That is why our company continues to reinvest in the communities where our dealerships are located. We expect to hire ten new people right away and an additional 20 to 25 employees by the end of this year at this new Russ Darrow KIA location."

The former location has been transformed into a Used Car Superstore for the Darrow Group.

Lynch Auto Group, with locations in Burlington, East Troy and Kenosha, has acquired Horter Chevrolet in Mukwonago. David Lynch had run the dealership with business partner Tom Horter for the past twelve years. "Tom decided to retire, so his part of the business is being bought out," said Patrick Lynch, company vice president. The Horter name will remain for the time being; in part because of past agreements with manufacturers.

Arcadia Motors has begun construction of a new 14,000 square foot facility. The new dealership showroom, offices and shop will include an express lane to help improve customer efficiency. "Chrysler is giving us such awesome products," said general manager Matt Hughes, "that we are seeing sales increase every month." He hopes the new building will be finished by December or January.

Justin Brantmeier, son of **VandeHey Brantmeier Chevrolet Buick** owner Dave Brantmeier, is joining the Chilton dealership as sales manager. Justin is a graduate of Marquette University, and has worked in various industry related businesses over the past eleven years. Justin's responsibilities will include working on the dealerships website, marketing and working with vendors, as well as managing used care inventory and assisting the sales team in serving customers. ●





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A Century of Brothers

That pretty well sums up the tradition of our association's oldest Ford dealership, Schmit Bros. Ford of Saukville/Port Washington. This 100-year-old company celebrated its centennial milestone on September 29th with a day of food, music, antique cars and much more.

The unique aspect of the Schmit Bros. organization is that its ownership has been of brothers right from the start. The current owners-of-record Jim and Mike J. Schmit are the third pair of siblings to be at the helm.

The founding brothers, Mike E. and Joe W. Schmit opened their original dealership early in 1912 in downtown Port Washington. They remained as principals into the early 1930's, when the next pair of brothers (Mike E.'s sons); Harry and Joe J. became the heads of the dealership. In 1973 Mike J. and Jim Schmit joined the business and bought their dad, Joe J.'s interest in 1985 to become the present day principals of the dealership.

The Schmit Bros. century celebration included 154 vintage autos, the Wood Brothers Motorcraft NASCAR team, live music, area fire department displays plus Girl and Boy Scouts from throughout the Port Washington-Ozaukee County area. One of the highlights of the day was a special presentation by Ken Czubay, Vice President of Ford Motor Company who was on hand to salute the Schmit brothers on their century of service.

The Schmit Bros. Ford dealership is the oldest Ford dealership in the state and the 15th oldest in the country. In commenting on the longevity and success of their dealership Mike Schmit said, "We have been fortunate to have wonderful employees and customers. Our father and grandfather taught us to value our customers and that is what keeps them coming back."

Hats off to three generations of brothers who have made their mark! ●



Jim Schmit, Mike Schmit and Ken Czubay – Ford Motor Company

The Schmit Bros. Ford dealership is the oldest Ford dealership in the state and the 15th oldest in the country.

NADA Director's Report

BY KEN VANCE

As you by now know, there is a lot of conversation about counterfeit air bags.



I am pleased to share with you the article that was in our paper in Eau Claire. Notice the number of times the new car dealerships are exonerated in the NHTSA comments. I have also enclosed the suggested response to questions about the air bags.

My suggestion would be to have one or two people to direct these questions to who are well informed about the issue.

Counterfeit car air bags called risky

Quarter million vehicles could have faulty bags, government says...

Washington (AP) – Thousands of motorists may be driving cars and trucks installed with dangerous counterfeit air bags and they should have them replaced at their own expense, the Obama administration warned Wednesday.

Most at risk are motorists who have had their air bags replaced over the past three years by a repair facility other than a new car dealership, the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration officials said.

Only 0.1 percent of the U.S. vehicle fleet – about 250,000 cars on the road – is makes and models for which counterfeit air bags are known to be available, NHTSA said. Auto industry officials briefed by the agency said they were told that tens of thousands of car owners may be driving vehicles with counterfeit air bags.

In government tests last month of 11 counterfeit bags, 10 didn't inflate or failed to inflate properly. In one test, a counterfeit bag shot flames and shards of metal shrapnel at a crash dummy instead of inflating, said NHTSA Administrator David Strickland, who showed a video of the test at a news conference.

"It is an extreme safety risk," he said.

NHTSA is asking car owners to check a government website, Safecar.gov, for information on how to contact auto manufacturer call centers to learn if their vehicle model is among those for which counterfeit bags are known to have been made.

No deaths or injuries have been tied to the counterfeit bags, NHTSA said. But it is unclear whether police accident investigators would be able to identify a counterfeit bag from a genuine one, industry officials said.

About 1.5 million air bags are deployed each year in police-reported tow-away crashes. Clarence Ditlow, executive director of the Center for Auto Safety said.

NHTSA had compiled a list of dozens of vehicle makes and models for which counterfeit air bags may be available, but the agency cautioned that the full scope of the problem isn't clear yet and the list is expected to evolve over time.

If a car model is on the list and has had its air bags replaced during the past three years by a repair shop other than a new car dealership, NHTSA is asking owners to take the vehicle into a dealership or repair shop to be inspected at their own expense to determine whether the replaced air bags are counterfeit.

NADA Guidance for Responding to Counterfeit Air Bag Questions

Q: What is the problem with counterfeit air bags?

A: Upwards of tens of thousands of counterfeit air bags may have been installed in U.S. vehicles in the last three years. These primarily are driver's side front modules. This number involves less than .1% of the vehicle fleet. But, in the event of a collision, counterfeit bags may not perform as expected. In some instances they will fail to deploy, in other instances their deployment may harm vehicle occupants.

Q: Which vehicles now on the road have counterfeit air bags installed in them?

A: This is not an easy question to answer. There exists no single VIN-based list of vehicles that have had air bags replaced, let alone one indicating if genuine replacement parts were used. This link (<http://watda.clearsender.com/proxy.php?filename=files/2012/DealerGuidanceCounterfeitAirBags.pdf>) will take you to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) list of vehicles of greatest concern. Counterfeit bags typically appear very much like genuine OEM parts and rarely trigger a trouble light or diagnostic code and are hard to detect without a full physical inspection. Again, only air bags that have been replaced in the last three years are of concern. Consider the following:

1. Single owner vehicles where no air bag has ever been replaced are not a concern. Vehicle air bags replaced with genuine OEM replacement parts at a franchised dealership service department or body shop also are not a concern.
2. Single owner vehicles where an air bag was replaced at an independent repair facility could have a counterfeit air bag. The repair facility, insurance company (if one was involved); vehicle OEM, and/or air bag supplier may be able to help determine if an installed part is a genuine OEM replacement. Vehicle owners also may know whether a genuine OEM replacement part was not used, whether a replacement bag was bought from an Internet sales or on-line auction company, or whether they paid "below market" price, indicators that a bag could be counterfeit.
3. The air bag replacement history of vehicles purchased used can be hard to determine. A commercial vehicle history report may indicate if a vehicle was involved in a crash involving an air bag deployment, however such reports cannot be fully relied upon and typically do not show if a non-crash air bag replacement has occurred. It is also possible for installed air bags to exhibit certain outward physical signs suggesting that the module may be counterfeit. For further information on such indicators, see NHTSA's Guidance on Managing Counterfeit Bags.

4. Vehicles with a salvage, rebuild or reconstructed histories are very suspect and should be closely examined for signs of a counterfeit air bag.

Q: How should I respond to inquiries regarding potential counterfeit bag installations?

A: Direct them to NHTSA's website: <http://www.safercars.gov/Air+Bags>, to obtain the primary point-of-contact for the vehicle make and model. This likely will be a phone number for the appropriate OEM call center. They should have their VIN readily available along with and as much information as possible regarding known or suspected air bag replacements. OEM call centers will help to determine whether genuine OEM replacement part(s) were used. If uncertain, they likely will suggest that a physical inspection of the suspected counterfeit air bag(s) be performed at a dealership service or body department.

Q: OK, what if a vehicle comes in for an air bag inspection?

A: Service advisors should be instructed to inform customers of the diagnostic charges involved. Carefully follow any OEM instructions on how to determine if an air bag is counterfeit. These instructions will involve an outward inspection, possible diagnosis of the passive occupant restraint system, and/or the removal and inspection of the module in question. If a counterfeit air bag is discovered, inform the customer of the cost to replace it with a genuine part and how long it will take to obtain and install it.

Q: What if a customer refuses to have his vehicle restored with a genuine OEM part?

A: Instruct the customer that you cannot put the counterfeit part back into the vehicle or give them the part. Have them sign an acknowledgment indicating that they are refusing to pay to have the vehicle restored and that they recognize that the vehicle will not offer them the same protection as if it were restored. Do not attempt to hide the fact that the vehicle is missing an operational air bag (e.g., putting on a false cover and turning off the trouble light).

Q: How can I help protect myself against liability for working on vehicle with counterfeit bags?

A: Contact your dealership attorney to draft a document designed to serve as a notice, hold harmless, and indemnification in the advent of a subsequent problem involving a vehicle where a counterfeit air bag is removed and the customer refuses to pay to have it restored. Note too that dealerships are under no legal obligation to conduct either the diagnostic or repair work described above.

Q: Are there any special precautions technicians should take when handling counterfeit air bags?

A: In addition to the normal precautions that should be followed when handling air bags, NHTSA strongly advises technicians not to electrically probe counterfeit air bag connecting terminals because of the risk of detonation and possible serious injury. NHTSA and the OEMs are expected to provide specific guidance on air bag handling and disposal procedures. In addition, NHTSA may request that they be notified if and when a counterfeit air bag is discovered.

Q: What steps, if any, should be taken with respect to the purchasing and reselling of used vehicles?

A: Federal law does not regulate the purchase or resale of used vehicles that may have had counterfeit replacement air bags previously installed. For advice on whether and to what extent obligations exist under state law, please consult your dealership attorney.

Q: How can we stop the use of counterfeit, stolen, salvaged or rebuilt air bags?

A: Always urge your customers to demand genuine replacement parts for vehicle service and repair, especially where safety is involved.

NADA continues to work with the auto manufacturers on facility issues. Call me if you have specific questions or issues: 715-834-4162.

We have an excellent line up for this year's NADA Convention, February 9-10 in Orlando. Best of luck for a strong wrap up to 2012. ●

Franchised Dealer Consolidation... Then and Now

In 1938, Portage County celebrated the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Northwest Territory document with an historical booklet. The franchised dealers of the day had an association, as existed in most counties in Wisconsin. Shown below is their salutary ad in the booklet. Some franchises have survived. Then there were twenty one franchised dealers, today there are four. This is a factual picture of dealer consolidation. Thanks to Gary and LuAnn Williams for sharing this document.

26 NORTHWEST TERRITORY CELEBRATION

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Legal & Legislative Update

BY CHRIS SNYDER

Elections and Budgets

With the release date of this issue of Dealer Point so close to the election, by the time some of you read this article the election results may already be in. Then again, we know that when most of you see the *Dealer Point* in the stack of mail, that you immediately open it and look for this article. If that's the case, we preface this article by saying we will not be cornered into any bold election predictions. No sir/ma'am, we don't comment on conjecture, only pontificate on facts.

After what has seemed like an endless election cycle, which for Wisconsin dates back to sometime in late 2008-2009, when hopeful gubernatorial candidates started to declare their candidacies, we may actually have some time off to let those elected actually work without having to worry about recalls. That is unless Romney wins the presidency, then the good people of Wisconsin's First Congressional District will get one more round of primaries and elections to elect a replacement for Representative Paul Ryan. OK, so the statement above about conjecture is slightly misleading, in that we are assuming that Ryan will win his Congressional election in the First District.

After the election and the ensuing lame-duck period, wherein it is suspected (more conjecture) that Congress will pass some kind of bandaaid tax structure continuance that will carry the country into mid-2013, allowing the newly elected congress the opportunity to pass a more meaningful long term tax reform law. The only thing that is clear, is the current structure is in dire need of reworking. We need a long term solution and not the continuation of kicking the can down the road and hoping someone else will fix it.

Wisconsin's Rainy Day Fund

The Wisconsin Department of Administration recently released its annual fiscal report. It showed that we were able to make a deposit of \$108.7 million, into the rainy day fund. It is the largest such deposit in the state's history! The rainy day fund now has a balance of \$342.1 million. This marks the first time the state has contributed to the fund in consecutive years. The report noted that the State continued to devote the major share of state tax collections to assistance to local school districts, municipalities and counties. Local assistance accounted for 53.7 percent of total general purpose revenue spending, while aid payments to individuals and organizations represented 22.4 percent and the University of Wisconsin accounted for 6.8 percent. State operations spending for all other state agencies accounted for 17.1 percent of the total. The Walker administration made addressing and correcting the state's structural deficit a priority and we are now starting to see real (positive) results to those efforts. You can see the state's Annual Fiscal Report by going to: <http://www.doa.state.wi.us/docview.asp?docid=9905&locid=3>

Transportation Funding

Speaking of Wisconsin's finances, the Transportation Fund has been a lightening rod for the past 10 years (5 budgets). Over the years revenues collected and deposited into the Transportation Fund have been utilized for other purposes. Wisconsin's transportation infrastructure is vital to attracting new business and the economic development and success of the state. Building and maintaining the state's highways, roads and bridges

are a huge expense. For the most part, Wisconsin funds transportation projects with fuel taxes, vehicle registrations and a portion of sales tax collections from the motor vehicle parts and service transactions.

However, transportation expenses continue to rise while some of these revenue sources (fuel tax, vehicle registrations) are currently or projected to decline. To address this issue the legislature established a Transportation Finance and Policy Commission to examine issues related to the future of transportation financing in Wisconsin. They reviewed highway maintenance, rehabilitation and expansion projects; local aid and assistance programs; revenue projections, and transportation fund debt service (paying off existing bonds). The commission discussed existing revenue sources and their projections for the future and also tried to identify new revenue sources. As with every "new" idea there are some that have possibilities and some that are not very appealing.

As is always the case when discussing generating additional revenues for the transportation fund, eliminating the motor vehicle trade-in sales tax credit (bringing in a projected \$94 million/per budget period) and value based vehicle registrations (projected \$9.1 million) were introduced as a possibilities. Other possible revenue generators include tolling, vehicle miles traveled tax, reinstating the inflation-based indexing fuel tax. While, WATDA does not have a seat on the commission, we do have eyes watching what is going on and will be doing everything possible to have our voice heard. To view the Commission's projected revenue figures go to: <http://www.dot.state.wi.us/about/tfp/meetings/meeting10.htm>

The only thing that is clear, is the current structure is in dire need of reworking. We need a long-term solution and not the continuation of kicking the can down the road a piece and hoping someone else will fix it.

In that vein, WATDA President Bill Sepic and General Counsel Chris Snyder, met with representatives from Governor Walker's staff to provide the Wisconsin dealer's perspective regarding the 2013-2014 state budget. They expressed the dealers concerns regarding eliminating the trade-in credit, value based registration fees and the vehicle miles traveled tax that were discussed by the Commission. It is understood that new revenue sources must be found; however, it shouldn't be shouldered completely by motor vehicle transactions and ownership of Wisconsinites. As for eliminating the trade-in credit and value based registration fees, WATDA has been very persistent and vocal regarding our opposition to those ideas to both legislators and the Governor's office over the years, but there will be a lot of new faces in the capital come January 2013, so don't be surprised if we ask you to start making contacts with your legislators about those issues.



For now, these are just ideas that are on the table simply because the Commission wants everything on the table for review. Our job is to make sure they get off the table. Frankly, neither source is a home run when it comes to generating revenue and the harm to business might very well outweigh the benefits. The Commission's study will take time and there are a lot of good ideas out there. Funding transportation projects is a nationwide issue and we anticipate federal and state entities to be involved in discussions on not only identifying revenue streams but also cost saving measures. Transportation funding is one of the biggest budget items and getting it right is vital to economic stability and growth. ●

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4.

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Internet Manager on site. Call Donna for any questions or concerns at 800.236.7672

Tribute

Robert Alexander

Bob Alexander died on September 9, 2012 at his home with his family at his side, including Lila the love of his life for 56 years, his sons Howard Robert III; Jeffrey and his finance Tammy Patchett; his grandchildren Sabrina, Jason, Leah and Lexy Alexander and stepson John Jensen. He is further survived by his daughter Loral (Guy) Zaricor and their sons Zachery and Christopher; Trinke and James Bishop and her children Ian and Taisia McNurlin and one great grandson Mason; a stepson Morely (Lisa) Jensen.

Bob was born in Battle Creek, MI on September 21, 1931 the son of the late Howard and Lorene (Maurer) Alexander. By the time he was four, the family moved to Illinois. He grew up in Jacksonville, Bloomington and Peoria, and moved to Milwaukee when Bob was a sophomore. The next year he moved to Fond du Lac and graduated from L.P. Goodrich High School in 1949. He spent two years at Brown University, was a member of Sigma Chi Fraternity, and transferred to the University of Wisconsin where he graduated with

a Bachelor Degree in Economics. All together Bob attended 19 schools and survived each move by making new friends each year.

Bob went to work for his father in the Ford Dealership in 1956 and purchased half ownership of Service Motors from his parents, where he worked until he retired in 1996. His son Jeffrey joined him in the dealership in 1984 and become the Dealer when Bob retired. The dealership closed in 2012 when the Ford franchise was sold.

Bob served as an officer of the Wisconsin Auto & Truck dealers Association and held the office of Chairman in 1994. Gary Williams remembered that Bob always like to sing a song to end each meeting.

Bob was always involved in choir and singing since the age of eight. He was a member of the Fond du Lac South Shore Choral for 32 years until he had to give it up for health reasons. His employees enjoyed his tradition of singing Happy Birthday to them over the public address system on their birthdays. He was a lifetime member of the BPOE Elks Lodge #57, served as President of the Noon Kiwanis; a long time member of the Fond du Lac Noon Rotary Club; served on the Board of Trustees of Lutheran Homes and Health Services; a member of the Masons and Shrine Club; and a member of the South Hill Country Club for over 50 years.

Bob enjoyed people, old cars, traveling with his wife and spending time with his family, especially watching his grandchildren play soccer, basketball, tennis and track, and he enjoyed golfing.

Bob was preceded in death by his parents and one daughter, Martha Jayne. ●



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Racine Park Auto Lab Named to Honor Roger Palmen

In 2004, after rallying the business community to help the school pass a \$500,000 referendum to construct an addition for a new improved automotive lab at Racine Park, Roger Palmen stepped up again when the funding ran out before three large lifts could be purchased for the lab. He gave the school \$5,000 from his dealership and \$5,000 from his own pocket to fund the purchase. Longtime Park automotive instructor Dave Dixon said, "This place truly wouldn't be here without Roger. He is our poster guy for best practices for business and education to work together."

The center was just named the "Roger Palmen Automotive Center" by the Racine Unified School Board on October 15, 2012 because Palmen, 66, is battling cancer for the second time and his prognosis is not good.

Palmen and his father started a Kenosha dealership in 1968, and since then he's also been involved with dealerships in Mount Pleasant and Yorkville. The dealerships in Kenosha and Racine are now owned by another family while Roger maintains the Yorkville location.

Roger has served as the district AYES advisory committee chairman since the mid '90's and has been involved with the program for more than thirty years. He helped the Unified district auto program secure national certification, and has employed many of the students as interns. Roger was the driving force behind improving the Park auto lab. "It was no tech center," said Palmen. "It had low ceilings, and you had no hoist. You'd spend as much time setting up and taking down as teaching, and really it was unacceptable."

Upon being told of the honor, Palmen said, "In my wildest dreams I never ever thought this honor would be had."

Congratulations Roger Palmen for this well-deserved recognition of your hard work and dedication. ●



Thank You

We thank the dealers included in this list for their contribution to the political funds: CarPac, the Dealers Direct Givers Fund, and/or DEAC. We recognize that many dealers give directly to candidates/campaigns and that is also very much appreciated. While we believe this is a current list, please accept our apologies if you believe you have contributed but are not listed.

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John Zimbrick

School is the Ticket!

That's according Mike Heidemann of Fred Mueller Automotive in Wausau. Mike received his automotive technician's scholarship from the Foundation 20 years ago and has been in the business ever since. His past 18 years have been with technical/service staff at Mueller's.

Mike says, "School is your ticket to getting a solid, basic knowledge of automotive technology that makes it easier to learn about the product-specs when you are on the job. If you don't have the base, especially in electronics you could be lost."

He is a North Central Technical College grad who attributes his success to his instructor and our long-time Team Wisconsin member, Bob Slane. Mike says Bob was instrumental in his getting the job at Muellers.

Heidemann says that there are so many different positions in our field and career opportunities are numerous.

Beth Mueller noted that the Foundation's scholarship program helps educate people who demonstrate knowledge and enthusiasm for our industry. In her words, "A little mechanical knowledge goes a long way in life." That is certainly the case with Mike! ●





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Center Stage: Awards, Honors, Milestones



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