



# DEALERPOINT

Official Publication of the Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers Association | 1928-2010 | Volume 26 Spring 2010

## INSIDE:

- WELCOME TO THE NEW DEALER POINT
- CASH FOR CLUNKERS AT THE DEALERS ANSWERS PLACE
- COMMUNITY CHALLENGE GRANTS MAKE A DIFFERENCE



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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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*Dealer Point* is a publication of the Wisconsin Auto & Truck Dealers Association, 150 East Gilman Street, Suite A, Madison, WI 53703-1493. Phone: 608.251.5577. It is published in January, April, July and September by WATDA. Printing by Inkworks, Inc., Stoughton, WI 53589. For advertising information, contact Julie Farmer at the WATDA.

Subscriptions included in WATDA membership dues.

Address corrections should be sent to WATDA, P.O. Box 5435  
Madison, WI 53705-0354


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Volume 26 • Spring 2010






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# Welcome to the New Dealer Point

BY JULIE FARMER

Change is good! OK, maybe not everyone feels that way, but we can probably all agree that change is inevitable. After 25 years as a tabloid newspaper, we have totally changed the format of the popular *Dealer Point* to a full color magazine. Besides giving us a fresh new look, the change to a more common size, even with the addition of color, will actually save some money. We believe this format will also have more appeal to potential advertisers, perhaps even make *Dealer Point* a revenue source for your association.

Another change that we have been moving toward is primarily using WATDA staff as our writers for *Dealer Point*. Not only does this afford additional savings of about \$1,000 per issue, but we also feel that the people you regularly interact with from WATDA are the people who will write from a perspective that is interesting and relevant to our dealers. And if you are being featured in one of our stories, chances are you'll already know something about your writer.

In brief, here are a few interesting facts about the WATDA *Dealer Point* writing team:

**Lee Bauman**, Vice President of Insurance and Finance will celebrate his thirty fifth year at WATDA in December. Lee also serves as President of the WATD Insurance Corporation. He spends his free time at his northern Wisconsin cabin hunting and fishing. Lee and his wife Peggy have three daughters: Kristine is a senior at the University of Minnesota, Beth is teaching in Chicago, and Amy is currently in medical residency at UW Hospital & Clinics. Lee was a member of the now defunct UW Madison baseball team; he had a hot bat in both '73 (.400) and '75 (.457)-and yes, he did start at WATDA right out of college!

**Gary Beier** has been Development Director of the Foundation of Wisconsin's Automobile and Truck Dealers since 2004. A fund raising professional for the past 18 years, Gary is a graduate of UW Milwaukee with a degree in Mass Communications and he serves on a number of non-profit boards as well as in community government. He and wife Kathryn have been married for 37 years with three children: Todd, who manages a Milwaukee area appliance store; Elyse, in the process of entering UW Graduate School in Social work and Jeff, who attained the rank of Eagle Scout in 2009. Kathy is office administrator for the Glenn Humphrey Center in Milwaukee.

**Julie Farmer** is in her ninth year at WATDA as Executive Assistant. She assumed the editor duties for *Dealer Point* last year. Julie is a member of the Executive Committee of the

Business Volunteer Network, a United Way program and will serve as chairman for 2010. She spends her off hours singing in a women's a cappella barbershop choir and in the warmer months cruising the countryside with her husband Dave in their 1948 Ford F-100 pick up. Their son Chris is attending Madison College for small engine repair.

**Mary Ann Gerrard** is celebrating her twentieth year as Legal Counsel and Lobbyist for WATDA. She gets excited when the legislature is in session. Her long-term relationships with many legislators and staffers are invaluable to the association when it comes time to find support for dealer issues. Mary Ann enjoys reading, writing, hiking and travel. She recently started a foundation with several friends called *Blessings in Tanzania* to support schools in the East African country of Tanzania.

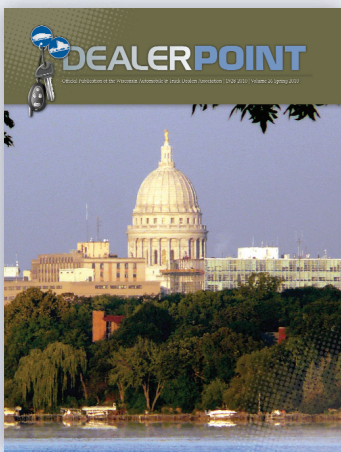
**Matt Lavold**, Vice President and Controller, the new kid on the block, is beginning his second year at WATDA. He and his wife Nicole, also an accountant, have two sons, Masen, age 3 and Drew age 6. The family enjoys Badger sports and the boys enjoy swimming, soccer and t-ball. Matt says that a job on the line at Oscar Mayer during college is the reason he's not a fan of b-o-l-o-g-n-a.

Membership Services Manager, **Chryste Madsen**, has been with the association for twelve years. She coordinates the dues process, recruits new members and makes sure our database is up-to-date. Chryste also spends time visiting dealerships installing flex spending plans and is the Vehicle Details product expert. Chryste is a Disney fanatic, visiting at least annually, and she enjoys football, especially the Badgers and Packers as well as Cubs baseball.

**Sue Miller**, Vice President of Education, IT and Services is in her eighteenth year at WATDA. In addition to her responsibilities with the association, she is on the board of directors for the Wisconsin Society of Association Executives. Sue and husband Gordy enjoy camping and travel. Sue trained as a chef at the MATC Madison Culinary school and enjoys cooking and entertaining, but prefers office hours to a restaurant schedule.

Executive Director of the Foundation of WATDA, **Ray Pedersen**, is a seventeen-year veteran of WATDA. Ray and his wife Patti live in Pewaukee and enjoy spending time with their family, especially their grandchildren. Ray, a retired Lutheran minister, now preaches the 'gospel' of automotive scholarships.

*continued on page 6...*







# NADA Report

BY KEN VANCE



## **Greetings fellow Wisconsin Transportation providers!**

It's been almost nine months since I became your NADA director, a period of time unprecedented in our industry. We are hopefully coming out of the deepest global recession in 60 years. Many of us were affected by the bankruptcies of GM and Chrysler and credit remains a top of the list concern.

I recently returned from "Automotive Forum 2010" a first, co-sponsored by NADA/IHS Global Insight and hosted by the New York International Auto Show.

We listened to the likes of Sergio Marchionne, Chrysler; Mike Jackson, CEO AutoNation; Mark Barnes, COO Volkswagen America; Jim Lentz, President, COO Toyota U.S.; Jim Mendel, Executive Vice President, Honda U.S.; Jim O'Donnell, President BMW North America; Jim Farley, Ford cancelled the day before.

This was an extremely educational forum with a couple of strong under currents that continuously arose. One, the manufacturers see now more than ever the need for a strong dealer body to retail their products and two, leadership is more important in both government and industry and we are experiencing a famine in some sectors. We also are desperate for good honest communication throughout.

## **NADA Initiatives**

### **NADA Asks Small Business Administration (SBA) to Improve Dealer Floorplan Initiative**

- Joined by commercial lending executives from four major national banks, NADA met with the SBA on March 11 to discuss ways to make its dealer floorplan pilot program work more effectively.
- The SBA clearly recognizes the importance of helping the retail auto industry. But significant changes need to be made to the agency's dealer floorplan program to make it work.
- NADA met with the SBA to discuss potential modifications to the program, which could lead to improvements that will benefit both lenders and borrowers.
- NADA and the bankers urged the SBA to make the pilot a permanent program, to simplify the program so it's more user friendly and to allow loan advances of up to 100 percent of inventory value with the maximum SBA guarantee.

- The banking representatives provided valuable input, and the SBA was receptive to their ideas.
- To enhance the eligibility of dealerships for SBA programs NADA also stressed the importance of shifting from a gross receipts-based dealership size standard to one based on the number of dealership employees. SBA is working diligently on a new size standard rule. A decision is expected later this year.

### **NADA Statement Concerning Department of Defense (DoD) Letter to Treasury on Consumer Financial Protection Agency (CFPA)**

- Auto dealers should not be included in the proposed CFPA. When it comes to auto financing, the financial practices at issue are already illegal.

*continued on page 6...*

## **Don't let franchise questions become franchise problems.**

Serious franchise problems can often be avoided, if you take the right steps from the outset. Just think of this as preventive maintenance for your dealership.

When a franchise issue arises, Boardman Law Firm can help. Consult us first if you're planning a change that requires factory approval, or if your relationship with the manufacturer hits a rough spot. We've advised Wisconsin dealers for many years and understand the special issues you face.

To get started, visit the Reading Room on our Web site and look for the article, "How to Avoid Franchise Problems," in the Automotive Services section. Then call us to discuss your needs.

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Welcome continued from page 4...

President **Bill Sepic** is in his second year at WATDA. He roots for the Badgers unless they're playing his alma mater Iowa and is a lifelong Packer fan. Sepic and his wife Rhonda have three daughters; Samantha a sophomore at Michigan State; Shae a high school senior and Savannah an eighth grader. Bill is an avid hunter and he spends at least a week of deer season at a family hunting spot in Northern Michigan.

**Chris Snyder**, Legal Counsel, is in his fourteenth year with the association. Chris also has responsibility for the Truck Council. Snyder resides in Janesville with his wife Joyce and children Alec, 17 and Kaitlin, 15. They enjoy spending time with their extended families that live in the area. Chris claims that for an eight month period in 1992-93, he was the most highly educated auto detailer in the state of Wisconsin.

We look forward to bringing you interesting dealer stories and news in *Dealer Point* for many years to come. ●

## Upcoming WATDA Education Seminars

### How to Stay Out of Jeopardy Selling Cars

June 3 • Eau Claire,  
Sleep Inn Conference Center

June 8 • Wisconsin Dells,  
Kalahari Resort

June 10 • Pewaukee, Country Springs

June 15 • Wausau, Holiday Inn Express

*Class will run from 8:30 until noon.*

### Title and Registration:

August 12 • Eau Claire,  
Sleep Inn Conference Center

August 17 • Wausau,  
Holiday Inn Express

August 18 • Wisconsin Dells,  
Kalahari Resort

August 19 • Pewaukee, Country Springs

*Class will run from 8:30 until 3:30.  
Attendees are on their own for lunch.*

Registration opens soon,  
watch your email for details.

NADA Report to continued from page 4...

- NADA, however, shares the concerns expressed in the letter from DoD Under Secretary Stanley regarding financial problems and challenges encountered by service members in today's stressful economy.
- It is important to keep in mind that current law prohibits each of the practices cited in the letter, so it is unclear what benefits service members would gain from the creation of new bureaucracy.
- It is noteworthy that the letter recognizes the CFPA protections should only be provided if they 'would not limit access to legitimate products.'
- Creating new regulatory mandates on top of the numerous federal and state requirements that already govern auto financing will only drive up costs, limit vehicle financing options and, for many consumers, effectively eliminate their ability to obtain financing to meet their vehicle needs.

## 2009 Accomplishments

- **Dealer Rights:** NADA helped create significant congressional support for dealer rights legislation related to the forced dealer closures as part of the government negotiated bankruptcies of GM and Chrysler. This bill as signed into law reflects a compromise supported by NADA that provides affected dealers transparency and a fair process to argue their case for reinstatement before an independent arbitrator who is required to consider the economic interests of the dealership, the company, and the public when considering the dealer reinstatement. For more information, see <http://www.nada.org/legislativeaffairs/commerce/dealer-rights/arbitration.htm>.
- **"Cash for Clunkers:"** NADA actions were critical to the design, implementation, and success of the \$3 billion "Cash for Clunkers" program which brought nearly 700,000 customers into dealerships and generated record vehicle sales increases. NADA aggressively worked with key congressional supporters and NHTSA on enactment of the program, additional funding due to the program's popularity, and to resolve dealer payment issues.

## Legislative Priority Issues in 2010

- **Estate Tax:** Congress let the estate tax expire for 2010; however, it is restored to a \$1 million per spouse exemption and a 55% tax rate in 2011. NADA will continue its leadership role in the Family Business Estate Tax Coalition to seek a permanent resolution of the issue.
- **Union "Card Check:"** NADA has helped slow momentum for legislation that abolishes the secret ballot election in union organizing drives. Despite union pressure, Democratic majorities and President Obama's support, the bill did not come up for a vote in 2009; however, "compromise" alternatives are under consideration, which NADA will continue to oppose.
- **Floorplan Lending:** With dealers in dire need of credit for vehicle inventory, NADA helped build congressional support for a Small Business Administration (SBA) pilot program for dealer floorplan loans by banks and continues to try to expand the program and increase the loan limits. In addition, NADA initiated a Congressional letter encouraging GMAC and Chrysler Financial to allow continuing Chrysler dealers to obtain and retain floorplan financing. NADA continues to seek legislative remedies to increase access to floorplan credit.
- **LIFO Repeal:** NADA opposes efforts to repeal the LIFO accounting system. Although originally proposed in the President's budget in 2009, NADA's efforts as part of the LIFO Coalition have prevented LIFO from being used as a revenue raiser for any spending bills.

In this election year we now more than ever need to have our voices heard. The best way to do this is to be involved financially. Contact Mary Ann Gerrard or me and find out how you can help. Mary Ann: 608-251-5577 or Ken: 715-834-4162 ●





# It's All in the Details

BY CHRYSTE MADSEN

Today in nearly 3,000 dealerships across the United States and Canada VINs explode, shutters click, and with the push of a button dealership personnel send their inventories to all of their websites via Vehicle Details.

And so it happens for Craig Toyce of Toyce Motors who replaced a well-known competitor with Vehicle Details. "We've been extremely happy with the transition to Vehicle Details. By using Vehicle Details and taking the photos ourselves, we've saved tens of thousands of dollars over the last couple of years," Toyce said, "Like any other dealer, we've looked at ways to get more 'bang for our buck' on the internet. Vehicle Details has truly been an asset."

Toyce went on to say, "If there is a specific feature I want to highlight on a vehicle, I can make sure that appears on our listings. The site is very user friendly and the VIN exploder is a great time saver and very accurate."

"I can edit any text I want to include any aftermarket accessory with ease. Vehicle Details also allows me to print my own window stickers and buyer's guides right at the dealership. It gives a classy, professional look to our vehicles and doesn't fade like handwritten buyer's guides do. The support staff is very friendly and always just a phone call or email away. It's easy enough to use that someone with limited computer experience can quickly use and master the site."

The company, Trans World Data, LLC, was started in 1988. In 2000, Howard Schlei, founder and owner, left the original company and started a new company focused on the data and software portion of the business. Nearly all of the original staff joined him and remains with him today.

Recently the company has moved to Thiensville, WI, purchased and now occupies a 158-year-old home that is a designated historical site. Because of its architecture and its resemblance to a famous residence in Washington, D.C., it's called (you guessed it) The White House.

The relationship between your WATDA and Trans World Data/Vehicle Details began almost by accident over a backyard fence in a conversation between a TWD employee and her neighbor David Williams, then WATDA Vice President in charge

of Endorsed Services. Although Vehicle Details was widely known in the United States and Canada, Schlei hesitated entering the Wisconsin market because of our "unusual" buyers guide.

Williams offered to introduce Schlei to employees of the DMV who explained how correct completion of the guide kept Wisconsin dealers in compliance with Wisconsin regulations. Schlei carried the DMV ideas forward in his programming creating a product that prompts the user to fill any voids prior to printing the guide, thus keeping them in compliance and avoiding human error.

Through these many years of partnering with WATDA Schlei has consistently been attuned to our members' needs. His concern and respect for the Wisconsin dealers is reflected in the level of service he and his staff bring to our members, maintaining a deeply competitive price with few increases through the years and a consistency in listening to our members' suggestions and sincerely working to bring them, when possible, to fruition. "WATDA is one of half a dozen dealer associations that work with TWD, and is by far the largest and most successful," Schlei said.

Personally, Schlei is a former Certified Flight Instructor and air charter pilot. He still loves to fly. He has over 3,000 hours as a pilot and stays current in single and multi-engine airplanes and in helicopters.

He is close to finishing the process of building his own 2-passenger experimental helicopter.

TWD has exciting new capabilities on the horizon. The latest new technologies include a new video capability that increases search optimization and can upload vehicle videos to sites like YouTube – and the capability to create and post vehicle ads on sites like Craig's List.

Over 240 WATDA members are using the Vehicle Details program at this time. If you'd like to see a demo of any level of the program don't hesitate to give me a call. There is no obligation. The product works for dealerships large and small. Simply call me directly at 608-251-4628 or call the WATDASI forms division at 800-236-7672 to make an appointment. ●

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# Cash for Clunkers at the Dealers Answer Place

BY SUSAN MILLER, CAE

*This article was originally printed in Wisconsin Society of Association Executives' magazine.*

Since the early 1980s Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers Association has had the slogan, "The Dealers Answer Place." It comes with the promise that we will provide free legal counsel and information to our members. No appointment necessary. No time or question limits.

Cash for Clunkers was a challenge for WATDA. In our role as The Dealers Answer Place, not only did we need to learn the rule and its impact on our members, we also learned about our preparedness for crisis communication. This article shares our experiences and explains some lessons learned.

Cash for Clunkers was passed in late June under the acronym CARS for Car Allowance Rebate System. Congress set it up so that a consumer could receive up to a \$4,500 rebate on the purchase of a new vehicle. The law was effective July 1, 2009 and included an initial one billion dollar funding (later increased to three billion dollars). The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) had rule-making authority and was required to have the CARS program operating in one month. CARS required dealerships to sell vehicles prior to CARS reimbursement. CARS also placed responsibility on the dealership to ensure all vehicles were compliant with legislation and that paperwork was filed correctly.

When CARS passed, the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) mobilized its legislative and legal teams to both lobby NHTSA and provide information to dealerships and auto dealer associations. (Like WSAE and ASAE, auto dealer associations are not a federation but they often work together on issues.)

WATDA legal counsel took the lead on CARS learning the law and reading various communications from NHTSA and NADA prior to implementation. On Friday, July 24th the initial rule was published and dealerships started to register their business with the CARS online submission system. In addition to taking non-stop calls that day, the legal team also had to read, understand and write about the newly published 120 page rule.

From that chaotic first Friday on, our members called us with their questions. Over the next four weeks we averaged an estimated 24 man-hours per day on CARS. Between gathering

information, writing updates and answering phone calls we were working full-out and learning on-the-fly. When things didn't work with NHTSA's online submission system we were just as likely to get helpful tips from our members as we were from NADA and NHTSA.

At the system's worst point, a typical transaction took about three hours, re-keying multiple times, before the transaction would "take." Every transaction had to be submitted electronically and included 20 pages of supporting documentation.

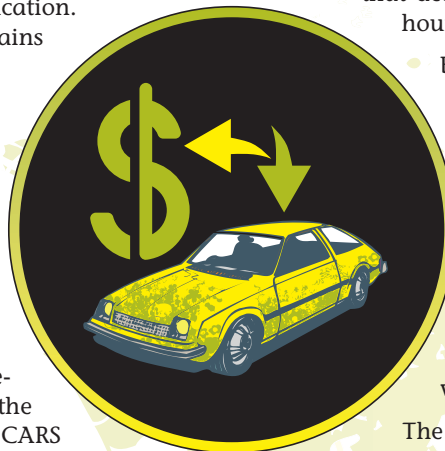
NHTSA's call line was so overwhelmed in the first few days that dealers were often holding for more than two hours only to be cut off.

By mid-August, NHTSA had sufficient staff and system capabilities that most submissions worked on the first try and most calls were answered in an hour. The system was improved, but dealers had been delivering cars for weeks and their transactions were neither reviewed nor paid. In an August 12th conference call NHTSA stated 80% of transactions were rejected due to problems with the paperwork. An NADA survey from the same week showed 2% of transactions were paid.

The problems were worse in Wisconsin because auto owners are not required to maintain insurance on a vehicle (the law changes June 1, 2010). NHTSA changed the rule to waive insurance requirements for Wisconsin consumers, but transaction reviewers continued rejecting Wisconsin transactions for lacking proof of insurance. Dealers received rejections with no rejection explanation or with an unclear "review all paperwork" explanation. As of September 4th, the Detroit Free Press reported that 17% of transactions have been approved or paid nationwide. That was \$2.3 billion owed to dealers.

WATDA continued to take many calls daily regarding CARS through September. NHTSA had started auditing dealers so in addition to, "How do I get paid?" we are asked "What do I need to have ready?" Also, as dealers waited for transaction approval and reimbursement, dealership lots were full of clunkers waiting to be destroyed.

2009 has been one of WATDA's most challenging years. As the recession took its bite out of every industry, auto dealers were doubly affected – consumers already reluctant to purchase completely vanished once "manufacturer bankruptcy" became the business of the Federal Government. The demand on WATDA's





legal and legislative staff was greater than ever, but as we saw our members cutting staff or worse, closing their doors, we had little choice but to cut positions as well. By June, when Cash for Clunkers was passed, we were operating on 12% fewer staff than the year prior, 20% fewer than in 2006.


Only our members can say whether we were able to meet their needs during the CARS days. We certainly tried. There were many days of multiple emails, after-hours calls and cramming sessions among team members to ensure that everyone's answers were consistent. We sent CARS communications out to all members regardless of whether they were participating in the program. Our goal in doing so was that all of our members would see the value the association provides.

### A Few of the Lessons Learned

WATDA's AMS allows any WATDA staff member to push out one-at-a-time email and fax communications to lists generated on the spot. Our system has weaknesses, however. Unlike other email services, we cannot see undelivered email and, if we could, do not have a system in place to correct the problem. Instead, we rely on members to contact us when something goes wrong. One benefit of our experience with the CARS program was that our members were talking to each other and looking for our communications. Missing emails generated calls and we were able to quickly determine where our communications were going awry, clean up our data and help dealers keep us white-listed on spam filters and ISPs.

In the past we allowed our members to choose how they wanted to receive our communications, US mail, fax or email. Many opted for US mail. During CARS we did not send anything by US mail and we found dealerships quickly signing up for our email communications. Still, because we had been following dealers "preferred method" we did not have quality data that would have maximized our communication. As a result our communication plan had to provide for correcting and adding emails on the fly.

WATDA policy permits the WATDA President (Chief Staff Officer) Bill Sepic to speak to reporters. With the call volume and other time demands, legal counsel was appointed to assist with media requests. In addition, reporters were calling our members directly. CARS was



# Rawhide Profile

*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.*



## Isaac: Student of the Month

March 2010

### GOD SAVED ME!

My name is Isaac and I am 18 years old. I am from Barron County and I have been at Rawhide for three months. My favorite hobbies are snowboarding, playing basketball, running track, swimming, and wakeboarding.

I really enjoy English class because it allows me to be creative and I love to speak and write. There are many

things that have played a role in my success at Rawhide such as houseparents, social workers, RI's, teachers, and peers. However, I would say that God played the biggest role. He gave me the structured place I needed to get away from the destructive things that were happening in my life.

Hart Olson, a residential instructor in the ABC House, is one of the people who encouraged me to keep going and stick with the program. I wanted to leave at one time, and since I was 18 and here as a voluntary placement I could have. But Hart and my roommate, James, encouraged me to move past that and make the best of it. Lisa, my social worker, helped me to see that I needed to stay and work things out.

My teachers at Starr Academy also helped me realize who I am and what can be achieved. Without them, I would have been the first in a family of 11 children NOT to attend college! This would have been a poor example to set for my three younger siblings.

I can say God changed my life and changed me! I thank the Rawhide staff for pushing me in a way I couldn't push myself.

~Isaac

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

not an image concern with dealers, rather it ended up providing an opportunity for dealerships to share their commitment to their communities and customers.

### END STATS:

- 96% of Wisconsin's new vehicle dealers are members of WATDA.

- The legal team includes attorneys Chris Snyder and Mary Ann Gerrard, Matt Lavold, CPA, and subject matter experts Bill Sepic and Sue Miller. Only attorneys provide legal counsel and WATDA does not provide legal representation to members. During CARS peak times, Association sales and support staff were trained to answer common questions. ●

# Community Challenge Grants Make a Difference

BY GARY BEIER

**T**he mission of Foundation of the Wisconsin Automobile and Truck Dealers is to enable dealers, dealers' families, vendors and friends of the transportation industry to fund education, research, and other charitable causes in the state of Wisconsin.

Our most effective program is the long-running Technician's Scholarship. A newer initiative, the Community Challenge Grant Program has grown steadily to support our dealer's involvement in local, community charities with matching grants of \$500 to \$1,000 to the dealers' charity of choice.

The Foundation has supported you in 133 of these challenge grants to date, totaling \$181,000. These numbers are just a small part of the challenge grant story. This program has helped all of us expand our presence through durable and meaningful grass roots programs that build a lot of good will because they help many people throughout Wisconsin.

The Dealer Community Challenge Grant program has often been the catalyst to attract other grant making agencies as partners in a larger goal. This was the case most recently in the Dodgeville area where the Hallada Dealerships made an initial gift to the Upland Hills Hospital for advanced kidney dialysis. The local fraternal organization stepped up to rematch this gift, which then attracted other Dodgeville area donors. In just a few months time, the original \$500 matching grant grew to \$12,000 and the project was a success.

This story has repeated itself many times over. Every chapter ends with lasting appreciation that simply cannot be measured in any other way than the personal satisfaction that is drawn from being involved in something that really does make a difference to you and your neighbors.

## **Completed Challenge Grants to Date:**

Above & Beyond Children's Museum  
American Cancer Society of Wisconsin  
American Players Theatre  
Antigo Area Aquatic Center  
ARC of Greater Milwaukee  
Barneveld High School –  
Scholarship Fund  
Bloomer Community Visitors Center  
Bobbie Nick Voss Charitable Fund  
Boys & Girls Club of Dane County, Inc  
Boys & Girls Club of the Wausau Area  
Boys & Girls Club of West Salem  
Boys & Girls Club,  
Wisconsin Rapids Area  
Boys & Girls Clubs of Barron County  
Boys & Girls Clubs of Portage County  
Center for Deaf-Blind Persons  
Children's Museum of Fond du Lac

*Completed Challenge Grants to Date continued...*

**This program has helped all of us expand our presence through durable and meaningful grass roots programs that build a lot of good will...**



**February presentation ceremony at the Upland Hills Medical Center in Dodgeville, Wisconsin.**

*Back Row: Lynn Hebgen, Orville Olson, Leonard Pishion, Tom Mueller, Emmett Reilly, Karl Pustina, Mel Masters. Middle Row: Connie Hallada, Frank Hallada, Mary Jo Ceniti, Davey White Jr., William Barnes. Front Row: Wayne Garthwaite, Gary Beier*



...Completed Challenge Grants continued

Childrens Service Society  
Community Hospice Foundation  
Crohn's & Colitis Foundation  
Divine Savior Health Care  
Eau Claire Community Foundation  
Echo, Inc.  
Esperanza Unida  
Family YMCA North of La Crosse  
Goodwill Industries of  
Southeastern Wisconsin  
Greater Menomonie  
Community Foundation  
Greater Portage Youth Education Foun.  
H.O.O.P.S. 4 Kidz  
Harbor House  
Harbor House Domestic  
Abuse Programs  
Hayward Foundation for Educational  
Headwaters, Inc.  
Hilbert Wolves Athletic Boosters  
Holy Angels School  
Junior Achievement of Brown County  
Junior Achievement of Wisconsin, Inc.  
Kinship Mentoring of Superior  
La Crosse City Vision Foundation

Langlade County 4-H Youth Fair  
Leadership Development Academy  
Lighthouse Christian Academy  
Little Chute Windmill, Inc.  
Lucille Tack Center for the Arts  
Main Street Waupaca  
Make-A-Wish Foundation  
Manitowoc Lutheran High School  
Medford Youth Hockey  
Merrill Area Community Foundation  
Mukwonago Catastrophic Medical Fund  
Mukwonago Food Pantry  
Mukwonago YMCA  
National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
Nativity Jesuit School  
Nature's Edge Therapy Center  
Neighborhood House of Milwaukee, Inc.  
New Richmond Area  
Comm. Foundation  
Portage Boys & Girls Club  
RMC Health Foundation  
Salvation Army Emergency Shelter  
Salvation Army of La Crosse  
Southwest YMCA of Metro Milwaukee  
St. Ann Center for  
Intergenerational Care

St. John Sacred Heart Parish  
St. Mary Central High – Student Robotics  
St. Croix County Fairplex Friends  
Stevens Point Area Catholic Schools  
Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure -  
Madison  
The Kids' Ranch, Inc.  
Theda Clark Medical Center  
Thrasher Opera House - Ripon  
Tomah Area Community Theatre  
Tomah Area Community Theatre  
Tomorrow's Hope Life Limiting Illness  
Twin City Catholic Education System  
Upland Hills Health Foundation  
UW-Eau Claire Center for  
LeadershipWallbridge Academy  
Waukesha County Food Pantry  
Wausau East High School  
AYES Program  
Weyenberg Library of Mequon  
WI Auto & Truck Education Assn. –  
Wausau  
Wisconsin Public Television  
Women with Courage Foundation  
Women's Sports Advocates of Wisconsin  
YMCA of Fond du Lac ●



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# CenterStage

AWARDS, HONORS, MILESTONES

**Ken Vance Motors** in Eau Claire, has been honored with three prestigious manufacturer awards. For the sixth time, Ken Vance Honda has earned the 2009 President's Award for excellence in customer treatment both in sales and service, total new vehicle sales and employee training throughout all dealership departments.

**Ken Vance Audi** has been awarded the Magna Society Award for the second time. The award was established to recognize U.S. dealerships that stand out as the best of the best. In addition to meeting or exceeding sales goals, the dealership must maintain a solid financial foundation, achieve high customer satisfaction scores and facilities and operations reflect the progressive Audi culture.

**Ken Vance Volkswagen** received their second Generation Best award, one of only twenty-four dealers nationwide to reach this pinnacle. To receive this recognition, Ken Vance Volkswagen reached 199% of their 2009 vehicle sales objective, achieved a Sales Customer Satisfaction score of 94.1% and attained Service Customer Satisfaction scores of 88.4%, both surpassing regional, state and national averages.

**Smart Motors, Madison**, has been named one of the top twelve Toyota dealerships in the nation. This marks the first time that the President's Cabinet Award, recognizing exemplary customer service and sales has been presented to a Wisconsin dealer. The award is based on 2009 performance as measured by sales and responses to surveys Toyota sends customers after every vehicle purchase or service appointment. ●





# WISCO, the Dealer's Partner



**BY  
JOHN  
HACKMAN**

**I**t is always a good time to be a member of WISCO Co-op, but especially this time of year. In June it will be time for the owners of WISCO to receive their share of the 2009 profits of their cooperative. Since we are a true cooperative the owners of WISCO are its members. WISCO will be sending out its annual rebate checks, over \$650,000 dollars this year, to its 550+ member dealerships. Member auto and truck dealers are paid the yearly profit in direct proportion to the amount of their purchases. WISCO

adds to your bottom line in two ways. First and foremost, you save money on your purchases from the cooperative upfront due to our low prices on products your dealership uses everyday. Secondly, any profits the Co-op earns are paid back to you in your annual rebate check. Who else that you buy from pays their profits back to you?

If your dealership is a WISCO member are you getting your share of the savings? Are you using the WISCO programs for equipment purchases, supplies, accessories, parts, batteries, bulk oil, vehicle appearance, and the many other products WISCO offers? If not you may be missing an opportunity to make your dealership more profitable. An increasing percentage of a dealership's gross profit is coming from its parts, service, and body shop operations. WISCO can help make these areas more profitable.

For those of you who are not members, check us out. It is easy to become a member. By filling out a simple application and investing in a one time \$1,000 share you too can save on your dealership's purchases. The \$1,000 is not an expense, but stock in the cooperative. If for any reason you would ever want to get out of WISCO we will refund the money. While you are a member we pay you 5% annual interest on the stock even if you purchase nothing. This year the average rebate to our members will be almost \$1,200. That is above and beyond the value of the stock. It really is a no lose situation. Call us at 800-274-2319 or visit us on the web at [www.wisco.com](http://www.wisco.com) to start adding to your bottom line.

Those of you who are WISCO members please mark your calendars for the WISCO Annual Meeting and Golf Outing. This year the meeting and outing will be held on June 22nd at Lake Arrowhead Country Club south of Wisconsin Rapids. There will be a complimentary lunch, refreshments, and golf immediately after our meeting. Plan a day of fellowship with other WISCO members. ●



# From Around the State



**DAVE DENIL**

**D**ave Denil, Denil Wall Cadillac, Green Bay, has announced his retirement after more than 40 years as a Cadillac dealer. Denil and partner Cliff Wall recently sold the Cadillac franchise to Bergstrom Automotive, Neenah. Cliff Wall will continue to operate the dealership as Cliff Wall Subaru-Mazda.

Denil began working in the family business, Denil Cadillac, started in 1957 by his father Joseph, as a teen. In 1997, Denil Cadillac-Hyundai merged with Cliff Wall Oldsmobile-Subaru. A graduate of UW Oshkosh, Denil served with the U. S. Army in Viet Nam from 1968-1970.

Through the years, Denil has served many civic organizations including past president of the Downtown Green Bay Rotary, the National Railroad Museum and is a founding member and past secretary of Bay Bank Corporation. He served as chairman of the automotive advisory board at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College for 18 year. He and his wife Donna have three children and five grandchildren.

**Dahl Automotive** is buying Underdahl Toyota in Winona, MN. Dahl operates dealerships in LaCrosse and Onalaska as well as Dahl Superior Detail Centers at both locations and Dahl Superior Auto Body in LaCrosse. The Dahl firm is owned by Harry Dahl and his three sons Andrew, Jansen and Tyler. The family has sold vehicles since 1911.

The Wisconsin Supreme Court has sided with **Wausau Truck Center** in a dispute with Volvo Trucks. The court upheld an administrative law judge's decision that Volvo Trucks unfairly canceled a franchise agreement with Wausau Truck Center. The dealership had sold Volvo trucks since 1988, but moved to sell the franchise and stopped marketing the vehicles in 2001, promoting a rival's trucks. The following year the dealership changed its mind and began marketing Volvo again. Volvo moved to terminate in 2004 saying the dealer violated their contract by failing to promote its products. ●



# The US 41 Project is here

A substantial upgrade to northeast Wisconsin's transportation infrastructure is underway. The US 41 Project will bring extensive improvements to a heavily-traveled artery and requires a massive construction effort.

The reconstruction of 31 miles of US 41 in Brown and Winnebago counties will run through 2017. The economy of the Fox Valley, with its strong manufacturing base and diverse retail sector, depends on US 41.

US 41 is a 200-mile stretch of highway connecting two crucial economic regions: southeastern Wisconsin and the Fox Valley. Construction will span over 17 miles of highway in Winnebago County and 14 miles in Brown County. The construction

includes traffic lanes expanded from four to six-ten lanes, 16 interchanges improved with 13 of those interchanges completely rebuilt, 44 roundabouts added, 17 traffic cameras installed, and an eight-lane Lake Butte des Morts Causeway.

"It's a terrific investment in the infrastructure of this region," said R. Perry Kidder, President of WFRV-TV who also serves on the Board of Directors of the Green Bay Area Chamber of Commerce. "I don't think people will fully comprehend what a great economic and tourism benefit this will be for this region until the project is completed and we start to enjoy the tremendous upside this will bring," Kidder said.

Officials at the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) understand that it will also cause some disruptions to businesses along the corridor—including several auto dealerships next to the construction zone. "We know this project will cause difficulties for businesses along the corridor, and we will do everything we can to minimize the disruption," said US 41 Project Corridor Manager Brett Wallace. Wallace said that WisDOT has started holding informational meetings with businesses located on or near major interchanges in Winnebago and Brown Counties.

Even with great communication, some businesses, including several car dealerships, will face challenges during the construction period. To help businesses not only survive but thrive during construction, the state has developed a great resource, the US 41 Project "In This Together" kit available on the US 41 Project Web site. The kit includes print and in-store signage templates, Web banner ads, a supplier letter, communications guide and radio commercial.

Wallace said that planning, design and real estate acquisition have been underway for several years, and the construction phase is now here. "We began ramping up in 2009, especially in Winnebago County," Wallace said. "In 2010 the construction process will get more intense in Winnebago County as well as near the Scheuring Road interchange in De Pere in Brown County."

For more information about the US 41 Project visit [www.US41wisconsin.gov](http://www.US41wisconsin.gov). ●



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# WATDA Legal News

BY CHRIS SNYDER

Reports are that Educator's Credit Union (ECU) is planning on clinging to a loophole under the law and operate a lease-to-buy program. They had originally planned on operating as a for-profit (tax paying business) but decided against it.

In November of 2007, WATDA staff, two dealer members, Department of Transportation (DOT) staff, Department of Financial Institutions (DFI) staff and the Office of Credit Unions (OCU) staff, met to discuss a number of issues that affected dealers and the respective regulatory agencies and OCU. One of the issues was Educator's Credit Union (ECU) retail sales activity. WATDA expressed concern that ECU had established a Credit Union Service Organization (CUSO) under the business purpose of conducting "sales finance company activities," but in fact were engaged in retail activity. (Apparently, and much to our chagrin, WATDA members were helping them by providing a pipeline of new vehicles to lease and program vehicles to sell).

CUSO's, are tax-exempt business organizations that are operated for the benefit of the sponsoring tax-exempt credit union. Both, the Federal Credit Union Charter and the Wisconsin Credit Union Charter (statutes) list a number of specific types of business activities that CUSO's may engage in, and retail activity is NOT permitted in either. As a general rule, a CUSO "may provide services related to routine daily operations of credit unions."

As a result of the above meeting, OCU conducted a fact finding investigation and legal analysis of ECU's activities and determined that they were in fact engaged in illegal retail sales activities and issued an order for them to cease all retail activities. Finally, after exhausting

all appeals, pleadings and legislative options, (some 31 months after our initial meeting), time has run out and ECU must comply with the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) they entered into with OCU, just days before they were scheduled to have an appeal hearing before the Credit Union Review Board.

WATDA is committed to ensuring that all dealers compete on a level playing field and comply with all of the various rules and regulations that apply to motor vehicle dealers in Wisconsin.

So as of May 1, 2010 ECU will be a lease-to-buy operation. Apparently still operated by the credit union or the CUSO, but one thing is for sure, it will be a tax-exempt entity. WATDA is committed to ensuring that all dealers play on a level playing field and comply with all of the various rules and regulations that apply to motor vehicle dealers in Wisconsin. That means that everyone pays their own overhead, taxes and employees, advertises truthfully and allows customers to finance their purchases with the lender of their choice.

WATDA and our members enjoy the overall relationship we have with credit unions throughout the state and view them as vital partners. Most WATDA members have excellent relationships with their local credit unions and we encourage all members to utilize Credit Union Direct Lending (CUDL's), for some of your customer's financing needs. ●

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of the Wisconsin  
Automobile & Truck Dealers

Rex Lowe of Lowe Sales and Service in Janesville passed away at the age of 90. Although Rex retired from the business and sold his dealership he never lost his interest in WATDA and all the issues affecting car dealers. It was a business he loved from the beginning.

It is believed that Rex holds the WATDA record for number of years served as an elected Board director, over 30 years. He was known to the dealers in his district (Rock County) as the "Dean" for his intelligence, diligence and years of dedicated service for the dealers and their businesses. WATDA bylaw amendments insure that the record will never be broken. He also proudly served as a Trustee for the WATDA Insurance Trust for over 20 years. Rex and Betty epitomized the American family, service to the community, and genuine concern for everyone.

At the luncheon hosted by WATDA on the occasion of his 88th birthday Rex shared that day he noted: "the time I spent as a WATDA director amounted to half my life at that time. It was rewarding I learned a lot. Time well spent. I have no regrets as I have served my God, my country and my family to the best of my ability."

You sure did Rex and we all salute you. ●



Rex Lowe, center, with Eldean Milward, long-time secretary to WATDA Presidents Milan and Williams; and Lee Bauman, WATDA Vice President of Insurance & Finance, at a luncheon in honor of his 88th birthday in 2007.

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# Technician's for Tomorrow



It was another top-ten finish for the Automobile Dealers Association of Mega Milwaukee's "Technicians for Tomorrow" Kenosha automotive students Brent Tate and Jayson DeCesaro, pictured here with Governor Doyle and their instructor, Bill Fell of Gateway Technical College, took 4th place out of 30 competing states in this year's New York Auto Show national competition.



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# DEALERPOINT

Official Publication of the Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers Association | 1928-2010



## 2010 EDITORIAL CALENDAR

### Spring Issue

FEATURE:

New publication introduction

Ad space reservation and materials deadline:

April 2, 2010

### Summer Issue

FEATURE:

Dealer Sports Team Programs

Ad space reservation and materials deadline:

July 6, 2010

### Fall Issue

FEATURE: Governor's Race

Ad space reservation and materials deadline:

September 30, 2010

## Circulation

Dealer Point is mailed to each member of the Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers Association, as well as key managers, potential members and industry friends.

## ADVERTISING RATES

Effective January 2010 (ad rates are net)

	1X	2X (consecutively)	3X (consecutively)	4X (consecutively)
Back cover, IFC & IBC	\$2,420	2,200	2,100	2,000
Full page	\$2,310	2,100	1,890	1,680
1/2 page	\$1,580	1,470	1,260	1,150
1/4 page	\$950	840	740	650

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Magazine trim size: 8-1/2" x 11" • Bleed: 8-3/4" x 11-1/4"

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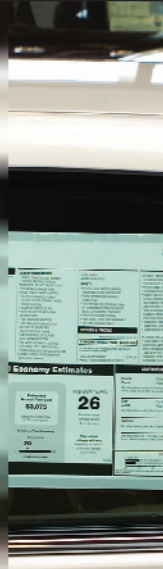
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-  NADA Report
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