



DEALERPOINT

Official Publication of the Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers Association | 1928-2011 | Volume 27 Summer 2011



INSIDE:

- FROM THE FARM
TO A FRANCHISE:
THE LEGEND OF SLEEPY
HOLLOW CHEVROLET BUICK GMC



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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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Sleepy Hollow cover photo by Neumark.

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From the Farm to a Franchise:

The Legend of Sleepy Hollow Chevrolet Buick GMC



"I'm a used car dealer who also sells new cars." That's LaVon Felton's philosophy. LaVon and Michelle own and operate Sleepy Hollow Chevrolet Buick GMC and Sleepy Hollow Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram, both in Western Wisconsin. "I love the car business, love everything about it," says LaVon. "I always say it could be worse... we could still be milking cows."

LaVon obtained a dealers license in 1987 at age 19 with the help of his parents. They sold cars on their farm between Richland Center and Viroqua. In 1989 LaVon was on his way home from UW LaCrosse and lost the water pump on his '78 Pontiac. "We fixed it at the old Citgo station in Viroqua," said LaVon. I got to talking with the guys and before long I had my own used car lot, Sleepy Hollow Auto Mart and a nickname, Spanky."

This little town is also where Spanky met his future wife Michelle. In 1995, they were married and built a new building next to Schmidt Chrysler, on the north end of town. The new store had four service bays, a detail bay and a small showroom. The day before grand opening of the new building, their first child Janie arrived. It was a long, busy week!

The Peterson family had owned the local GM dealership for over 50 years. In 2006 they approached LaVon to see if he had interest in purchasing the dealership. "We desperately needed the space and the facility was only a few years old," said Spanky. "We also wanted to add a body shop, which this dealership had in place." Spanky was told 'he did not qualify' to be a GM dealer. "We bought the land and building anyway," he continued. "We wanted to expand our used car operation and service department as well as capitalize on the existing body shop business." Spanky said the only part he didn't know was the new car business, so when he was told he was not getting the franchise it was a load off his mind. "After GM realized that

we were serious about not wanting the franchises, they gave them to us," he said. "Michelle and I signed papers with GM in April of 2007. I wore blue jeans and a Sleepy Hollow ball cap. They shook our hands and shook their heads."

Michelle and Spanky looked to expand operations again in 2009. Allen Taylor had purchased the Viroqua Chrysler store and was commuting from his Ford store in Wisconsin Rapids. Spanky and Allen would have lunch from time to time. Spanky quipped to Allen, "If you're ever ready to sell, let me know." The day finally came when Allen decided that the commute just was not worth the time it cost to be away from his family and a deal was struck. The Chrysler Dodge Jeep Ram store became part of the Sleepy Hollow family.

2011 has brought more changes for Sleepy Hollow; a new 11,000 square foot addition to the Chevy store, giving the store twenty service bays, and a total of 42,000 square feet.

Walking into either store gives you the feeling that you're stopping by to visit an old friend who loves cars. Both showrooms feature vintage neon signs, an old cast iron stove, antique Coke machines, gas pumps, an old jukebox and root beer on tap. Despite their busy schedules, LaVon and Michelle are usually around to greet you as well.



In addition to keeping up with the many activities of their children, Janie 15 and Sawyer 10, both are active in the community as well. Michelle, who is finishing her PhD in psychology, is co-chair of the Viroqua Relay for Life, and a member of the Viroqua Area Foundation Board. Spanky is serving on your WATDA Board of Directors, and the Viroqua Development Association Board.

Spanky said, "I would like to think someone can still get into the car business and make it as a franchise dealer from a corner gas station. Some of the best dealers I have ever met are used car dealers. There are some big advantages to having a franchise dealership. I know that now. I didn't five years ago. Dealing with the Reps can be challenging for me. That's what Michelle is good at. I just want to sell cars." ●

Career Exploration Program Reaches Thousands Annually

One of the key educational functions of your Foundation is to produce and participate in career exploration programs that introduce students and their family members to job opportunities in our industry. This is accomplished through a large network of partnerships that includes dealerships, industry, schools and workforce development organizations throughout Wisconsin.

The primary audience for these exploration events is high school students with a secondary target of junior and middle school students. The goal is to get attendees thinking about the benefits of a career in Wisconsin's auto and truck industry. The geography of these events is limited only to our state borders and their size and scope are individually tailored to the needs of each of the areas that we serve.

"The awesome thing about career fairs is the wide variety of participants," says Brian Davis, Service Manager at Andrew Chevrolet Nissan in Glendale. "It gives everybody a chance to see all of the job opportunities they have to think about, including the multitude of jobs in our industry."

Individual career events reach as many as 2,000 young people to deliver our message of progress and opportunity, as well as teaching the students what it takes to break into the business. In 2010, this program brought our message to 6,500 students in a half-dozen sites throughout Wisconsin. So far this year, career awareness program presentations have reached over 3,000.

This program continues thanks to a multi-year grant from the Glenn Humphrey Fund that enables us to purchase supplies and travel statewide to these career programs. ●



Save the Date! Used Car Education Conference Monday, October 17

Glacier Canyon Lodge and Conference Center Wilderness Resort in Wisconsin Dells

Registration at 12:30 p.m. • Conference 1:00 – 5:30 p.m.

Stay and mingle with our sponsors! • Cocktails from 5:30 – 7:00 p.m.

Key Note Speaker



Jay Rose: Over the last 24 years, Jay has worked with over 1,200 dealerships in 9 countries. Jay spent 5 years as a Speaker, Trainer and Business Development Mgr for the Joe Verde Group. Jay also has spoken at many 20 Groups and dealer associations including: NIADA & NABD National Conventions along with many State Conventions, & The Leedom Conference.

"Jay Rose is the dealers true trainer - his hands-on approach gives you confidence that he has real world dealership experience," said Lawrence Meade, Easton Motors, and Used Car Council Chairman. "His down-to-earth delivery style is refreshing."

Featured Speakers

Chuck Supple: Dealer Section Chief at DMV and WATDA Legal and Education Staff

Confirmed Sponsors include: Manheim Milwaukee Auto Auction • KF Sullivan Construction • CarMax Auctions Inc.

If you want to join this list, contact jfarmer@watda.org for details!

Foundation Teaching the Teachers

Teaching the teacher's – that's a capsule of what takes place every spring and summer at the Foundation's Team Wisconsin Teachers Institutes. These multi-day programs bring automotive and transportation instructors from across the state to workshops that provide them with hands-on experience with new automotive technology, networking with industry professionals and brainstorming with colleagues about new curriculum and classroom techniques. This year award-winning instructor and long-time Team Wisconsin member, Carl Hader introduced his 'boot camp' for newer instructors at his Grafton High School auto lab.

Our automotive and transportation teachers leave the institutes with up to 3,000 professional credit hours of education utilized in automotive classrooms serving more than 5,000 students each year. This year the Teachers Institute series was made possible through the generous support of Delmar Cengage Learning, Wells Engine Management, G-W Publisher, Gateway Technical College, Snap-on and the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. ●



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Personal Philanthropy, Lasting Effects, *Donor Advised Funds* Make it Happen

BY GARY BEIER, FOUNDATION DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

The story goes that Mr. Jay was a successful business leader and a well-known philanthropist in his community. He always had room for one more request, despite the pressures of economy, family demands and the day-to-day challenges at the company.

As one would expect, these pressures overwhelmed him from time-to-time. Instead of throwing in the towel, our Mr. Jay initiated some long-range thinking about how he could continue being the go-to guy in his philanthropic activities, without passing a burden on for others to shoulder in the future. These thoughts lead our Mr. Jay to start some serious research about how he might be able to ensure that his and his family's charitable efforts could be sustained.

One day our Mr. Jay was surfing the Internet and came across a website that contained detailed information on Donor Advised Funds. He was surprised to learn that this method of philanthropy has been an established component of most public charities for many decades. He learned that donor advised funds are an excellent and cost-effective alternative to creating a personal trust or family foundation. This option has the potential to save donors thousands of dollars in start up and management fees. He also discovered that the donor is able to participate with the sponsoring foundation on an ongoing basis to determine the annual recipients of the distributions from the fund.

The biggest advantage to donors and their families is that all of the business issues associated with operation of the donor advised funds are handled by the sponsoring foundation. This includes investment, accounting, audit, marketing/promotion and distribution according to the donor's wishes. These funds are usually pooled with others just like them to create a stronger investment package producing greater earning potential for each individual fund. Most important, all of this is accomplished under the specific guidelines of the Internal Revenue Service to ensure maximum benefit to donors and recipients.

This is a great story, but where does the Foundation of the Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers come into the picture? Actually we are already there on a small scale. We have maintained this type of program for more than a decade. The Foundation of WATDA currently holds two such funds for specified distribution and two more, which support its general operations.

There is a wide range of options available to donors who wish to set up a donor advised fund with us. A donor advised fund might be initiated through cash gifts, multi-year pledges, securities transfer, real property gifts, trusts, or bequests. The Foundation of WATDA recently adopted uniform gift policies, which describe in detail all of the methods of gifting that our board and its advisors have deemed appropriate and beneficial.

Like any other charitable support, the gifts you make to create a donor advised fund could be tax deductible. It is always best to check with your personal financial advisor to determine the extent of tax credit and what gifting method best suits your individual financial needs.

The biggest personal benefit to you is that you can ensure that your favorite charity or charities will be supported for many years to come and your generosity will always be remembered. The Donor Advised Fund has the potential to be a true and lasting reflection of what you do and what you stand for in your community. The late Bob Kolosso, Jr. was one of the early chairmen of the Foundation of WATDA. One of our first donor advised funds was created by members of his family to honor him. Wife Joan Kolosso had this to say about her family's experience with the fund, "Bob's big love was for our industry. Our fund with the Foundation of WATDA represents this. It was never work for him. It was his way of life. This fund keeps that spirit going."

Most recently, our foundation was named the recipient of a perpetual, annual scholarship gift made possible through Kenneth Pike, creator of the Janet and Kenneth Pike Family Fund, which is held by the Greater Milwaukee Foundation. Mr. Pike said, "I wanted to set up a scholarship that helped people start a career. Philanthropy is something nice to do."

The Pike Fund scholarship program begins this fall and will continue indefinitely due to the generosity and forethought of its creator.

Maybe, like our fictitious Mr. Jay or the families that have already seen fit to establish their donor advised funds, it might be the right time to put your name on something that counts for many years to come. The Donor Advised Fund program of the Foundation could be the answer you've been looking for: your lasting gift to family, company and community through an investment in philanthropy that lasts.

To find out more, call the development office today 414-520-7870 or email me at gbeier@watda.org. ●



Sticking to it, is a Good Thing for this Technician!

Brad Sundstrom would know all about 'sticking to it.' He has been with his scholarship-sponsoring dealer, Amato Automotive since the day he started his career. It all started back in 1999 when Brad applied to the Foundation of WATDA for the technician scholarship. He was awarded one through the Amato automotive group, along with Snap-on Tools. He entered the GM ASEP program at Waukesha County Technical College. Two-years later he graduated school and stepped into full-time work at the old Amato Cadillac store. Today he's busy on the service line of Amato Hyundai.

Brad grew up around automobiles with his mechanic father who provided him with hands-on opportunities throughout his childhood. As he said, "I've been taking things apart since I was quite young and I always liked

being hands-on and independent." By the time he reached age 16, Sundstrom had his first car, a '73 Mustang. He takes



pride in the fact that he did all of his own maintenance on it and continues that for his whole family, and of course, the his extended family - thousands of satisfied customers every year at Amato Hyundai.

Brad feels that technology is a great advantage that provides fuel efficiency, diagnostic accuracy in repairs and makes it generally much quicker to pinpoint problems in a vehicle. He says, "Technology changes are something that you have to keep up with and modern dealerships like this one help techs do just that."

Owner John Amato calls Sundstrom, "A class guy. It has been great seeing him grow with us through the years." ●



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What do you get out of this? You get a comprehensive marketing program. This program assures that you see that customer at least (4) times a year. Included in the Auto Club your customer receives 12 monthly newsletters from NitroFill

and you. You provide us with your logo and they see your name 12 times a year. They are told to have their tires checked quarterly. It's up to the service department to utilize this time to sell. There is an email blaster so you can send messages about anything the dealership is offering on a limited basis. There is text messaging capabilities. Available on every newsletter your service manager can access a website menu with multiple choice options. This is for creating service related coupons. The last email reminds your customer to see you for an inspection of tires and a program renewal.

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CenterStage

AWARDS, HONORS, MILESTONES

Holz Motors has been named a Dealer of the Year by General Motors. The award recognizes the top 2% of Chevrolet, Buick, GMC and Cadillac dealers by region. It is the eighth time Holz has won in the past nine years the award has been presented. President and owner of the Hales Corners dealership Jerry Holz said, "We are quite honored to receive this award." Holz's father Rudy started the dealership in 1914, and it remains the oldest Chevrolet agency in the state.



Brickner's of Wausau and **Fred Mueller Automotive** in Schofield, each promised to make a \$50 per vehicle sold donation for the used car "Unity Bowl" this past February at the Cedar Creek Patriot Center. The promotion benefited the Marathon County Hunger Coalition with a total of \$1,700.



L-R: Frank Murphy and Beth Mueller, Fred Mueller Automotive, Dave Eisenrichen and JoAnn Janikowski of Marathon Co Hunger Coalition, Jerry & Mike Brickner, Brickner's of Wausau.

Rhineland GM Auto Center, as part of the Chevy Youth Baseball Initiative, will provide Rhineland Little League with new equipment, instructional clinics, a monetary donations and an opportunity to raise an additional \$10,000 in funds through a Chevy vehicle giveaway fundraiser. The dealership will present the Little League with kits complete with equipment bags, baseball buckets, dugout managers and Chevy Youth Baseball T-shirts.

Jones Chevrolet Buick Cadillac held their eighth annual Classic Car Show on June 11 in Richland Center. Over 120 classic cars registered for the event and first and second place trophies were presented in 17 categories. The event proceeds of \$2,500 were donated to Walk with GRACE (Greater Richland Area Cancer Elimination) whose mission is to fund cancer research, education and provide assistance to local cancer patients.

William Pedretti, Adam Bennett and Hugh Sperbeck of **La Crosse Truck Center, Inc.**, La Crosse were crowned as Mack's top service technicians at the Mack North American VISTA Competition, held at Mack's North American Institute in Greensboro, North Carolina. Each team member received a brand-new Harley-Davidson motorcycle!

Center Stage continued on page 12...



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From Around the State

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

Bothun Auto Group has been renamed **Eau Claire Automotive Group** under new owner Mike Keil. The Bothun family sold its shares a dozen years ago to Lupient Auto Group in the Twin Cities. Keil, a Michigan native who has lived in Eau Claire for the past twenty-five years, has been general manager of Bothun for the past fifteen years. The dealership franchises include Chrysler, Dodge, Ram, Jeep and Nissan, as well as used vehicles. An addition and renovations to the Chrysler dealership are being planned, Keil said, as well as technology upgrades to better serve customers and employees.

Anderson Ford of Baldwin co-owners Andy Lamb and Corey Hawkins announced that the dealership's new name is **River Valley Ford**. "We have operated the store for over five years and felt it was time for the dealership to take on its own identity," said Hawkins. "The Anderson name has served us as a family oriented business for the past five years and we have no intentions of changing the way we do business," said Lamb. "Although it's the same faces around here every day, there is a certain amount of excitement about the name change," Hawkins added.

Hudson Ford recently broke ground for 5,700 square feet of new construction and extensive remodeling. A new quick lane, customer service drive-through lane, expanded showroom, new customer lounge and two completely remodeled restrooms round-out the project. The existing building is 15,000 square feet and was built in 1986.

Sommers Automotive in Mequon broke ground in May for a new building to house its Subaru operations. The building will accommodate the growth of the Subaru line as well as satisfy manufacturer requirements. Sommers Automotive has become the top-selling Subaru dealership in the Midwest. The expansion will take place on a parcel just to the east of the current dealership and includes additional vehicle display parking, modifications inside and outside the existing building, lighting that complies with the city's new lighting code as well as new signage, additional landscaping and new storm water management features.

Lynch Chevrolet of Kenosha opened recently in a temporary location on Highway 50. The new dealership, which will only carry the Chevrolet brand, opened with about 150 new vehicles on site because of a special allocation from General Motors. Lynch is in the process of obtaining permits to build a 25,000 to 30,000 square foot building with a lot that can hold up to about 300 vehicles. They hope to break ground in the spring and complete the project in about a year. The late John Lynch opened the family business in 1957. It is now run by his son David Lynch and his sons, Patrick and Michael Lynch.

Bergstrom Automotive of Neenah purchased Lincoln of Appleton from **Gustman**, making Bergstrom the sole Fox Cities Lincoln dealer and giving Gustman room for its growing Subaru brand. The Lincoln operation will be called Bergstrom Ford Lincoln of the Fox Valley with a new showroom to be built in Neenah at the company's Ford location.

Gustman Holdings, the parent company of the Gustman Car Dealerships will be able to devote more space to Subaru, one of its top growing brands. The former Lincoln Mercury store, which is located around the corner from Gustman Honda Subaru, will be renovated to the latest franchise design standards. Tom Gustman, president noted that the Subaru brand "has been increasing dramatically over the past few years, up over 26 percent just last year."

Pioneer Motors in Lancaster is closing after 51 years. The closing is a direct result of the General Motors bankruptcy restructuring in 2009. The loss of the Pontiac nameplate along with GM decision to limit Cadillac franchises to larger communities was a major factor in closing the dealership. Owner Todd Gillilan, who also owns Mound View Motors in Platteville, had moved the GMC franchise there. The Lancaster store had at operating peak employed 24 people, currently employed only six and did not generate the volume needed to operate as a used car only store.

The **Russ Darrow Group** is shuffling its dealerships in West



Pictured from left to right are: Mark Doornink, Clintonville Alderman; Bill Zeinert, Clintonville Alderman; Dick Koeppen, Waupaca County Board Chair; Dave Stubbs, Keller Project Manager; Lisa Kuss, City of Clintonville Administrator; Judy Magee, Mayor; Charlie Klein, Klein Chevrolet Buick Owner; John Klein, Klein Chevrolet Buick General Manager; Phil Keberlein, Chase Bank; Sandy Yaeger, Clintonville Chamber of Commerce Director; Wayne Stellmacher, Keller President.

Bend. The Russ Darrow Chrysler, Dodge, Ram, Jeep will move to a facility leased from Steve Kearns. The building will be upgraded to meet Chrysler corporate requirements. Russ Darrow Toyota Scion will move to the former Chrysler location, and the current Toyota store will be demolished and replaced with a larger vehicle display lot for Toyota. Both West Bend stores are located on West Washington Street.

Brenengen Chevrolet opened in the former Saturn dealership in Onalaska. This is the third Chevrolet site and sixth overall dealership for the Brenengen Auto Group, but the first in the LaCrosse-Onalaska area. GM ended its franchise agreement with Ray Hutson Chevrolet of LaCrosse in 2009 in their effort to cut 1,100 dealerships nationwide. The new dealership will allow more convenient service for its Onalaska and LaCrosse customers. Co-owners Don and Cheryl Brenengen said, "It's a win for our customers, it's a win for our community and it's a win for Chevrolet."

Klein GM and the City of Clintonville officially broke ground on a new 24,000 square foot dealership on July 1. The new dealership will feature a state of the

art showroom for Chevrolet and Buick lines. The new facility will also house Klein's automotive service and collision center with 12 service bays offering a wide range of car repairs and service updates including general repairs and maintenance, factory recalls and warranty service on all models. The new facility will also feature a children's play area, coffee bar and an indoor temperature controlled vehicle delivery area. Klein's new facility is west of its current location, which will continue to sell the Chrysler, Dodge and Jeep brands. Construction of the new dealership will be complete in November 2011.

Quinlan's Equipment, Antigo, recently completed a new 16,000 Square foot facility housing their International Truck dealership. The new building features 4 drive through service bays, overhead crane system, a wash bay, and a 5,000 square foot parts department. It is located on US Hwy 45 adjacent to the existing building which will now be used for additional inside parts and equipment storage. A grand opening celebration is planned for June 9th and 10th 2011. The family's GMC dealership just across the highway will stay in place. ●

Center Stage continued from page 10...

The biennial competition consists of three rounds of online testing, which narrows the field down to the top team for each of Mack's five sales regions. The three top-scoring teams of the regional winners qualified for the championship fourth round, in Greensboro.

The winning La Crosse Truck Center team, nicknamed "Granite" was selected after a final round that included parts lookup and service questions, and hands-on challenges, including troubleshooting mechanical or electrical issues planted on two Mack trucks and a Mack MP8 engine. ●



L-R: William Pedretti, Adam Bennett and Hugh Sperbeck of La Crosse Truck Center, Inc.

Ewald Family Supports Local Soccer

During the Oconomowoc Soccer Association's annual Recreation Tournament, a groundbreaking ceremony took place for the Ewald Soccer Complex at Monterey Park. The Ewald family was on hand to participate and presented a check for \$200,000 toward the soccer fields, paving, signage and the creation of the Ewald Family Pavilion.

"This was the opportunity of a lifetime, for a family business like ours to give to the families in our community," stated Emil Ewald, Chairman of the **Ewald Automotive Group**. "Our contribution will not only help the 525 soccer families of the OSA, it will hopefully have an impact on the entire community."

OSA President, Joel Falk agreed, "This contribution is the catalyst. This project represents a unique collaboration to build a facility for generations to come. On behalf of all the families in Oconomowoc and the OSA, I give my heartfelt thanks to the Ewald family for their incredible donation."



From left, Robert Hultquist, Chairman of the Town of Oconomowoc, Emil Ewald, and Joel Falk, president of the OSA.

This project had been in the works for five years before the Ewalds learned of it. Their donation has triggered other donors to activate their pledges, and donations have started to pour in. "We wanted to make this contribution right now," said Mr. Ewald, "It will allow the main portion to be completed by the end of 2011, so that the Oconomowoc Soccer kids and their families will be able to enjoy the new facility at the beginning of 2012."

The Ewald family has been committed to Oconomowoc and the surrounding Lake Country area for more than 30 years, living here, raising their families and operating their family business here. Ewald Chevrolet Buick opened in 1980 with Mayfair Rent-A-Car, followed by Ewald Chrysler Jeep Dodge Ram and Ewald Kia of Oconomowoc. ●

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LAW CHANGE:

Wisconsin Labor Law Poster Change: Hours and Times of Day Minors may work.

Substantive-Wisconsin made changes to the list of hours and times during which minors may or may not work.
Meal period requirements were also added.

**This is a material substantive change and a new,
Wisconsin All-In-One poster is required.**

Poster Change: July 1, 2011.

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NADA Director's Report

BY KEN VANCE



I recently had the opportunity to stop and say hello to an old friend, a Chevrolet dealer in our fair state. He is a stand-alone in a community of about 4,000. About eight years ago at the urging of GM he rebuilt his facility and a very attractive one I might add. Now under their current structure, with no protections in place for dealers, he is being told he must replace his relatively new

windows because they start at 15 inches above the floor instead of at floor level. The floor in the showroom, which looks new, must be replaced because the tiles are 12 x 12 rather than 17 x 17. I am sure there is some logic here somewhere; I just don't quite grasp it. He is also 198% sales effective and has one of the highest customer satisfaction indexes.

If you haven't been involved in talking to the people you know in state government or given to the legal action fund (by company check) or the Dealers Direct Givers Fund, our political conduit (by personal check) you need to consider it now. WATDA and NADA are trying hard to reinvigorate our franchise laws but we need everyone's help. If you require further information, please contact Bill, Mary Ann or Chris at WATDA, (608) 251-5577 or you can contact me at (715) 834-4162.

NADA Applauds Decision to Drop Letter Grades from Window Stickers

Two regulatory agencies responsible for setting national energy policy announced a new fuel-economy label rule for passenger cars and light-duty trucks without a controversial "letter grade" system that NADA and other auto industry groups opposed. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration and Environmental Protection Agency unveiled the new labels for model year 2013 at a press conference in Washington. NADA applauded the move to eliminate letter grades, citing its potential to confuse consumers.

"With gasoline spiking to over \$4 a gallon and alternative fuel vehicles hitting dealer showrooms, rolling out totally unfamiliar "letter grade" labels would have only served to confuse and frustrate consumers," NADA said. "NADA applauds the Obama administration's decision to drop the ill-advised "Letter grade" in favor of one that prominently displays a vehicle's MPG. By doing so, car shoppers can make informed comparisons on dealer's lots, allowing them to take advantage of new technologies, which will ultimately put more fuel efficient vehicles on he road."

In addition to the miles-per-gallon (MPG) numbers consumers have relied on for decades, the new labels will include:

- Data comparing new technology or alternative-fuel vehicles to conventionally powered cars and trucks
- A fuel cost estimate over five years
- How a particular vehicle compares to all vehicles for smog and greenhouse gas emissions
- An estimate of how much fuel or electricity it will take to drive 100 miles
- Information on the driving range for electric vehicles and charging time
- A scanable code to allow smartphone users to access additional online information



Although they are better than the first proposal, the new fuel economy labels aren't perfect, says Doug Greenhaus, director of Environment, Health and Safety for NADA's Regulatory Affairs Group. For example, the labels compare a vehicles' emissions performance against all vehicles, as opposed to vehicles within the same class Greenhaus says, which could confuse some consumers. Moreover, a vehicle's five-year estimated fuel cost is compared to a hypothetical "average new vehicle," also a comparison of limited value, Greenhaus says.

NADA is working with NHTSA and EPA on a strategy to assist dealerships with responding to questions and concerns from consumers about the new labels. NHTSA and EPA have prepared a Q&A Fact Sheet along with example labels.

Automakers must include fuel economy information on window labels of light-duty vehicles for model year 2013 before they are shipped. And dealers must maintain the labels until they are delivered to retail customers.

Questions about the new fuel economy labels may be directed to NADA Regulatory Affairs at regulatoryaffairs@nada.org or (703) 821-7040.

2012 NADA/ATD Convention and Expo in Las Vegas, February 3-6

The 2012 NADA and ATD Convention and Expo will be held in Las Vegas, February 3-6. It will be the first time the two conventions will be held together. ATD members will participate in events geared solely to the trucking industry, including luncheon, general sessions at the Las Vegas Hilton Hotel. And ATD and NADA registration, franchise meetings, workshops and expos will take place in the Las Vegas Convention Center adjacent to the Las Vegas Hilton. ATD attendees also will be able to attend the NADA Expo, workshops and general sessions. And they can stay at any hotel of their choice in NADA's block. Online registration for the NADA and ATD conventions is open at www.nadaconventionandexpo.org and www.atdconvention-andexpo.org. ●

In the Driver's Seat

After a personal tragedy changed her life, Darlene Ballweg steered herself toward a new future.

By Kim Dearth • Photographed by Amber Arnold • Reprinted with permission from *Brava Magazine* • June 2011

“When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” We’ve all heard the saying, but not many of us truly take it to heart; instead we brush it aside as one of those well-meaning platitudes tossed around when things go wrong. For Darlene Ballweg, however, this simple statement, found on a kitchen magnet affixed to her oven door, is more than a throw-away truism—it is a life mantra.

Today, Ballweg is the powerhouse we see as the face of the eponymous car dealerships—the small, tanned woman in those fun-loving commercials who lends her personal touch at locations in Sauk City, Middleton, Wausau and LaCrosse. But it wasn’t always that way. For years she was content working on a farm and raising a family. Then, in the face of personal tragedy, she was forced to rethink her way of life, ultimately making one seemingly simple decision that would lead her down an entirely new path: Taking over her husband’s business and forging her own road to success.

A small-town girl who grew up on a farm outside Lodi, Ballweg was raised with that pragmatic Midwestern mentality and unending work ethic. A girl whose youthful days were full of the type of fun that comes from growing up on a farm known for its annual corn maze, it was no surprise when Ballweg grew and found herself falling in love with a farming man. Though she had earned a teaching degree from Columbia County Teachers’ College in Columbus, Wis., after marrying Danny Ballweg in 1956, it only felt natural to leave the classroom and head back to her farming roots.

“I was a chore girl, carrying milk and feeding calves,” Ballweg states matter-of-factly about married life on the couple’s dairy farm. “It was a hard life but I was happy.”

In 1965, Danny decided to double his business ventures. While Ballweg helped maintain the family farm and take care of their four children, Danny purchased a Chevy franchise from a widow in Sauk Prairie. In the next two years, he decided to expand. Partnering with 22-year-old Les Mack—who had started working for the Ballwegs when he was just 18—in a Chevy/Buick dealership in Lancaster.

Then, in 1984, tragedy struck. Danny was killed in a farming accident. After 28 years of marriage, Ballweg was suddenly a widow—and solely responsible for both the family farm and the car business.

It was a daunting proposition presented in the midst of her grief. “When you lose a partner it’s like cutting off your right arm,” She candidly explains. “[Danny and I] were so close. Even on Sunday morning we would just sit around reading the paper, not talking, but it was so comfortable.”

At 49, Ballweg was at a crossroads. Did she sell the businesses and make a comfortable life for herself on the farm? For her answer, she did something unusual; in spite of her no-nonsense demeanor, she relied on her intuition.



“I decided this was where I belonged,” she says of the dealerships.

“Darlene was a farmer’s wife until that day,” remembers Mack, the man who had worked for the Ballwegs for many years and had bought their Lancaster franchise in 1980. “A few weeks after the funeral she called me up and said she wanted to attend an upcoming corporate meeting in Milwaukee. She told me she wanted to become the designated dealer in Sauk City, and she wanted to tell management that day. At that time it was unheard of for a person who had not spent time in a dealership to become a dealer, much less a woman,” Mack adds. “But she did it.”

Despite her outward strength, the pain of losing her husband was still fresh.

“We cried all the way to Milwaukee and back, reminiscing about Danny,” Mack recalls. “But she still knew what she wanted to do.”

Ballweg stood in a room full of corporate leaders, businessmen with years of experience behind them, and announced her plan.

“I was the only woman in the room,” says Ballweg.

Undeterred, Ballweg charged ahead.

At a midpoint in her life, Ballweg was in a place she never thought she’d be, teaching herself the finer aspects of running a business, often spending sleepless nights worrying about inventory and profit and loss statements, subjects foreign to her until then.

Despite the challenges, Ballweg persevered. Not only did she learn the ropes of their current dealerships, she used her business acumen to add several more, including a state-of-the-art facility in Middleton, and boosted corporate revenues from \$10 million in 1984, the year Danny died, to more than \$150 million today. And the corporate dealership world that once was cautious of having a woman in its midst embraced her, showering her with accolades such as the 2007 Wisconsin Auto and Truck Dealers Association’s Dealer of the Year.

Today, nearly 27 years after making the decision to step into the business world, Ballweg is not just a figurehead—she stays involved in her business in personal and unique ways.

“I think it’s really important for me to be on the scene,” she says. “Every two weeks I go to Sauk Prairie and Middleton and hand the employees their paychecks personally.”

Her personal touch also extends to her relationship with her customers, to whom she writes thank you notes after a purchase, and to the ways she keeps the dealerships up to her high standards.

“The wind at the dealership in Middleton is terrible and really tatters our flags,” she notes. “I sew the flags when they need repair. I keep a sewing machine in the service manager’s office just for that reason.”

Call them smart business moves or shows of Midwestern niceties—but ask those who know Ballweg and they agree, these are

continued on page 18...

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: Chazz

I am Born Again



My name is Chazz and I am 15 years old. I have been at Rawhide for seven months. My favorite hobbies include football and creative drawing. I really enjoy learning about God, learning new things in school, engineering, and mechanics.

I would like to become an electrician and make something good out of my life after leaving Rawhide. I hope to go to a two-year technical college to obtain an electrician's license. My dream is to have my own business.

Living in the Aylward House has helped me in many ways. The staff showed me a better way to live my life. Mr. Grant was a resident instructor in the house. He was my mentor for the BSM program (Building Spiritual Muscle). He was a great example of a Godly man; always ready to work, run five miles, or help us through God's word.

Moving to the Gillespie House was difficult for me. It was hard to see my houseparents, the Smith's, as well as Mr. Grant and Mr. Adam (another resident instructor), leave Rawhide and go to where God called them. All of the staff were the kind of people everyone should get to know. They were always welcoming.

Rawhide is a good place for kids who struggle with the hard things and don't want to be corrected. Every kid needs to be corrected in a loving manner by people who truly care for them and their well-being. This is something I've learned during my time at Rawhide. ~ Chazz

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

Ballweg continued from page 17...

choices that are just her, through and through.

It's never easy to pick up the pieces after a personal tragedy, but it can be even harder to use them to forge a new direction in life.

Through everything, family and friends have helped keep Ballweg centered and strong—even when pain came again after she lost her two sons in separate incidents.

Quick to remember the good moments with her departed sons and husband, Ballweg isn't one to get lost. Instead, she focuses on treasuring even more deeply the relationships she has with the people surrounding her. From Mack to her daughter Dana, former General Manager Dave Pederson and now Ballweg's Vice President Jason Brickl—another son of the company who started working for the Ballwegs when he was just 14—Ballweg maintains close ties with those involved in the company.

And as for family, Ballweg says, "Home is everything to me. My life is very family-oriented. Everyone gathered here [at the farm] for Easter and Mother's Day instead of going out. Home is a little piece of heaven for me."

Ballweg has also found a source of comfort and community in an active volunteer life, supporting local charities including Sauk Prairie Memorial Hospital and Clinics, Tripp Memorial Museum and Hope House.

Her donations also were instrumental in making the River Arts Center in Sauk Prairie a reality. On the day we spoke, Ballweg was planning to attend a variety show at the Center where her 12-year-old granddaughter would be performing.

"With the political situation and the schools getting crunched, I want to make sure children like my granddaughter have the opportunity to participate in the arts," she says.

"I've always been very interested in music and the arts," Ballweg continues. "When my husband died, I joined Cripple Creek Cloggers out of Madison and was with them for 21 years. It was a way to dance without a partner."

Throughout all that life has handed her, she's found her own way to keep moving forward, ticking down a list of life lessons.

"Keep busy. Don't sit home and feel sorry for yourself. There are so many people who are worse off than you are, even if it doesn't feel like it," she says. Each ultimately goes back to that little mantra found on a magnet in her kitchen: "When life gives you lemons, make lemonade."

Ballweg has, time and time again. ●

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Tribute

Edwin Van Boxtel



Ed Van Boxtel owner of the former Van Boxtel Ford Jeep and RV died May 22, 2011 as a result of complications following open-heart surgery. He was 83 years old.

Ed was born in Aniwa, WI on September 15, 1927 to the late John and Irene (Wegner) Van Boxtel. Shortly after that his family moved to Clintonville, where he spent his childhood. At Clintonville High School he lettered in basketball and

football and in the summers, he played for the Clintonville A's city baseball team. With WWII raging in the Pacific, he tried to quit school his senior year to enlist in the Navy where he was turned away and told to come back after he graduated. He did return and enlist, serving 14 months in the Navy and spending time in China and Japan after Japan surrendered.

Taking advantage of the GI bill after the war, Ed enrolled in watch making school in Kansas City and became a licensed jeweler. Ed then enrolled in the University of Wisconsin and majored in Business with a minor in Psychology. He married his high school sweetheart Lois Schauder and paid their way by opening a watch repair shop in their apartment at the foot of Bascom Hill on the UW campus. When Lois became pregnant shortly after Ed graduated in 1951, he decided he couldn't wait to establish a jewelry business...he had bills to pay now!

Ed answered an ad for an "Insurance Manager" at Hult's Chevrolet in Madison. He soon found out the job was not a good fit and gave his notice. The owner, C.J. Thorstad, convinced him to stay on as a used car salesman. He soon became Hult's number one salesman and was promoted to Used Car Manager and eventually to General Sales Manager in charge of both new and used car sales. Under his management Hult's Chevrolet became the number one dealer in new and used car sales in the state of Wisconsin.

With the jewelry business now in his rear view mirror he decided he wanted his own dealership. He applied for several available Chevrolet dealerships but was denied each time. Finally Ford Motor Company called and offered him the dealership in Green Bay. It was a tough decision since he was a Chevy man but he finally accepted. He sold his home and mortgaged his family's future to scrape up the money to buy the Ford franchise in Green Bay. On May 1, 1967 Van Boxtel Ford Inc. was born.

The original facility on Adams St was totally inadequate to house a competitive dealership. A brand new modern facility was opened on Military Ave in 1969. From that point on Van Boxtel never looked back. In 1976 Van Boxtel Ford Inc. became the number one Ford dealer in the state for new car sales, a feat they repeated many times in the next three decades.

Ed also stressed the importance of used vehicle sales. For nine straight years from 1996 to 2004 Van Boxtel Ford Jeep was the number one selling used car dealer in Wisconsin, and in 2003 they were the number five used car dealer in the United States. Late in 2004 at age 77, Ed decided it was time to retire. The Ford and Jeep franchises were sold to Broadway Automotive. The RV division stayed in the family and is currently owned and operated by Ed's sons Tom and Jeff.

Ed firmly believed that you need to spend money to make money and achieved local celebrity status by his full-page newspaper ads and frequent appearances on local TV as spokesperson for the company he founded. He adopted the catchphrase that will be forever associated with the name Van Boxtel... "And You Can't Do Better Than That, Now Can You!"

He married his current wife the former Sue Struebing on December 5, 2002.

Survivors include his wife Sue Van Boxtel, his sons, Thomas A. Van Boxtel and his wife Cherie and Jeffrey L. Van Boxtel and his wife Lori; a stepson, Scott Struebing; a stepdaughter, Michelle (Struebing) Leffler and her husband Kurt; his grandchildren, Lea (Van Boxtel) Hildebrand and her husband John; Christine (Van Boxtel) Cverwonka and her husband Luk; Danielle Van Boxtel; Matthew Van Boxtel; Brittany Harbick; Megan Leffler; Leah (Leffler) Lesh and her husband Shawn; and Jackson Struebing; one great granddaughter, Annabelle Hildebrand; one brother Vernon Van Boxtel (age 93), Seattle WA and his wife Glenna; his in-laws, Lyle and Liz Krizenesky, Diane Branson and Barb and Richard Drnec.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by a sister, Ardis and her husband Edgar Sengstock and his first wife, Lois (Schauder) Van Boxtel. ●

William Stafford Quinn



William Stafford Quinn lifelong resident of Ellsworth, WI passed away on Friday, June 24, 2011 at the age of 79. Bill died in his home surrounded by his loving family. Bill was a consummate gentleman, beloved father and a fun-loving Irishman. There wasn't a tale he didn't love to share, a face he couldn't remember, a charity he wouldn't support or a sporting event he wouldn't miss watching.

He died as he lived – with dignity, integrity and prayer. Bill was born on April 23, 1932 to his parents Matthew and Mary

continued on page 21...

Legislative Update

Dealers around the state are hosting meetings in their dealerships with their State Senators and Representatives, to stress the importance of changing the franchise legislation for their business. Assembly Bill 132/Senate Bill 96 is being marketed as the Save Our Local Dealers (SOLD) Act. President Bill Sepic authored an editorial letter that was featured in many newspapers across the state, outlining the importance of the legislation to dealers and their employees in local communities.

These meetings are key to WATDA's lobby effort. Legislators want to hear from dealers and to learn how the franchise laws work in the real world. Thanks to all the following dealers who hosted these meetings, and to all of you who took the time to attend. You are helping us make the case for AB 132/SB 96, the dealer franchise legislation.



Date/Time	Legislator	Host Dealership
July 11, 1:00 pm	Representative Craig	Horter Chevrolet, Big Bend
July 11, 3:30 pm	Representative Kooyenga	Russ Darrow Group, Menomonee Falls
July 19, 10:00 am	Representative Petryk	Ken Vance Motors, Eau Claire
July 21, 10:30 am	Representative Thiesfeldt	Holiday Automotive, Fond du Lac
July 22, 11:00 am	Representative Wynn	Burtneis Chevrolet, Whitewater
July 26, 3:00 pm	Representative Kramer	Boucher, Waukesha
July 26, 3:30 pm	Representative Kaufert	Bergstrom Corporate, Neenah
July 27, 10:30 am	Senator Miller	Capitol Ford, Madison
July 28, 11:00 am	Representative Kuglitsch	Holz Chevrolet, Hales Corners
July 29, 9:30 am	Representative Strobel	Schmit Brothers Ford, Saukville
July 29, 11:00 am	Representative Bernier	Ken Vance Motors, Eau Claire
August 1, 4:00 pm	Representative Knodl	Russ Darrow Group, Menomonee Falls
August 4, 3:00 pm	Representative Kleefisch	Frank Porth Chevrolet, Columbus
August 12, 10:30 am	Representative Tranel	Pioneer Ford, Platteville
August 12, 10:30 am	Representative August	Ford of Lake Geneva
August 12, 2:00 pm	Representative Kerkman	Miller Ford, Burlington
August 15, 11:00 am	Representative Suder	Gross Motors, Neillsville
August 15, 4:00 pm	Representative Rivard	Johnson Motors, Rice Lake
August 16, 4:00 pm	Representative Seversen	Larsen Auto Center, Amery
August 17, 9:00 am	Representative Steineke	Gustman's Chevrolet, Kaukauna
August 17, 11:00 am	Representative Jacque	Dorsch Ford Kia, Green Bay
August 18, 10:00 am	Representative Bies	Jim Olson Motors, Sturgeon Bay
August 20, 11:00 am	Representative Nerison	Sleepy Hollow Chevrolet, Buick GMC, Viroqua
August 22, 8:00 am	Representative Vos	Lynch Truck Center, Waterford
August 22, 10:45 am	Representative Nass	Tasch Chevrolet Buick GMC, Elkhorn
August 30, 10:00 am	Representative Larson	Bloomer Ford, Bloomer
August 30, 2:00 pm	Representative Murtha	Keyes Chevrolet, Menomonie
September 9, 9:00 am	Representative Meyer	TBD

Legislative Update Continued...



L-R: Chad Curran, Newman Chevrolet; Representative Duey Strobel (R-Saukville), Mike Schmit, host at Schmit Brothers Dodge.



Rep Bernier photo: L-R: Sherry Mohr, Eau Claire Ford; Karl Rynish, Karls Chevrolet, Jason Vance, co-host, Ken Vance Motors; Representative Kathy Bernier (R-Chippewa Falls); Suzanne Ashley, co-host at Ken Vance Motors; and Dean Loftus, River States Truck & Trailer

Tribute continued from page 19...

Stafford Quinn. He was a loving brother to Donald Quinn, Matthew James Quinn and Margaret (Peggy) Gross.

On April 27, 1953 Bill married Mary Joan Clarity of Westwood, CA. They met in St. Paul while attending college; Bill at St. Thomas University and Mary Jo at St. Catherine's University. Bill graduated magna cum laude in 1954 and was chosen as Fulbright Scholar recipient in 1954-55. Bill served his country from 1955-1957 in the Army Intelligence Corp. After his military duty, Bill and Mary Jo moved back to Ellsworth to join his father Matt in the auto business Larson-Quinn a franchised General Motors and Chrysler Corporation dealership. After Matt's untimely death in 1959, Bill became the dealer principal operating the dealership for over 55 years. Meghan, Bill's daughter currently operates the family GM dealership today, over 92 years after its inception.

Along with his parents, Bill was preceded in death by brother Don and grandson John Matthew Quinn. He is survived by his wife of 55 years Mary Joan and all eight children; Moira Ann (Michael) Leite of Annandale, VA; Tracy Jean Quinn of Ellsworth, WI; Terence Sean (Lisa) Quinn of Lake Elmo, MN; Kevin Patrick Quinn of Edina, MN; Shannon Marie (Jeffrey) Horsager of Edina, MN; Meghan Joan (Charles) Kummer of Ellsworth, WI; Erin Margaret Quinn of St. Paul, MN; and Brennan Joseph Quinn of Minneapolis, MN. Bill is further survived by 15 grandchildren: Richard (Sarah), Dana (Dan), Michael William, Sean Patrick, Hannah Josephine, Bridget Juliana, Elizabeth Ann, Peter Michael Joseph, Patrick Thomas, Griffin Douglas, William Stafford, Morgan Quinn, Mackenzie Joan, Clarity Katherine and Nolan Charles. ●

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Nobody Does Dental Insurance Like Delta Dental of Wisconsin

In January of this year, WATDA Insurance Agency entered into a relationship with Delta Dental of Wisconsin for the obvious – dental insurance for our valued Association members. When it came time for the selection committee to pick the preferred dental provider “there wasn’t a close second place consideration,” according to Bruce Ohlsen, Manager WATDA Insurance Agency. Ohlsen has worked with Delta Dental for more than 25 years and says they have provided the most consistent level of provider access and administration than any other dental insurer, bar none.

Sue Rausch, VP of Operations, WATDA, states that Delta Dental was the obvious successor to our own, former dental insurance plan. “We needed to have confidence that the same level of customer service our dealers were used to with our former dental program would continue. Those expectations have been met,” Rausch stated.

Oftentimes, big doesn’t necessarily mean the best. However, this is the case with Delta Dental. They are the nation’s largest dental insurer, both in terms of numbers of insureds and dental providers. Delta’s main headquarters for Wisconsin is in Stevens Point, with offices in Madison and Milwaukee. DDOW has more than 1.2 million insureds in the State and, nationally, more than 47 million covered lives. Delta also boasts an “A” rating from A.M. Best, a third party rating entity for all types of insurance.

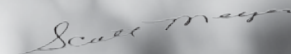
The program that WATDA Insurance Agency offers the Association is an opportunity to provide stellar dental insurance at very competitive rates. The plan offers some unique features that are unusual in the marketplace today:

- A minimum of only two employees per dealership is required, no other participation requirements!
- Dealers can contribute nothing towards the premium; pay the full amount, or anything in between!
- No dentist is out of network with Delta and there are no waiting periods for benefits once coverage begins (many competitive plans have a 1 year wait except for preventive benefits and fillings). Also, each covered individual receives up to \$1200 of benefits per year, while some competing plans only pay \$1000 per year.

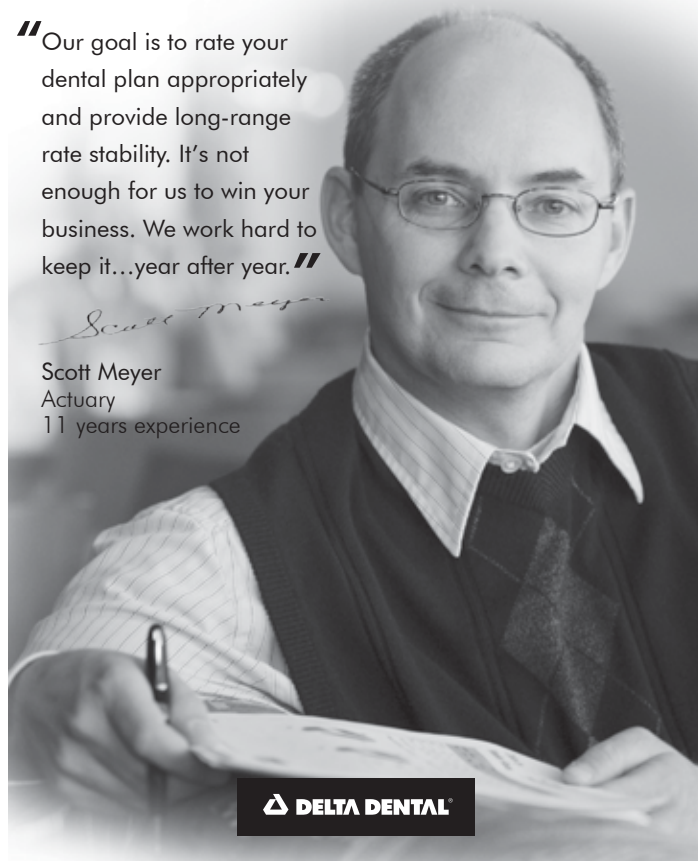
All in all it is a great opportunity for great coverage from a great dental insurer!

For more information about the three plan options available from Delta Dental of Wisconsin please call either Bruce Ohlsen or Chris Connor at 888.236.2465. And remember, commissions paid from Delta Dental roll up to your State Association! ●

“Our goal is to rate your dental plan appropriately and provide long-range rate stability. It’s not enough for us to win your business. We work hard to keep it...year after year.”



Scott Meyer
Actuary
11 years experience



 DELTA DENTAL

experience.deltadentalwi.com



Bruce Ohlsen, WATDA Insurance Agency, accepts the United Advantage Gold Award for 2011 from United Healthcare Account Executive, Pete Stewart. The award, based on sales volume, is presented to the top agency partners. United Healthcare is a valuable, strategic partner of the WATDA Insurance Agency. UHC is currently meeting the needs for many insured groups via their competitive rates, provider network, and progressive benefit options.

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Lifetime Engine Warranty, Limited Warranty, Vehicle Service Contracts (VSCs) and GAP are backed by Lyndon Property Insurance Company in all states except NY. In NY, VSCs are backed by Old Republic Insurance Company. GAP, Lifetime Engine Warranty and Limited Warranty are not available in NY. Credit Insurance is backed by Protective Life Insurance Company in all states except NY, where it is backed by Protective Life and Annuity Insurance Company.

NEXT ISSUE:

Rawhide Introduces Choice School Option for Milwaukee Students



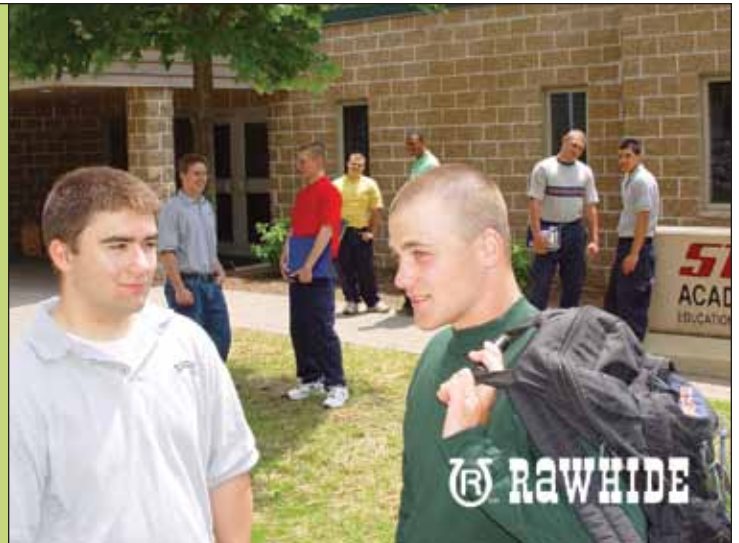
From Around the State



Center Stage: Awards, Honors, Milestones



NADA Director's Report



Gauge us for yourself.

As an indication of client satisfaction, Baker Tilly's dealership services team averages a score of **9.4** out of 10. From staff accountant to managing partner, we're focused on understanding your needs. We ask, we listen, and we deliver, providing you with proactive, consistent service and results from a team that is dedicated to your success.

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Connect with us today to learn more about how our team can assist you with your accounting, tax, and advisory needs.



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