

# Dealer POINT

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inside |

## Ron Boldt named 2009 Wisconsin Dealer of the Year

BY MARY ANN GERRARD

In a place where Ford stores had not thrived, a 22-year-old Ron Boldt created a winning strategy that has given Platteville a successful dealership and a great community partner. Boldt, the 2009 Wisconsin Dealer of the Year and 2010 Time Magazine Quality Dealer Award nominee, began as an office manager at 20; he became half-owner at 24 and a major stock holder at 26. He was a kid among the gray hairs at many of the first Milwaukee District Ford meetings.

The TMOA is one of the most prestigious awards given on a national scale. It honors the "best of the best" from Wisconsin and every dealer nominated, is nominated by his fellow dealers.

Boldt, a Platteville Wisconsin native caught the automobile bug from his father Wilson who sold Chevrolets in the late 1930's and early 1940's. Wilson was also a silent partner in Boldt's dealership Pioneer Ford Mercury.

"It's our business, but we have a duty to give back to the industry all that we can," Boldt said in his remarks accepting the award. "I am deeply honored and humbled to have been chosen by my fellow dealers. My contributions to this great industry have made a difference in my life, my wife Karen and I have made so many lasting friendships and had such fun," Boldt said.

"Perhaps my most memorable and significant experience came in my year as WATDA Board Chairman and that was the creation of the WATDA partnership with Rawhide Boys Ranch," Boldt remembered. "Rawhide has been truly successful in rehabilitating troubled boys and giving them a chance in life they otherwise might have missed."

Boldt's contributions to the auto industry were also recognized when he was awarded the WATDA Gold Award in 2006 for extraordinary service in multiple leadership roles over a lifetime. In WATDA's 81-year history only eleven Gold Awards have been



presented.

Boldt's civic involvement also extends to his community of Platteville where he has served the Chamber of Commerce, is a volunteer firefighter/engineer, contributed his time and talents to museum boards and many more.

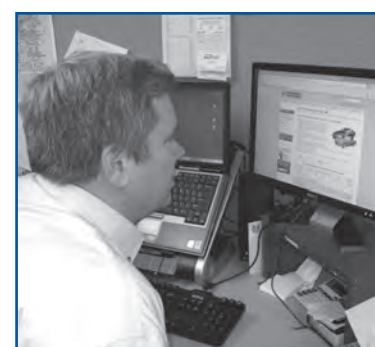
Pioneer Ford Mercury will be getting a bit of a facelift this year but his business model seems timeless: Care for employees, emphasize customer service and maintain the correct inventory. 2008 and 2009 have been tough years to say the least, but with expense

and inventory control he and his son Tim are looking forward to serving Platteville for years to come. Tim has managed the business since 1995 after attending NADA Dealer Academy, and is following close in dad's footsteps as he just finished as President of the Chamber of Commerce and is currently President elect of WISCO, while being President of the UW Platteville Sports Boosters Club.

"This business, in this great industry has been rewarding to my family, which is why I feel so strongly about giving back," Boldt said.



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## New Format for Dealer Point in 2010

BY JULIE FARMER, EDITOR

You are holding the final issue of *Dealer Point*, in its life-long tabloid size format. After 25 years, it's time for a change! Your Spring 2010 issue will come to you in a full color magazine format. We plan to keep our focus on

the human-interest side of our industry and feature stories about dealers and their staff. Regular columns from our friends at WISCO and Rawhide will continue to be part of our publication as well as pertinent news from our Foundation and our Legal and Legislative staff. We hope this format

change will attract new advertisers as well as giving our long-time supporters an opportunity to ask for your business in color.

We welcome your comments, suggestions and ideas. Please contact us at [jfarmer@watda.org](mailto:jfarmer@watda.org).



## FROM AROUND THE STATE | Changes

**Palmen Automotive Group** is closing its Racine GM store as part of the automaker's restructuring and is in the process of purchasing a GM franchise in Kenosha. "GM is consolidating the Kenosha and Racine markets for Buick, GMC and Cadillac, and that dealership will be located in Kenosha," said Andy Palmen, president of the Palmen Automotive Group. "We are in the process of purchasing the LeMay dealership on Highway 50 (in Kenosha) and that will be the regional Buick, GMC, Cadillac dealership." Palmen will continue to service Racine customers at its Dodge Chrysler Jeep store.

In a related move, **Porcaro Ford**, Racine, will move across the street, to the former Palmen GM location. That will put them next door to their **Porcaro Mitsubishi** store, though that's not what's driving the deal, according to majority owner Mark Porcaro. "We wanted to expand and offer some better service," he said. They plan to add a Ford Quick Lane and a children's play structure between the two dealerships.

**Kudick Chevrolet Buick**, Mauston, is moving across town to a building twice as big as their current building. GM wants to update their image, Brett Kudick, president said, with all dealerships displaying a similar signage and general look. He expects increased traffic for the new location. The timeframe for moving depends on how quickly GM approves the plans and layout.

**Markquart Motors** and **Ken Vance Motors** of Eau Claire announced that Markquart has purchased the Buick and GMC franchises from Vance. Vance will continue to oper-

ate his Honda, Volkswagen, Audi and Hyundai franchises along with a used car business. Markquart will launch a major remodeling project at their current facility in Lake Hallie.

**Markquart Toyota** will relocate to Lake Hallie, from its Clairemont

Avenue location in Eau Claire. About nine acres of the 92-acre parcel will be used for the new dealership. Plans are underway and they hope to make the move in the next year. The existing Toyota facility will be sold.

**Kolosso Chrysler Jeep Dodge,**

## CENTER STAGE | Awards, honors, milestones

**Mark Motors**, Plover has been named Plover Area Business of the Year for 2009, by the Plover Area Business Association. Owner Mark Olinyk is a former Wisconsin dealer of the Year and TMQDA finalist for 2008. Olinyk supports a wide range of organizations including the Boy Scouts of

America, the Grand Rapids Volunteer Fire Department, Special Olympics and the YMCA. He is also a member of the Wisconsin Rapids Rotary, serves on the board for both the Wisconsin Rapids and Plover Area Boys and Girls Clubs and coaches youth hockey.



John Zimbrick of Zimbrick Inc., Madison received a special award from the Dealers Election Action Committee (DEAC) of NADA, in recognition of his 25 years of contributions to DEAC at the President's Club level. We salute you John for this terrific involvement. You have made a difference.

Appleton relocated from its Mall Drive location to a larger site at 2445 W. College Avenue. The new site is a more convenient location for customers and service.

**Fagan Chevrolet Cadillac and Rock County Buick Pontiac GMC**, both of Janesville, announced a deal that will make Fagan exclusive seller of General Motors' products in Janesville and leave Rock County to focus solely on the sales of Honda cars and trucks.

The Fagan dealership will be renamed, retaining the family name that has been in the car business since 1945. This accomplishes the GM goal of consolidating their brands at one dealership.

"We're going to grow our Honda business and add inventory, said Dick Stockwell, president of the family dealership, now Rock County Honda, that traces its roots in Janesville to 1939. "My growth has been and will continue to be with Honda."

**Zimbrick's Saturn of Madison** dealership will be remodeled and converted into a MINI franchise and is expected to open in May. Zimbrick European also expanded its dealership by adding the Mercedes-Benz Sprinter vehicles, and is the only Sprinter dealer in Wisconsin.

**Wisconsin made  
our 2009 DEAC  
goal!**

**Thanks to all  
who helped  
make it possible!**

# Dealer POINT

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## 2010 WATDA OFFICERS

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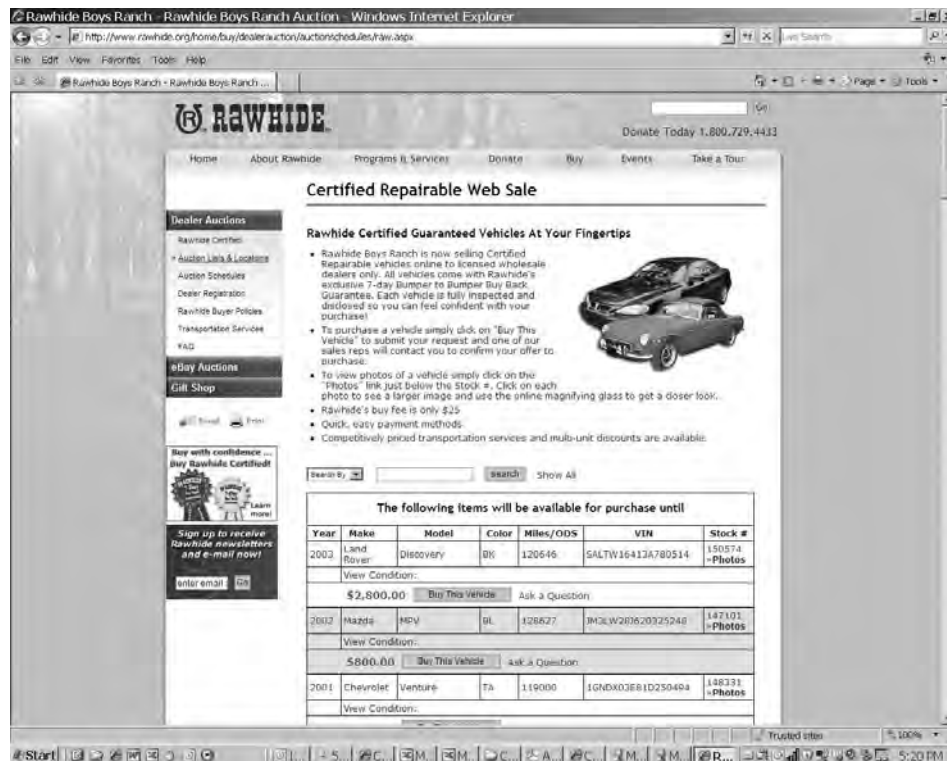
## Rawhide Boys Ranch leverages the Web to help buyers save time and money

BY TIM COSTELLO

In September of 2009 Rawhide launched its web sale tool for wholesale automobile buyers. We are now offering selected “Certified Repairable” vehicles, which are cars that are in need of some repair. With the current shortage of used cars, this is a good alternative for dealers who have repair shops to buy cars at very affordable prices.

These cars are all being offered with a seven-day bumper to bumper buy back guarantee to buying dealers. Rawhide completes a full inspection, disclosing any issues related to the condition of the vehicle so buyers know exactly what they are buying. If buyers find something not disclosed that is \$200 or greater we will either buy the car back or offer some kind of discount on their next purchase. Most dealers have a hard time believing that we do this. The bottom-line is that we want the buyers to be happy with their purchase.

We have talked with hundreds of



Wisconsin dealers over the last few years and one of their top expenses is unplanned or undisclosed repairs averaging \$2500 to \$5000 per year or more.

Pat Heibbits, owner of Advantage

Auto in Eau Claire said having the web sale on-line would save drive time to the auction site, which is around one and a half hours. Now, he can quickly look at the list and have everything

done in around 20 minutes. He is very happy with the vehicles he has purchased so far and thinks the web site will be a huge plus to his business.

Buyers can look at the vehicles on line, then call Rawhide Sales staff on any of the items they are interested in. The web sale is available 24 hours per day, 7 days a week. Rawhide's buyer fees at \$25 per car will also provide savings in addition to very competitive hauling rates. Rawhide buyers, can search by year, make, model. We also provide the full VIN along with the condition view and photos (which have a zoom feature).

If buyers find a car or cars they are interested in they simply click on “Buy This Vehicle” and an online form appears that the buyer completes and sends to our sales staff, who will then return your inquiry right away.

You can view the list on line at [www.rawhide.org/cars](http://www.rawhide.org/cars) or email us at [sales@rawhide.org](mailto:sales@rawhide.org) and we will be happy to send you the link via email and walk you through the process.

## The Grainger Foundation supports local educational program

BY GARY BEIER

The Grainger Foundation, Lake Forest, Illinois, has donated \$10,000 to The Foundation of the Wisconsin Automobile and Truck Dealers Association in support of its educational programs.

“This grant will be used to support the ongoing educational programs and services the Foundation of the WATDA provides to certified Automotive Youth Education Systems schools throughout southern, north-eastern and central Wisconsin,” said Raymon Pedersen, executive director of The Foundation of WATDA. “We have been in the business of supporting

technical education that builds lifelong careers for deserving students. We're grateful to The Grainger Foundation for its support, especially at a time like this.”

Pedersen said these programs currently serve some 1,600 high school students through 12 AYES satellite high school programs. The educational services to schools include securing training equipment donations through vehicle manufacturers, advanced technical curriculum, and on-site assistance to individual schools during their industry certification process. The result is greater opportunity for AYES graduates to continue their technical education and build lifelong careers in

the transportation industry.

This donation was recommended by James Leurquin, branch manager of W.W. Grainger, Inc.'s North Milwaukee location. Grainger has been a part of the Milwaukee business community for more than 50 years as the leading broad line supplier of facilities maintenance, repair, and operating (MRO) products.

“We are proud to recommend the programs offered by The Foundation of the Wisconsin Automobile and Truck Dealers Association,” said Leurquin. “We understand the need for skilled workers including the students involved in classes at schools supported by the Foundation of the WATDA.”

The Foundation of the WATDA was one of the first of its kind in the nation. Its Automotive Youth Education Systems school programs consistently rank in the top 10 with respect to successful student internships and long-term employment opportunities.

For further information contact: Gary Beier, The Foundation of WATDA, [gbeier@watda.org](mailto:gbeier@watda.org), or Kelsey O'Kane, [kelsey.o'Kane@Grainger.com](mailto:kelsey.o'Kane@Grainger.com).

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# A thoroughbred photographer and Packer fan

## Meet Robert Preston, Manager of Information Technology

BY GARY BEIER

On reviewing Bob's biography, it becomes clear that he has brought depth in personal and professional experience to WATDA's IT department.

A Chicago native, Preston attended the University of Illinois with a Ph-yed Major. The opportunity to work with computers soon drew him into a programming career that took him from positions with Sherwin Williams and Florsheim Shoes in Chicago to a trans-former manufacturer in Monroe and then 27 years at Madison-Kipp.

So, what was the transition from manufacturing to the service sector like?

"When I first started at WATDA, I



had a difficult time mentally with the switch," Preston said. "Everywhere I

worked my employers 'made' things – shoes, castings, and light fixtures. But, I quickly realized that what we really do is provide important information that helps dealers stay informed and educated. We are truly the dealers' answer place."

Outside of the office, Preston has a strong interest in climbing, hiking, canoeing, and biking among other sports. He once had thoughts of becoming a coach, until the technology revolution caught his interest. Despite his Chicago roots, Preston is a big fan of the Green and Gold, due to his dad's northern Wisconsin heritage. However, there is a balancing factor with Preston's loyalty to his hometown White Sox and Bulls.

Preston's other pastime is photography – and in grand fashion! His

outstanding work in thoroughbred horse racing has landed on the pages of national magazines and web sites, including well-known equestrian events like the Breeders' Cup. In addition, Preston has amassed a large collection of thoroughbred racing memorabilia. It dates all the way back to his Chicago days. He recently sold 200 of his photographs, netting a handsome profit.

"I can still remember my mother asking me why I was saving all that junk," he said.

Bob has four children – son Jeremy and daughters Kathleen, Ellen and Kelly. One of his favorite free time activities is attending Kelly's basketball games. He is quite proud of her achievements both locally and nationally.

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## From Main Street to Washington—A moment with Russ Darrow, chairman of AIADA

BY GARY BEIER

“It’s a great day.” Those are the first words you’ll hear when calling or visiting the Russ Darrow Automotive Group headquarters in Menomonee Falls.

After spending a recent afternoon with Russ Darrow, chairman and CEO, it’s clear that this greeting is true reflection on the spirit of the man who built an automotive empire from a single, personal experience. It started on Main Street and now it extends all the way to Washington.

This Milwaukee native knew early in life that following his dad’s footsteps in a successful law practice was not for him. The love of cars was in young Mr. Darrow’s blood.

The auto retail marketing ‘bug’ hit Darrow during his second year of college at UW Madison. The challenge he had trying to trade his old Austin Healey in on a new Ford Falcon led him to believe that he could improve the customer’s experience at the dealership. Darrow got a shot at doing so when he landed his first job on the sales staff of Heiser Ford.

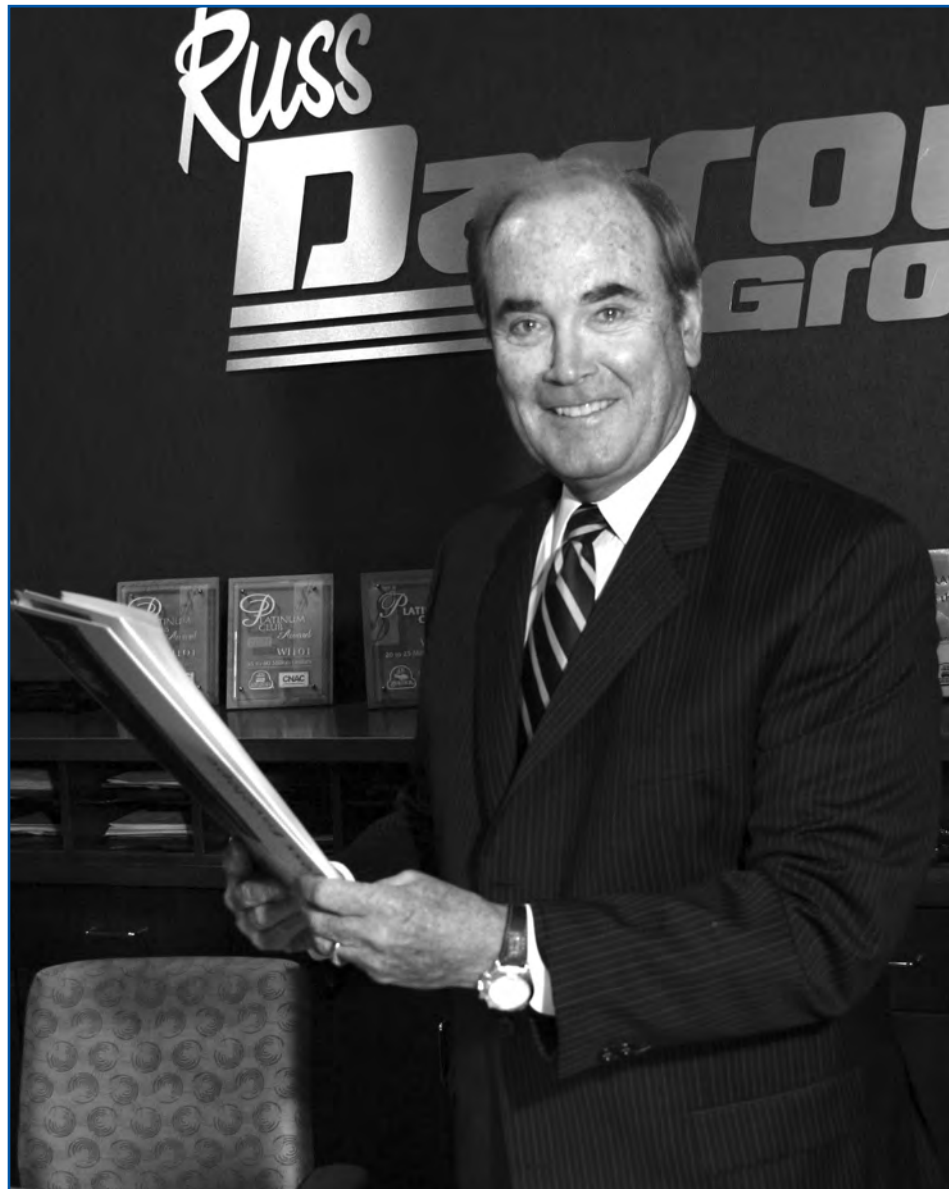
Five years later, he got wind of a pending Chrysler/Jeep franchise sale in West Bend. His offer to purchase was accepted and Darrow became the youngest dealer in the 1965 Chrysler franchise system. He was on his way to building the Russ Darrow Group – now owner of 15 automobile dealerships, 23 franchises and a nationwide fleet department.

Additionally Darrow owns a finance company and a leasing company. Collectively, the Darrow Group sold 13,000 vehicles in 2008. He has made it a “great day” for plenty of customers and employees in and around Wisconsin.

This “great day” attitude extends well beyond his car stores into the community and the association side of our industry as well. He currently serves on six industry and non-profit boards with past experience on more than 20 others. His service took on international dimensions when Darrow was appointed chairman of the American International Automobile Dealers Association in 2009.

The AIADA began some 40 years ago to assist Volkswagen dealers to support continuation of free trade in North America. Today, free trade is still the major thrust of this association, but in Darrow’s view, there is quite a bit more to AIADA.

He defines it as, in his words, “a nimble” organization that has the ability to form non-traditional partnerships with business and industry leaders from throughout the world.” The AIADA web site states “The international automobile industry has been a source for growth in the U.S. for over 50 years, and we are a large reason why.”



Russ Darrow at Darrow Group Headquarters in Menomonee Falls, Wis.

Darrow takes great pride in the beneficial relationships the AIADA has been able to develop between manufacturers, dealers and governments. This extends the collective voice of North America’s international dealer base, a good number of who are members of WATDA.

What about being AIADA chairman? “Chairman is not a job, it’s an honor,” Darrow said. He defines part of this honor as the ability to become even more connected to dealers across the country and here at home. In his view, the recent issues that have plagued the domestic market, such as the bankruptcy filings, franchise revocations and general misinformation have bolstered public confidence in international brands. In his weekly column on the AIADA website, Darrow said, “Legislators, many of whom are unfamiliar with our industry, need to hear our voices. They need to know

lars in real estate and facilities, and paying local, state, and federal taxes. We dealers need to be active in the political process in 2010, or we could see the gains we made in 2009 chipped away.”

When asked to share his views on how the industry has changed since 2000, Darrow said he views the foundations of our industry – marketing and manufacturing – as if it is a base of shifting sand. On the outside, the Internet has effected drastic changes in the way customers shop for vehicles. Dealer incentives have given way to manufacturer discounts that are changing every week, sometimes even quicker. Old business and marketing methods are a thing of the past.

On the inside, the manufacturers have stepped up their financial pressure on the dealer base through more frequent audits and rules that change almost daily. Add government interven-

keep our love affair with the automobile going,” Darrow said. He’s a living example of this and he sees that “great day” on the automotive horizon with the evolution of dealer websites video car shopping and high-speed communications with manufacturers. All of these building a more efficient service platform for the consumer.

There will be more changes in the traditional media outlets like TV and print that have been the cornerstones of dealers’ marketing mix for many decades. He feels that social networking is headed toward becoming a new media source for dealers and consumers. The Darrow Group is actively connected with You Tube, Facebook, My Space, and Twitter and the company constantly updates its corporate website as these networking sources evolve.

A future downside, according to Darrow, is the mixed signals that continue to come from manufacturers about alternative fuel technologies. The electric car has stolen the spotlight from other viable options like hydrogen and the currently popular hybrid mix. What the general public doesn’t realize is that electric power requires construction of a new distribution, “grid system” as Darrow calls it, to facilitate ease of recharging the car. It’s not a simple issue of plugging into the standard wall outlet and its going take a long time to develop before the electric car can become the vehicle of our future.

Where will it all go from here? Well, the “great day” attitude of industry leaders like Russ Darrow, Jr. might give us a clue. His current Darrow off-the-cuff commentary started with this observation.

“Final sales numbers from 2009 are in, and the news is surprisingly upbeat. For all the challenges dealers faced over the past year – bankruptcies, credit freezes, dealership closings – sales ended the year on a high note. Overall vehicles sales, including domestic brands and unadjusted for business days, were up just over 15 percent from December 2008, although they were down 21.2 percent for the year. As a group, international brands fared better. They were down just 16.2 percent for the year and up a whopping 23.4 percent from December 2008. It appears that the healing has begun.”

He also shared some advice from his own experiences.

“This is the most exciting business, because there’s no

limit to what you can earn and achieve. You are your own best resource for success,” he said. “I have watched the evolution of sports figures and how they appeal to the masses. It is much easier to be successful with personal determination.”

Darrow sums up his approach to building the trust and motivation of the Darrow team as a personal responsibility: “If it’s meant to be, it’s up to me. You can make it if you try.”

**“This is the most exciting business, because there’s no limit to what you can earn and achieve. You are your own best resource for success,” he said. “I have watched the evolution of sports figures and how they appeal to the masses. It is much easier to be successful with personal determination.”**

that more than half of the international nameplate vehicles sold here are built here. They need to know that international nameplate manufacturing facilities represent a more than \$39.3 billion investment in the U.S. economy. To bring it a little closer to home, AIADA’s 10,000 franchised dealer members provide jobs for more than 500,000 Americans across the country, with the average dealership employing 50 individuals, investing millions of dol-

tion during the bailout, which in his view, violated some of the most basic constitutional rights of individual dealers by stripping them of their right to free enterprise under cover of bankruptcy law and you have a pretty challenging business environment. He wondered whether the domestic side of our industry would ever be as vibrant as it once was.

Where is this industry headed in the next 10 years? “It is important to

# Rawhide student puts feelings into written works

## 16-year-old’s poem chosen for publication

BY RACHEL RAUSCH  
POST-CRESCENT WEST

NEW LONDON – When 16-year-old Raul Hernandez gets upset, he writes his feelings down on paper.

But, that wasn’t always his first response.

Hernandez, a resident at Rawhide Boys Ranch who recently earned the privilege of attending classes at New London High School, has learned to use poetry as an outlet to work through his problems.

Over the past year, he’s written a dozen poems that deal with anger, perseverance and following one’s dreams.

His teachers at Rawhide encouraged him to enter his poem “Anger” into a writing contest. It was selected to be published in the 2009 Great Lakes spring edition of Creative Communications, a company that publishes young writers’ works in anthologies.

“I write poems to release my thoughts and feelings in a positive way that people can relate to,” Hernandez said. “Everything comes from my experiences with gangs, drugs, crimes and fighting. In life you learn from your own mistakes. If I could go back and learn from others’ mistakes I’d choose that, but I went through things and now I can share my mistakes with others and try to help them.”

On Dec. 7, Hernandez read four of his poems in front of an audience that included friends and staff from Rawhide at Harmony Café in Appleton. Prior to speaking, he met with Ellen Kort, former State Poet Laureate.

“She gave me advice on how to make my poems better,” Hernandez said. “She said they were amazing. That felt good hearing that from her.”

Kort enjoyed meeting with Hernandez and hearing his story. The two even exchanged contact information so they can stay in touch.

“I was very impressed with his writing,” Kort said. “Some of it is very deep.”

Kort noted that poetry often serves as a healing device and believes Hernandez is “going to go places.”

“He’s on fire now,” she said. “I think poetry will make a major difference in his life. I’d love to mentor him in any way I can.”

Hernandez not only shares his story through his poetry, he’s also branched out as a motivational speaker. With help from New London High School teacher Lori Menning, he’s spoken to groups of students in New London and Waupaca.

“He really gears his talks to his audience,” Menning said. “His influence has been powerful here and we’re proud of his efforts.”

Hernandez, who hopes to become a counselor and publish his own book of poetry, also takes pride in his accomplishments.

“My mom is from Mexico and she came here to give her kids a better life,” he said. “When my poem got published I showed it to her and she was so proud. I want her to know that I’m doing something.

“All you need to do is to learn from your mistakes and have self respect. If you can do those two things you’re set.”

The following are two of Raul Hernandez’ poems:

### ANGER

Anger, it makes you mad.  
Indeed it has something to do with sad,  
Got me a mom, but not a dad,  
In this life, I just want to be glad.  
Anger,  
But then I get madder and madder  
To the extent that nothing matters,  
Wanting to make so many things shatter,  
Anger,  
You then get hot,  
And think something about yourself,

That you are not,  
Flashbacks kick in,  
About the fights that I fought,  
Killing me from the inside,  
It’s making me rot,  
Anger,  
It’s so hard,  
But the whole thing,  
I got to let drop,  
“Anger, it does make you mad.”

### A WASTE

Hope faith and love  
Is not what I want  
But what I crave and need  
Like Malcolm X says  
By any means  
& Martin Luther King says  
I had a dream  
So open the bible to Exodus  
And in ways it does say follow your dreams  
A waste  
We are all something  
But none of us are everything  
No one is close to perfect  
But in life we can try new things  
And indeed take a swing

A waste  
You see at times I feel like flying away  
So far  
Like I would be in outer space  
But that can’t happen  
Just like a beat with no base  
In the mirror what you see is your face  
So follow your dreams  
And don’t let your life be a waste

### REMEMBER YOUR NAME

From problems,  
Running away,  
This is a poem,  
That releases some pain,  
While inside,  
It drives me insane,  
I want to drop tears,  
So much like the rain,  
It is not fear,  
But a lot of pride that I gained,  
This life is for real,  
Not at all like a game,  
If I gave you a feel,  
It would bring back some shame,  
Thinking I was tight,  
Like a chain,  
So don’t forget who you are,  
And Remember your name.



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WISCO | John Hackman

WISCO SHOW

During tough times in our industry auto and truck dealers look for ways to save money on their purchases and operations and to generate more revenue. WISCO exists to do just that for its members. Now more than ever WISCO members should be looking to WISCO for help in these areas. One of our biggest challenges in saving our membership money on their purchases is educating them on all of our products and programs. The annual show is an excellent way to do just that. The 39<sup>th</sup> annual WISCO Show will



be held on Saturday, March 13, at the Kalahari Resort and Waterpark in Wisconsin Dells. Attendees will see our vendors’ product offerings, new products, and will be able to take advantage of money saving specials. Many of our suppliers, including our major equipment manufacturers, have developed “WISCO Show Specials” on their products. Often these specials yield the year’s best pricing available on these products. There will be 100 vendor booths to browse at the WISCO Show, which runs 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturday. Door prizes will be given out throughout the day. Saturday night will start with a cocktail reception followed by a dinner

and dance. Boogie and The Yo-Yo’z will provide entertainment, combining high-energy entertainment and superior musicianship. The WISCO Show is, and always has been, free for our members. The only expense for attendees is the cost of their room if they stay overnight. The show weekend is a good blend of business and fun for our members and their spouses, especially at such an excellent venue as the Kalahari. We hope to see you along with your managers at this year’s show. WISCO has reserved a block of rooms at the Kalahari with a special group show rate of \$139 for a standard room (called hut) and \$169 for a suite

type room (called lodge suite). Either room includes up to four waterpark passes for each occupant. To reserve a room, call 877-525-2427 and refer to the WISCO Show block of rooms to receive the special group price. Another option for anyone looking for a less expensive room option is the Ramada located one-half mile from the convention center. WISCO also has a block of rooms there for \$62. To reserve a room at the Ramada, call 800-845-2251 and refer to the Wisco Show block of rooms for the special rate. You can save your dealership money and have an enjoyable weekend with your fellow WISCO members.

2009 Recipients of the Foundation of WATDA Dealer Community Challenge Grants			
	Dealer/Donor	Pledge Amount	Charity
1.	Michael Montello Bernards Northtown New Richmond	\$2,000	The Friends of the St. Croix County Fairplex St. Croix County Fairgrounds is raising funds to renovate existing fairgrounds to ensure adequate facilities for current and future generations
2.	Don & Cheryl Brenengen Brenengen Chevrolet Inc West Salem	\$1,500	Boys and Girls Club of the West Salem Area This newly developed Boys & Girls Club opened its doors in July 2006. It currently serves 645 members – youth ages 7-18 years. It provides a safe and positive place for young people to be able to learn and grow. Tutoring, computer labs, field trips, play ground area and “smart-girls” programs are just a few of the clubs offerings.
3.	Frank Hallada Hallada Motors Inc Dodgeville	\$500	Upland Hills Health Foundation Inc. For the purchase a new dialysis machine. Wayne Garthwaite, a 21-year employee at Hallada is currently receiving dialysis at this facility.
4.	Thomas Horter Horter Chevrolet Pontiac Inc Mukwonago	\$500	Mukwonago Food Pantry Local food pantry
5.	Joshua Johnson Don Johnson Motors Rice Lake	\$500	Boys & Girls Clubs of Barron County The mission of the Boys & Girls Clubs is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible people.
6.	Tim Neuville Neuville Motors, Inc. Waupaca	\$500	RMC Health Foundation Purchasing tele-monitoring equipment.
7.	Mark Olinyk Mark Toyota Plover	\$1,000	Boys and Girls Club of Wisconsin Rapids Area To help with the gym/recreation building project
8.	Glenn Pentler Uptown Motors Inc Milwaukee	\$1,000	St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care The St. Ann Center for Intergenerational Care provides community based health and educational services for frail adults and children, and serves as a support network for caregivers. The center meets the social, spiritual and psychological needs of all who participate, regardless of ability to pay, faith or culture.
9.	Teresa Van Horn Joe Van Horn Chevrolet Plymouth	\$5,000	Above & Beyond Children’s Museum A museum geared towards children with interactive fun exhibits to promote active play and learning

The Community Challenge Grant program is offered through the Foundation of WATDA. Dealers complete an application for the grant confirming status as a qualified Wisconsin organization, as well as document their contribution to the organization. The Foundation has contributed \$175,500 to 116 organizations since 1994. The program is a testimony to the ongoing generosity of Wisconsin dealers. Thanks to all of our participants over the years, and congratulations to our 2009 recipients.



# Follow WATDA on Twitter

Need another reason to sign onto Twitter? WATDA is there! WATDA tweets notices when we've sent information to dealers as well as links to articles that might be of interest. To find us, search for WIAuto.

## HOW TO GET THERE

First, go to Twitter.com and create an account. It is free but you have to do it yourself – WATDA cannot sign you up. After you've created an account start following the Twitter accounts you find most interesting. If you want people to be able to find and follow you, you have to post five or six times but if you're not interested in accumulating followers there's no need to post.

There are some Wisconsin dealer-

ships that are doing a great job of using Twitter as a marketing tool. Manufacturers have also gotten the Twitter bug and you can get quality breaking information from Ford, Chrysler and Toyota via their feeds.

Twitter is easy to use. You can set your Twitter account to send text messages to your cell phone (check your phone plan to determine whether charges apply) so you don't even need to sign on to Twitter in order to know what's going on.

WATDA would also like to follow member dealers' Tweets. If you are tweeting please send a message to WIAuto (at Twitter) or suemiller@watda.org (email).

# If you only receive WATDA Bulletins by mail, you are missing a lot

For the past few years WATDA has offered its members access to additional information via email. The WATDA Bulletins cover subjects that have substantial statewide impact. The WATDA Update, an email-only service gives you the rest of the stories. In addition to sending Bulletins electronically, we use the WATDA Update to inform dealers about current scams, republish articles from NADA as well as state and federal agencies and inform you of interesting happenings. Updates are published when we have something to say rather

than on a scheduled basis.


Many dealers sign-up their management teams for the WATDA Update. To sign up your team simply email Karen Swenson at kswenson@watda.org. Please provide the employee's name, title and email address. (Email addresses must be unique. For example sales@dealership.com can only be assigned to one individual.) If you have any questions about the WATDA Update please feel free to contact Sue Miller at WATDA.

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## Reg-Trak and WATDA: Celebrating 20 years and counting

BY CHRYSTE MADSEN

Monica Winkler, marketing manager for Zimbrick Automotive, begins her month by opening her specialized Reg-Trak reports, analyzing the data she needs and then distributing appropriate data to specific Zimbrick general managers.

Using Reg-Trak's data, used car managers can determine which makes are selling and which models are hot. "Whatever data you look at has to be actionable," Winkler said.

For example, when Mercedes acquired the Sprinter franchise from Dodge one of the first things Winkler did was to request a specialty report from Reg-Trak to find out what industries were already making use of the vehicle and would make good market targets.

Whether dealerships are the size of Zimbrick or a single point, franchised or independent, you will usually find a Reg-Trak report under the roof. A Reg-Trak report can do so much more than be a "weep sheet"!

- Do you need to know what to spend your money on at the auction?
- Do you need ammunition with the manufacturer to get more product?
- Do you need to know if your salespeople are letting potential customers walk?
- Do you need to know if your competitor is outselling you this month or is it becoming a trend?
- Is there a potential market share that you're missing because you didn't even know it might be viable?
- Does the money you just spent on advertising show direct increases in that market area for your dollars spent?

Reg-Trak can and should be a vital source of managing your dealership as you can learn much from past statistics so as not to repeat your mistakes.

Reg-Trak began as Automotive Directions in the early '90's by Dinos Constantine as part of a college thesis at the suggestion of a WATDA member.

Automotive Direction's initial vehicle sales report product was an expansion of a rudimentary WATDA report. WATDA was quick to see that Dinos' idea was a significant improvement and backed his efforts.

Scott Quimby and Matt Apps joined Automotive Directions in 1998 as project managers. The company quickly became a profitable venture for both Constantine and WATDA.

Constantine continued to develop

Automotive Directions beyond the vehicle reporting aspect including comprehensive market research studies and customer development. This ultimately led to the design and creation of a viable customer relationship management (CRM) product that worked directly with all dealership management systems.

ADP became interested in the CRM component around 2000 and developed an affiliation with the company and ultimately purchased Automotive Directions as their own CRM solution. By this time Apps had left the company and Quimby became the sole project manager for the reporting side of the company.



Scott Quimby

In 2000 the Federal law called the Driver Privacy Protection Act put a major wrench into what could be done with reports and the buyer information provided from the state DMV. Quimby was a key witness at a class action trial held in Florida regarding mishandling of data in that state and is very well versed as to how reports can and cannot be used .... knowledge that has proven very valuable to WATDA members to keep them in compliance with the law.

Eventually a settlement was reached in this case but ADP had grown skittish about marketing the Automotive Directions reports under the ADP umbrella. Quimby saw it as an opportunity and by 2005 he purchased ADP's vehicle reporting business, renaming it Reg-Trak.

Reg-Trak and WATDA continue to

have a close relationship. By doing business with Reg-Trak, members are funding some of WATDA's legal and legislative work. Like all of WATDA's endorsed providers Reg-Trak not only provides a valuable service to members, it also contributes time, money and resources to WATDA. Reg-Trak advances the automotive industry.

"Although our canned reports are extremely comprehensive and detailed, additional specialized reports can be created to fit whatever detail you need to see so that your business can be more successful," Quimby said.

Reg-Trak and WATDA are proud to be celebrating 20 years of partnership and endorsement this year. If you weren't aware of all that Reg-Trak can do for you, give Quimby a call at 920-478-2909.

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