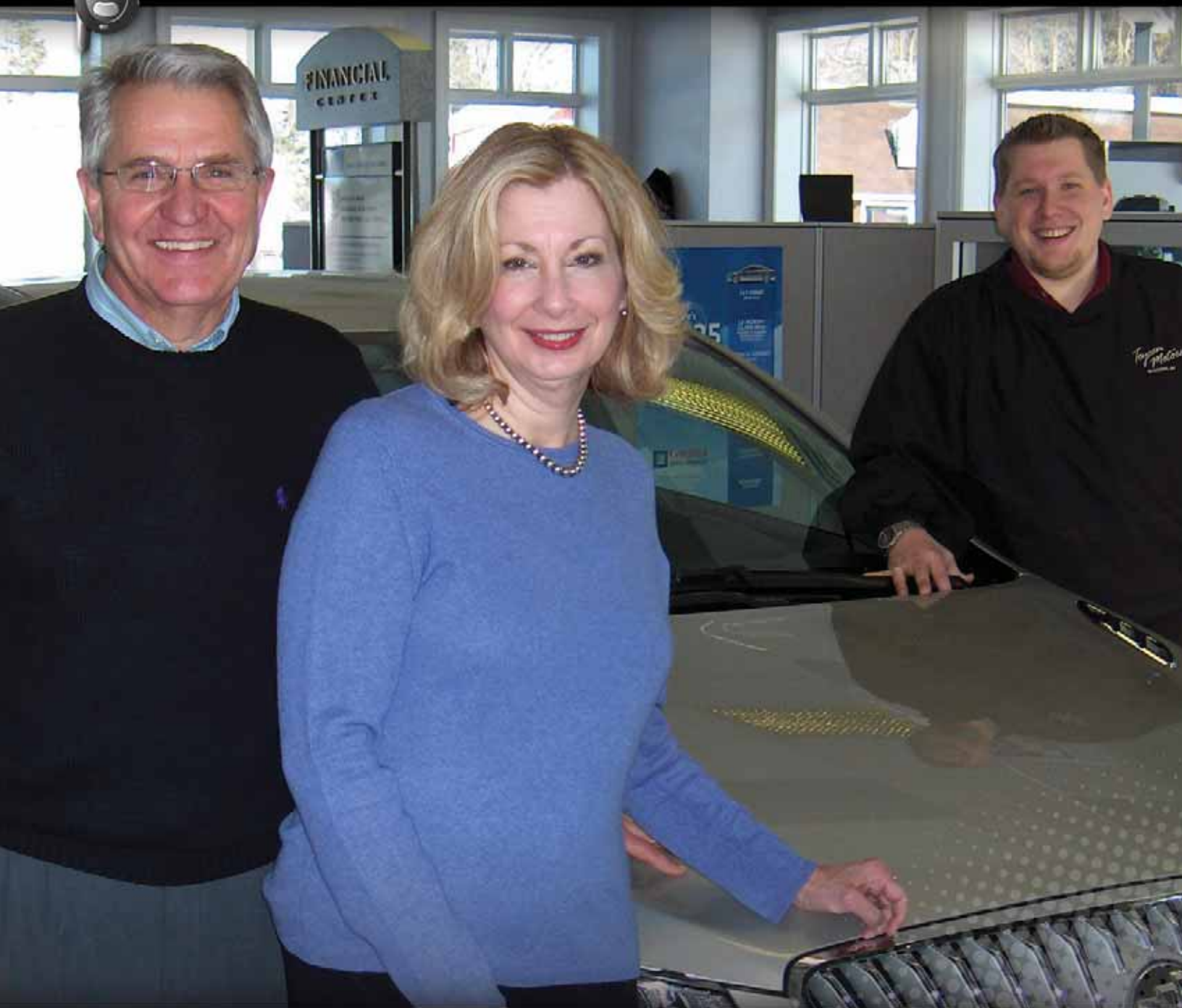




DEALERPOINT

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



INSIDE:

• WISCONSIN DEALER OF THE YEAR: DAN TOYCEN

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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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From the cover:
Left to right: Dan, Mary Lynn and Craig Toycen.

Toyce Named Wisconsin's 2010 Dealer of the Year

A person's life doesn't always take the path that was planned. Sometimes a person is asked to step into the breach when there is a family need. This was the case for Dan Toyce's father, LaVerne, who led the way into the auto business.

LaVerne was the only son on the small family farm in rural Sand Creek, Wisconsin. When his father became ill, LaVerne had to quit high school to work the farm. As the war years came and the other young men left for the service, LaVerne stayed home to run the farm as his part of the war effort. As a young man approaching the age of 20 and while running the farm, he also drove the local school bus twice daily and returned to high school, finally graduating. At the same time he began trading in used machinery, which eventually led him into the car business.

Like his father, Dan's life was interrupted by family need. The year after graduating from college Dan worked as a 4th grade teacher in the Appleton area. At that time the auto industry was at a low point, Toyce Motors along with it, and his father's partner wanted out. "My father convinced me to take a leave of absence from teaching to try the car business," Dan Toyce recalled, "It was the mid-70s and the economy was terrible. The business was in a very precarious financial condition. I decided to be a loyal son and stay until the business folded. Ten years of hard work later, we made it financially. In the process, I decided I liked the business."

And so the path has led to today and Dan Toyce as the 2010 Wisconsin Dealer of the Year and the 2011 *TIME* Magazine Quality Dealer nominee.

To look at Dan and at past recipients of this prestigious award it's evident that while each person has unique individual qualities, all have shared the mantra of hard work and great character. It is obvious that character and drive are very important to Dan Toyce and he has shown this by example all through his life.

Dan grew up on the family dairy farm. His family was very conservative. Until his teen years the only movie he had ever seen was Ben Hur. Dan fed calves before going to school and then stayed after school to practice sports. He was the starting pitcher on the baseball team, starting quarterback on the football team and star guard on the basketball team. It seems safe to say he certainly has shown a desire to succeed.

His parents were small town rural people but had a keen appreciation for education. Dan's mother was an RN who had studied in Chicago. His parents were respected leaders in their community.

At his father's funeral in 1997 at least 11 men came up to Dan and said that LaVerne was their best friend.

The elder Toyces raised their children to do good works out in the world: Dan's brother and one sister are seminary graduates, he being head of a large Canadian Christian relief organization and she being a PhD in psychology with an office practice. His other sister is a surgical nurse and a retired Colonel in the National Guard. Dan chuckles at himself as the underachiever.

He is far from that. Anyone who knows Dan knows that he throws himself into volunteer work committing both his time and ideas. He is not an idle board member. Dan makes community contacts, and leads fundraising efforts. He is most often the leader of the organizations he is involved with... and with good reason.

Dan has been very involved with WATDA through the years. Both he and his father served on the WATDA Board of Directors and Dan has been a member of the Subprime Task Force, the Membership/ Marketing Committee, Education Task Force, Executive Committee, Franchise Laws Task Force and is currently the Chairman of the Foundation of WATDA.

Here are just some of his civic accomplishments:

As President of the local Industrial Development Committee the group purchased 60 acres of prime development land that has since turned into a very successful industrial park. Dan was responsible for moving the very conservative board forward.

As Chair of the Friends of St. Joseph's Hospital Board, Dan was instrumental in quickly raising funds for a \$4 million emergency room expansion and renovation for the hospital.

As a member of the Bloomer Pool Committee, after four previous tries a \$2.2 million indoor aquatic/fitness center (with an endowment for operations) was just completed. Dan noted this was accomplished in spite of the poor economic climate.

Wisconsin
Dealer of the Year
Award winners have
shared the mantra of
hard work and great
character.

As a Board Member of the local Feed My People food bank serving food pantries in an eleven county area, a dilapidated warehouse was replaced in less than 15 months, and \$1.3 million was raised to refurbish and pay it off.

Most amazing, is that all of these civic projects took place in a six-year period.

Like his peers in this industry, he spends long hours at his dealerships. Toycen Motors in Bloomer carries the Buick, GMC lines while Bloomer Ford operates just down the road. In Ladysmith, the Toycen family operates Buick and Chevrolet franchises. Dan takes great pride in having his employees grow and excel. So many of his employees have been with him for their entire careers, a fact in which Dan takes much satisfaction.

What is the “source” of a person’s character? We’ve all heard the old question, Is it nurture, or is it nature? Could it be something as small as a comment? Such a comment was made to Dan when he was a young high school football player. After Dan had completed a required run, his coach used a stethoscope to listen to Dan’s heart in order to take his pulse. As Dan remembered it, the coach said, “You have the heart of a winner.” He paused, and then continued, “You are a winner, Toycen.” Dan has often mentioned to his wife how that moment has stuck with him. When times seem tough and his confidence flags, he remembers those impactful words.

The business success, as with his peers, has required much sacrifice both by Dan and his family due to long hours at the dealership. Yet Dan has always had time for his sons’ John, Michael and Craig’s events, even though he feels he should have been there more. His family has tried to assure him that there is great value in providing a solid income and a good example of hard work and dedication.

The family does relate one rather amusing story of Dan’s early years when the hours were especially long and times were tough. Dan was finally able to get away for a brief fall fishing

trip. He left before dawn on a Wednesday. It wasn’t until Friday evening dinner that his four year old son finally queried, “Where’s Dad?” It seems he hadn’t been missed for three days!

Dan’s son, Craig, had this to say about his father: “My Dad has always been a believer in doing the right thing because it’s the right thing to do. I really enjoy working with my Dad. The days he’s at another dealership aren’t as fun for me. I like working side-by-side with him. A lot of people working with their parents are looking to push their parents out the door. I’m really going to miss working with my Dad when he retires. It’s been the best part of the job for me. I truly consider my Dad my best friend.”

Dan credits his wife for his success. “My wife really is my partner, in my life, my businesses and my philanthropic endeavors. When I am faced with a major business decision or a tricky personnel matter, Mary Lynn is the first person I go to for advice. She has so much experience in so many areas and being a college math major (cum laude) she brings a different perspective from me. We often disagree but we always respect each other’s ideas. I never take on something without getting her support.”

“She has probably contributed more to various charities and boards than I have. She is recognized in our community as being a true leader. My wife has sacrificed a very successful career to be my partner and to be a fine mother to our children. This award is every bit as much hers as it is mine. I am pleased to share the recognition with her and I don’t know where life would have taken me without her support and partnership.”

Wisconsin will be well represented when the TMQDA candidates take the stage in San Francisco this year. It’s been a long journey but this year’s candidate, like so many before him, has followed a path of hard work and integrity. As Dan said, “It’s been a great ride.” ●

From left to right: WATDA President Bill Sepic, 2010 Board Chairman Dick Stockwell, Wisconsin Dealer of the Year Dan Toycen with his wife Mary Lynn, ADAMM President Jim Tolkán



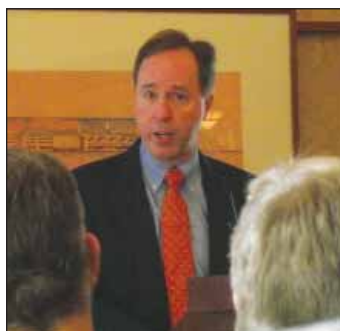
WATDA Winter Board Meeting

The December meeting of WATDA Board of Directors saw the election of new officers, an appearance by Governor-elect Scott Walker and the retirement of a good friend.

WATDA hosted their winter board of directors meeting at the Fluno Center, University of Wisconsin in Madison. Chairman Stockwell reported that in 2010 despite unprecedented industry events and a dismal economy, WATDA staff successfully carried out its core mission of pursuing an aggressive political agenda and representing all dealers' interests equally (including those who were unfairly terminated in manufacturer bankruptcy proceedings). The financial health of the Association was preserved and the decline of membership was kept to a minimum given circumstances beyond our control. There was a smooth transition of the WATDA Insurance Corporation to an agency wherein they still provide a much needed, valuable service to the membership and there is an offer on the WATDA real estate that hopefully will conclude in a sale in the first half of 2011.

The board approved the 2011 leadership for the association, with Frank Porth of Columbus/Crivitz as the new Chairman of the Board, Eric Jorgensen, Hartland – Chairman Elect and Jim Tessmer, Brookfield as Secretary-Treasurer. New board members include Jim Flood, Holiday Chrysler Dodge, Jeep, Fond du Lac; Jim Olson, Jim Olson Motors, Sturgeon Bay; and Paul Schlagenhauf, Badger Truck Center, Milwaukee.

Top left: Governor-elect Scott Walker addresses the WATDA board, thanking dealers for their support and summarizing his immediate legislative agenda. Top right: Representative Robin Vos (R-Racine) the new co-chair of the Joint Committee on Finance addresses the board outlining the financial problems facing the state. Bottom: Dealers were impressed with the breadth and depth of Representative Vos' remarks.



During the DMV report, Nancy Passehl announced her retirement. Nancy was a program supervisor in the Dealer Section, managing the customer service and agent partnership units for the last five and a half years. Nancy has been an invaluable help to Wisconsin motor vehicle dealers, providing prompt, courteous and professional service for over 30 years.

The new WATDA Insurance Agency was able to transition two-thirds of the members on the old WATDA health insurance. The agency receives an agent commission from the insurance company and helps the association financially. Any independent insurance need can be met by the new WATDA Insurance Agency. A look to our agency provides dealers with an expert that only works with dealerships.

The wind down of the insurance company is going as expected. Although the insurance company must remain open for another year and a half, no policies are in effect.

The board also approved changes to the WATDA bylaws. A copy of the proposed changes was mailed to all members in November and is available for review on the website. Additionally, final direction was provided on how to proceed with negotiations regarding the WATDA headquarters. When a final lease has been signed the membership will be notified. ●



WATDA INSURANCE AGENCY

WATDA is now functioning as a full-service employee benefits source.

WATDA Insurance Agency is fully equipped and ready to shop the market on your behalf. Let us do the work and find the answer for your employee benefits:

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Commissions the Association Insurance Agency receives help keep your WATDA Membership dues down.

Social Media the WATDA Way

BY SUSAN MILLER, CAE

There are many resources to help dealers navigate the minefields of Social Media from paid consultants to free online articles. There are also many philosophies as to the best way for a dealership to utilize Social Media as part of its brand management and marketing strategy. WATDA is not sufficiently expert to advise dealers in this area except to say,

- Your dealership is being mentioned in online conversations therefore it is a good idea to know what people are saying about you (see article in the summer *Dealer Point*) and
- You have greater control over your brand if you are actively involved in Social Media (see Baker Tilly article below)

WATDA also has a Social Media presence and is available as a resource to anyone who Tweets, Likes or Joins. Our various groups and handles are as follows:

- **Twitter:** @WIAuto (Use #WATDA for Wisconsin Dealer related subjects)
- **Facebook:** Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers Association Page
- **LinkedIn:** Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers Association Group



WATDA is also providing ways for you to expand your online presence. The new WATDA website (to be rolled-out sometime in the first quarter of 2011) will have a Social Media feed that includes the wall posts on our Facebook page as well as all of the tweets @WIAuto.



You can increase your dealership's Twitter feed exposure by participating in our Twitter feed. Simply mention @WIAuto in a tweet and we'll follow you. If you include the hashtag #WATDA you can also increase your exposure in subject searches. (Note: We'll follow automotive-related tweets. We won't follow Twitterers who tweet primarily about non-dealership or non-automotive subjects.)



Finally, we've tried to keep our various online presences dedicated to conversations about ideas, issues and interesting automotive-related subjects. Posts that sell products or services are deleted from the Facebook page and LinkedIn group. (Sell all you like on Twitter.) ●

Social media sites... How well are you working them?

Does your dealership have an account on at least one of the popular social media sites-Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn? Is your business using its account(s) effectively to boost its online presence, cultivate relationships and, ultimately bring in customers? Whether your dealership is already active in social media or still on the sidelines, there are compelling reasons to test this viable marketing tool.

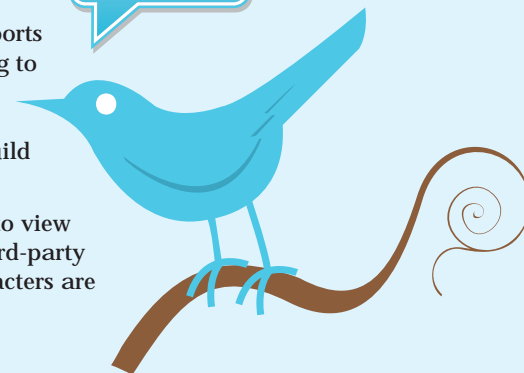
Tweeting on Twitter

If you think that this popular instant messaging system – which reports 65 million “tweets” (or message daily) – is for kids, you're mistaken. According to digital marketing intelligence company comScore, only 11% of Twitter users are ages 12-17. So Twitter can help dealerships reach plenty of grown-up car buyers. And, like the other sites mentioned here, Twitter is a great way to build exposure and identify people who are in the market for a new car.

Twitter users keep current with their “followers” (other users they've allowed to view their tweets) through cell phone text messaging, the Twitter site or a third-party Twitter application. Brevity counts with Twitter – only tweets up to 140 characters are allowed. But that hasn't discouraged some auto dealers. ●

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An Impressive Crop of New Legislators

BY MARY ANN GERRARD

January 3 began a new Republican era at the State Capitol, one friendly to business and ready to make Governor Walker's campaign slogans "help is on the way," and "Wisconsin is open for business" a reality. The State Senate, State Assembly and the Governor's office are all controlled by Republicans and this new talent coming to Madison is unlike any group of freshmen WATDA has ever encountered.

I joined the other members of the Conference of Retail Associations (CORA) in a statewide tour late November and December to meet the new legislators in their home districts. CORA is made up of the "main street" business groups, the Restaurant Association, the Grocers Association, the Convenience Stores, and Auto & Truck Dealers, etc. All told we met 35 of the 38 new legislators and many auto dealers hosted us in their dealerships for these "ice breaking" meetings. It's always fun to show off our dealers and their beautiful stores. Ken Vance, Bob Le Mieux, Norm Mueller, Ron Boldt, Pete Dorsch, Frank Hallada, Roger Palmen and Beth Mueller all hosted our meet-and-greets.

The new Republican members of the Assembly, 25 in total, are the most impressive group any of us in CORA have ever encountered. They, to a person, are coming to Madison to make a difference, to fix a broken system. These legislators are doctors, veterinarians, real estate brokers, electrical contractors, professional musicians, accountants and business owners –

people who do not need this legislative job but are doing it as a public service. "Tough votes will be required of us," each one said. "We need to change Madison," was heard at almost every visit.

Conservative, determined, single-minded, intelligent, realistic, motivated and concerned are adjectives I would use to describe every one of the new crowd at the Capitol: Representatives and Senators alike. Every one of them saw a Wisconsin they believed

was headed in the wrong direction and got involved because they felt a responsibility to find solutions.

"The strength in their numbers of 25 will give them a power almost no freshmen ever have," said Jennifer Badeau, lobbyist for CORA members the Petroleum Marketers and Convenience Store Association.

"Warren Petryk our new legislator isn't like any politician I have known. He brings a freshness, commitment and energy that is unique," said Ken Vance of the new

Republican member of the Assembly from the 93rd Assembly District in Eau Claire.

They do not come to Madison starry eyed or naive, they come understanding that the work of solving Wisconsin's problems and righting the ship of State will be a monumental task. But if ever any group could tackle Wisconsin's problems I believe the voters have elected the right people who will give all they've got. ●



State Rep.-elect Michelle Litjens to take a community-first mentality to Madison. Photo courtesy: Oshkosh Northwestern.

Thank you to the following dealers who contributed to the WATDA political funds, the NADA fund (DEAC), individual fundraisers or reported their direct political contributions to candidates. No matter if you contributed to our funds, NADA funds or directly to candidates, the combined efforts of the dealers give us political clout as an industry.

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Barb Anderson
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Ron Boldt
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WISCO, the Dealer's Partner

WISCO Show

In our industry today auto and truck dealers look for ways to save money on their purchases and operations to help generate more profit in their dealership. 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 the products and programs we have available. The annual show is an excellent way to do just that. The 40th annual WISCO Show will be held on Saturday March 12, 2011 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 anywhere on these products. This should be of particular interest for items seen at the NADA Show in San Francisco. Look to your Co-op to save money on these items.

There will be 100 vendor booths to browse at the WISCO Show which runs 9:00-5:00 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. We are very excited to have back Boogie and The Yo-Yo's as our entertainment. The combination of their hi-energy entertainment and superior musicianship will certainly be remembered by this year's show attendees. 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. Plan now to attend. 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 waterpark passes for each occupant up to 4 maximum. Phone number for reservations is 877-525-2427. Refer to the WISCO Show block of rooms to receive the special group price. You can save your dealership money and have an enjoyable week-end with your fellow WISCO members. ●



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CenterStage

AWARDS, HONORS, MILESTONES

JD Byrider recently recognized three Wisconsin locations; Appleton, Madison and Milwaukee, as President's Award winners, given to individual locations based on store earnings, portfolio quality and customer service rankings. Mike and Russ Darrow, Jr. own the stores.

LaCrosse Truck Center Ford/Sterling Division is pleased to announce that ASE and Daimler Trucks of North America have named Steve Mitchell the 2010 Sterling/Western Star/ASE master medium/heavy truck technician of the year.

Hallada Auto Group received the most votes in a reader poll of *The Dodgeville Chronicle* as the Best Car Dealership. They were also named the second best place for an oil change.

Wisconsin Auto & Truck Dealers Association received a Silver Award from United Way of Dane County for campaigns with gifts averaging \$100-\$149 or more per employee.

Right: The 13th annual community food drive was recently held at Heritage Chevrolet, Tomahawk. It is a major event for the benefit of the two area food pantries. In addition to the groceries, over \$1000 in cash was also collected.

Charles Dearth Buick GMC Truck in Monroe has been named the recipient of the Buick Mark of Excellence award. The award is an accomplishment reserved for outstanding Buick dealerships and is a symbol of individual performance for sales and customers satisfaction excellence.

Neuville Motors, Waupaca was the only dealership of 19 in its district to achieve the Mark of Excellence award from the Chevrolet Division of General Motors, and one of two dealers in its district to receive the Mark of Excellence from Buick and GMC Division of GM. ●



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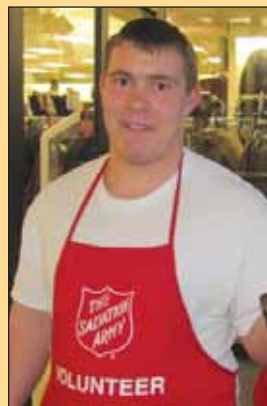
Rawhide Profile

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

Student of the Month: James

The Book of Life

My name is James and I am 17 years old. I'm from Oneida County and have been at Rawhide for 23 months. My favorite hobbies include playing sports, working out, drawing, and working on cars. The subjects I enjoy most in school are English and Science.



I currently spend much of my time preparing for high school graduation in December 2010 and my future after leaving Rawhide. My plan is to attend college/technical school in January 2011 to pursue a career as an automotive technician. I would like to own an automotive shop as well.

While at Rawhide, I have participated in several programs such as: About Face, Standard Residential, CATCH Plus and the Cornerstone group home. In all of my programs I've enjoyed the family atmosphere and support of staff. I especially appreciate my houseparents, the Dedmon's and the Solberg's, and my CATCH family the Newell's. Mrs. Newell was a good cook!

My success at Rawhide has been due to the staff not giving up on me, but instead urging me to think about my actions and help me understand I needed to change. Because of this I have learned not to shun relationships and discipline, but understand and accept that because people love me through discipline.

The biggest challenge facing me when I leave Rawhide is to stay away from drugs and not give up when times are difficult. Hopefully, I will be able to apply what I have been taught and relate it to my life outside Rawhide. Rawhide was the beginning to a new chapter in my life!

~ James

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



From Around the State

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



Les Mack Ford opened July 27th for business. The former Lancaster Ford Mercury has been purchased by Les, Richard and Steve Mack. With the past downsizing of the domestic automobile dealerships Les Mack stated that "We wanted to make sure that customers from Lancaster and the surrounding communities of Grant County have an option to purchase and get factory service on Ford as well as GM and Chrysler vehicles in Lancaster now and in the future. With the quality, the lineup of products and the financial strength of Ford Motor Company it seemed like a great fit. For over a year we looked at all of our options, which were many; but required investing in other markets outside of Lancaster. Investing in the Lancaster market where we have been for over 37 years made sense."

Les Mack Chevrolet Buick Inc. was established in 1973 and remains a family owned and operated business.

Lakeside International is expanding with a seventh location in Rockford, IL. Lakeside's current locations include Milwaukee, Racine, West Bend, Janesville, Random Lake and Monroe. Founded in 1984, Lakeside International Trucks celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2009.

JX Enterprises announced that the Peterbilt Wisconsin & Illinois brand will be changing to JX Peterbilt. This brand change, effective immediately reflects the recent purchase of a dealership in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

According to Eric Jorgensen, President and CEO "This change will allow us to grow as an organization without geographic limitations, allowing us to support our customers throughout the Midwest. This transition will also align our dealerships closer to our other entities, JX Enterprises, JX Financial, JX PacLease and JX Extreme Graphics, providing a strong branding relationship company wide."

JX Enterprises has been serving the Midwest since 1970 with sales, parts, service, finance, lease and rental support for the trucking industry. Currently there are thirteen JX Peterbilt locations throughout Wisconsin, Illinois and Michigan, providing a network of support to local and transient customers.

The **Ballweg Family of Dealerships** has purchased Steve Low's Midwest Toyota in LaCrosse and will rename the dealership Ballweg Midwest Toyota. Ballweg bought the dealership for an undisclosed price from Steve Low, his father Jack and Sean Green.

Green will serve as Ballweg Midwest Toyota's managing partner and general manager, a position he has held with the Low organization for the past 13 years.

With this acquisition, Ballweg has five locations including LaCrosse, two stores in Sauk City, Middleton and Wausau.



In September 2010, **Keyes Chevrolet** transitioned into the family's 3rd generation of ownership. Joseph W. Keyes became Dealer Principal of Keyes Chevrolet, Inc. with General Motors. William H. Keyes started Keyes Chevrolet in 1946 in Boyceville, WI and his son, William P. Keyes took ownership in 1980 and moved the dealership to Menomonie, WI. Joe attended NADA Dealer Candidate Academy after graduating from St. Cloud State University in 2000. He became the General Manager at Keyes Chevrolet in 2002 after graduating from the academy. In 2005, Keyes Chevrolet moved into a larger facility with more visibility and all of the design aspects lacking in the old facility. Bill works part time during the summer months and Joe's sister Kami is the Office Manager at the dealership. All three of them enjoy working together and their leadership team has been with them for ten years as well. Joe currently resides in Menomonie with wife Kate and two sons, Peyton (2) and Maxel (3 mos). ●



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Shares in the Future and Cornerstones Today

Notes from your Foundation Chair



In the fall edition of *Dealer Point*, we announced the launch of our Cornerstones of the Foundation campaign. Chairman Elect Mike Schlossmann and I recruited 16 volunteer solicitors to call on 154 campaign prospects. Our goal is to fill a corporate funding gap that developed as a result of the continuing recession.

By year-end, our call team connected with almost two-thirds of their prospects and closed on 30 new gifts. This work has gone a long way toward closing our funds gap so that your Foundation can continue to provide the education and community services you have come to expect.

Our sincere thanks to Greg Hobbs, Tom Horter, Mike Obertin, Tim Welch, Bill Martin, Jr., Jeff Rosen, Glenn Pentler, Lee Baird, Mike Keil, Frank Hallada, Jr., Harry Dahl, Tim Jubie, Ken Vance, Bill Kolosso, Roger Kriete and Mark Olinyk. Their dedication and your generosity have combined to make the Cornerstones of the Foundation a success. Thanks to everyone who has supported this effort.

The Foundation has enabled us to put a great number of programs in place that benefit our industry and our communities all across Wisconsin. These include a statewide network of industry certified transportation technology training centers; community challenge grants to 123 non-profit organizations, scholarships and jobs for 1,345 promising technicians; and resource sharing of millions of dollars worth of training vehicles and classroom training equipment. The challenge is to make sure these, along with new or developing programs have the ability to flourish and continue in perpetuity.

Shares in the Future is a new program that allows you to establish permanent Foundation funds with the express purpose of providing that kind of perpetual gift to a charitable agency of your choosing. You can designate a recognized charity as a fund recipient and advise the Foundation Board from time-to-time on the use of the perpetual gifts provided by your fund. An establishing or accumulated gift of \$10,000 or more will initiate your designated fund in the Foundation of the Wisconsin Automobile and Truck Dealers. This fund will award \$1,000 in perpetuity to the recipient charity of your choice.

Shares in the Future is cost-effective philanthropy because you receive all of the benefits of a foundation without the expenses of maintaining one. We assume the fiscal responsibilities of investing, reporting and disbursement. You have the opportunity to designate your recipient as a fund advisor to our Foundation Board of Directors.

...dedication and your generosity have combined to make the Cornerstones of the Foundation a success.

If you'd like more information about starting your Share in the Future call Gary Beier at (414) 520-7870 or email: gbeier@watda.org.

The Foundation of the Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers continues to support this industry and our customers because you continue to support us. We are grateful for your continued confidence in us and we'll work hard this year to keep it that way.

Sincerely,
Dan Toyen, Foundation Board Chair



Shares in the Future Pledge

- ☐ Yes, I would like to establish a *Shares in the Future* fund with the Foundation with:
- ☐ An immediate gift of \$10,000 or
- ☐ a pledge to reach that goal of \$_____ per year for ____ years

Date: _____

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Company: _____

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The
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The
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“A Generation Ahead”

Dahl Family Celebrates 100 Years in Car Business

BY SUSAN HESSEL AND GARY BEIER

“We got it!” Those three simple words that Henrick (Harry) Julius Dahl exclaimed to his new wife, Nellie, signaled the beginning of a century-old automotive empire.

Harry’s excitement came with word in 1911 that the A.H. Dahl General store in Westby was awarded a contract to become the newest Ford agency in Wisconsin. That agreement moved the Dahl brothers from selling butter, eggs, flour and other household goods into gas-operated farm machines and automobiles.

It was the first example of the Dahl Auto Group always working to be “a generation ahead.”

In *Deal with Dahl*, a comprehensive history of the 100-year-old business, author Kenny Dahl writes about how his father (Harry) and uncle envisioned a real future in selling Model T’s. “My father and Uncle Chet were interested in selling cars that the ordinary man could buy.”

They certainly did that – and then some. The year 2011 marks the beginning of the second century for the Dahl Automotive group. Five generations of family entrepreneurship have and are making positive marks in the industry and their community.

From that modest beginning in Westby, an automotive empire was born. Over the course of the business history, the Dahls had some 44 locations across the country, including 14 in Wisconsin and 30 others in Minnesota, Iowa, Indiana, Florida, New York, Texas, Illinois, Missouri, Washington, Oklahoma, Kansas, California and Colorado.

Challenges included the Great Depression, World War II and the end of the Model T Ford line. And then in the summer of 1959, Dahl Motors Oshkosh, one of the family’s more successful Wisconsin locations, suffered \$250,000 in damage in a fire so spectacular smoke could be seen 70 miles away. One week

after their 60-foot brick facility was gutted and 29 new cars and trucks destroyed, it was business as usual with new inventory at a new location.

Automobile sales and service have been the hallmark of the Dahl family for the past century but not the only business.

In the first generation, Andrew H. Dahl served in state and local government. He became State Treasurer in 1906 and was reelected twice. A.H. made a run for Governor in 1914 and gained a major block of voters in Western Wisconsin but not quite enough to overtake Progressive candidate Emanuel L. Philipp, who won the primary and eventually the election.

In the second generation, Harry Dahl was elected to chair the Wisconsin delegation of the 1932 Republican National Convention and twice ran for lieutenant governor. Another member of the family, A.J. Vinje, was a long-serving Wisconsin Supreme Court Justice.

Left to right: Dahl Family - Tyler (5th generation) Harry (4th) Kenny (3rd) Andrew (5th) and Jansen (5th).



In the third generation, Kenny's brother, Howard, led the family into purchase of the WKBH radio station, now known as WIZM - 1410. Howard eventually became the station president and helped sign on the city's first TV station, WKBT, Channel 8. Its first studio site was the Dahl Motors Sixth Street showroom after the auto business moved to Third and Division Streets.

During the years it had automobile dealerships throughout the country, the Dahl family operated Viking Aviation Services at the La Crosse Municipal Airport.

The Dahl Family Foundation and Dahl Auto Group contribute \$100,000 annually to more than 40 non-profit organizations in the Greater La Crosse Area. Two fund-raising events - an annual Lube-a-thon and a Golf Outing for Scouting - raise significant money and include many volunteers from the dealerships.

The Lube-a-Thon has meant \$30,000 in donations over the last three years to Steppin' Out in Pink (a local breast cancer walk), Operation Homefront and the Family and Children's Center. On the Lube-a-Thon day in July, Dahl service departments are closed. Anyone who donates at least \$10 receives a free oil change and car wash. Since materials and

labor are donated; 100 percent of the proceeds go to the selected charity each year.

The Dahl Automotive Golf Outing for Scouting event has become a premiere local golf tournament that has raised more than \$60,000 over the last four years for area Girl and Boy Scout organizations. The tournament includes a morning round of nine holes of golf, lunch, an afternoon round of 18 holes of golf, a gift package, dinner, a silent auction, and a golfer's valet service.

Harry Dahl II, a member of the fourth generation, has some of the same adventuresome business spirit of his namesake and grandfather, the first Harry Dahl. "It's my nature... My grandfather was that way."

Over his career, Harry II has had a nationwide classic car program, a passenger riverboat leasing operation, been a real estate developer and created a national health screening service and a drug testing business based in California and Arizona. His numerous community service projects include co-chairing the capital campaign for YMCA facilities that raised \$9.3 million.

Harry's industry-related efforts continue successfully with new franchises, the

latest just last year in Minnesota. The Dahl Automotive group currently includes Subaru, Hyundai and Mazda in La Crosse, Ford-Lincoln in Onalaska, and Toyota in Winona, Minnesota. It also has a collision service center on the North Side of La Crosse.

The fifth generation of the enterprise that A.H. and his family started one hundred years ago includes Harry's sons: Andrew, Jansen and Tyler. The fourth and fifth generations also include Harry's brother, Vinje and nephew, KV, who owns Dahl Ford in Davenport, Iowa.

Harry and sons currently are redesigning the old Dahl downtown La Crosse facility as the import dealership plus an automotive museum that captures the family history and the vehicles that drove their success.

"I have a sense of pride that we can trace our family back to some of the first vehicles sold in this country," Jansen Dahl said. "It really has an impact on me and as the fifth generation, we have that pressure - not burden - to uphold the legacy."

If the past is any indication of our future, Deal with Dahl will be a bright part of our industry for a long time to come. ●



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NADA Report

BY KEN VANCE

Dealer Victories

I don't have to tell you what an unreal time it has been for our industry these past two years. At times it seemed as though we were doing business in a third world country. Since the bankruptcies we have prevailed on a variety of fronts. Not the least of which was our "carve out" on the financial regulatory bill. We had help from a number of our Wisconsin legislators.

I hope you have followed the UNICAP tax ruling that has resolved several contentious and potentially costly income tax issues that have risen over the past five years. The IRS ruling simplifies uniform capitalization methods of accounting. The dramatic turnaround by the IRS is a major victory for dealers.

We also have a definitive answer on the size of small business for SBA loan qualifications; the number of employees is 200 or less.

Shifting gears: This year's NADA convention in San Francisco is being held on February 4-7. Housing costs are about half of what they were last time the convention was held there. The convention is one day shorter this year and features several exciting speakers including former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Miracle on the Hudson pilot Chesley "Sully" Sullenberger.

Dealers scored a few wins when President Obama signed the new tax bill into law December 17. In addition to a lower

estate tax and higher exemption to that tax than had once been expected, two other parts of the new law are likely to help the auto industry. First, businesses will now be allowed to immediately depreciate 100 percent of new equipment purchased between September 8, 2010 and the end of 2011. Bailey Wood of NADA also touted the extension of higher thresholds for investment deductions. For 2010 and 2011, companies can deduct up to \$500,000 of capital investments, including machinery. For 2012, they can deduct up to \$125,000.

Bert and I want to wish each of you a healthy and prosperous new year. ●

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NEXT ISSUE: WATDA 2011 Chairman Frank Porth



NADA Report



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