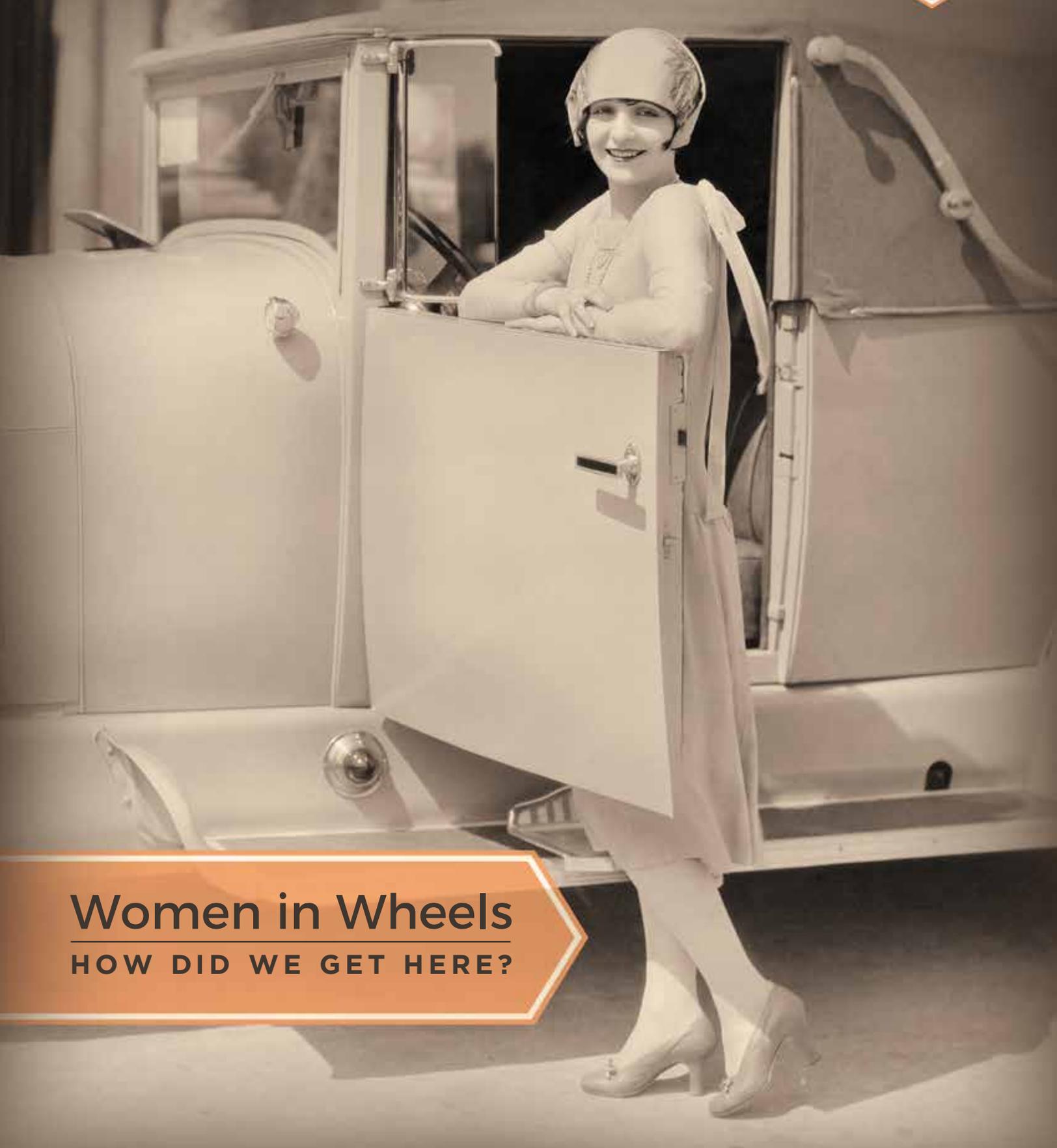


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Official Publication of the Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers Association | 1928-2015 | Volume 39 Spring 2015



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Women in Wheels

HOW DID WE GET HERE?

BY CHRYSTE MADSEN



Darlene Ballweg

DARLENE BALLWEG recalled standing at her kitchen sink, looking out the window, trying to decide the right thing to do. At 49, with four children, a farm that she loved and a dealership that was her husband's dream, she found herself alone, losing Danny in a tragic farming accident. Darlene didn't hesitate long. She refused to let Danny's dream go. Even through her grief she jumped into dealership life with both feet. While the trip hasn't been an easy one, Darlene lost two sons in later accidents; Danny could never have imagined the successes achieved.

Now helping the Ballweg name grow is a gentleman named Jason Brickl. He came to work for Darlene when he was just fourteen years old and as he grew up, they grew close. Today he heads the Ballweg Corporation as Darlene's successor. "He is just like a son to me," Darlene says with obvious pride.

Darlene remains an active part of the business she nurtured from a fledgling beginning in 1984 to the giant corporation covering two states today. She still believes in the personal touches that

made the business successful in the first place; things such as personally handing out paychecks to employees and writing personal thank you notes to customers.

Darlene was one of the first women to serve on the WATDA Board of Directors and she was the first (and to date, only) woman to be named the TIME Quality Dealer of the Year and Wisconsin Dealer of the Year in 2007.

Darlene's resiliency as a person, regardless of gender, sets an incredibly high bar for all of us.

Darlene's story and the stories that follow are just a few among hundreds of Wisconsin women who have worked in all facets of dealership life, both yesterday and today. And what we discovered is that almost all have an interesting story regarding what led to them their career in this industry. We're only sorry to be able to share so few.

While the emphasis of this article is clearly on gender, some interesting questions and facts came up while researching the story. In talking with female dealers and managers, all stated that finding great employees, regardless of gender, is a primary concern in all areas of the dealership.

This conversation led us to look at our Foundation, producing 80 to 100 new techs a year through the highly successful scholarship program. However, out of approximately 135 applicants there have been no more than two to five women applicants per year (not recipients) for the award. Yes, some have been awarded scholarships, but we began to ask ourselves why more women haven't applied.

It's not just the Foundation. In conversations with participants in this article the question seemed to come up; Are we, perhaps, missing an opportunity? Women are no longer discouraged from entering our industry. Opportunities abound in all areas of the dealership for those who want them. But are we letting young women know about us? Do they know that we are here?



Margie Stewart

Someone very vocal about the benefits of our industry is one who teaches it every day. Asked how her career as a tech teacher began, **MARGIE STEWART** smiled and said, "My Dad had two daughters. One stayed in the house and the other went out to the garage with him."

Margie, now an Automotive Instructor at Chippewa Valley Technical College, has been leading by example for 25 years.

Prior to instructing techs, Margie turned wrenches and fixed cars in a dealership for nine years. Margie said, "I took great satisfaction in watching a vehicle come in on a tow truck and, after I was done with it, watching the customer drive it away."

When asked what it was like in past years working in a non-traditional environment, Margie was very straightforward, "Working with men all day has its advantages and disadvantages. For example, you have to be able to handle the fact that someone may tell you you're a female and shouldn't be doing this job. In most non-traditional occupations you have to be better than good to be considered good at what you do. The automotive industry is a great field to work in and I truly love what I do."

“The automotive industry needs our small hands and our attention to detail.”

— MARGIE STEWART

As a teacher Margie said she has several women in her program at this time. “As vehicles become more computerized the industry needs someone who can not only turn a wrench,” said Margie, “but be able to understand computers; how they work, how to program and how to diagnose them.”

Margie has worked hard through the years to help attract young women to the auto business. One of her presentations a few years ago was “Her Favorite Color is Chrome.” Margie Stewart is a great role model for anyone interested in a career as a tech!

In the 1950’s an eight-year-old got her start in the auto industry by having a rather odd talent. She could identify makes and models of cars from quite a distance. Her father, a local businessman in a small town, would frequently bet a nickel or two with his customers on his offspring’s talent. He built up quite a stack of nickels... and Dad wasn’t surprised when she decided to spend her life selling cars, creating products for dealerships and working for dealers. Enough about her for now...

JENNY PARSONS GRETZINGER was born into the business when her grandparents, Max and Adeline Parsons began their automotive venture just east of Antigo in 1935. Forty seven years later, their son, Dave, along with wife Sherri, moved the business to Antigo in 1982.

Dave and Sherri’s children, Curt and Jenny, in true family tradition, cleaned bathrooms, vacuumed the rugs and cleaned ashtrays in the showroom before school.

Years later, a tragic accident took the lives of two key service employees and Sherri Parsons became the Service Manager, a position she would hold for six years.

In 1994, Parsons of Eagle River was purchased. Curt remained in the Antigo location while Jenny took the helm at the Eagle River store about five years ago. Jenny, now with two children of her own, daughter Sydney and a son (appropriately named Chevy) credits her husband, Sonny, for much of her success in the business. Jenny said, “Sonny’s a great Dad. He runs his own business, plus plays taxi driver with the kids many times a week. I wouldn’t be able to do it without him.” Many dealers, regardless of gender must share that sentiment with the long hours and unpredictability of the business.



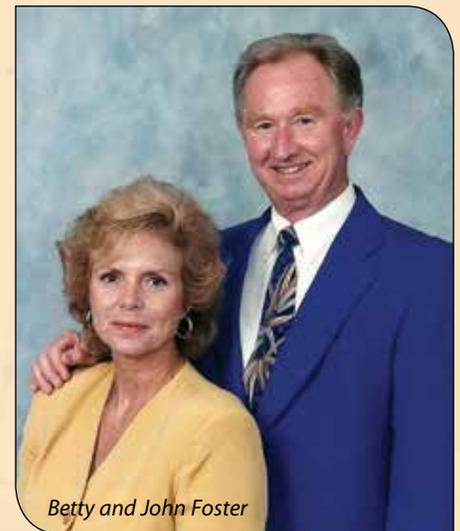
Shown with an award presented for ongoing education from the GM Women’s Retail Network, left to right: Jenny Gretzinger, Dealer; Lisa Bodamer, Parts Manager; and Jessica, GM Representative.

of the curve for women in non-traditional roles with Sherri’s stint as Service Manager! Jenny was also the youngest women to ever serve on the WATDA Board of Directors.

“I feel very proud to continue the Parsons tradition of serving our customers since 1935 and I thank my parents for the opportunity to do so,” Jenny concluded. Anyone who has ever met Jenny Parsons Gretzinger knows that statement to be sincere and heartfelt.

JEAN RUDA took a very circuitous route to becoming a Wisconsin dealer. From fifteen years in the banking industry, while watching it change from a male dominated field to almost equal parity in the mid 90’s, she transitioned to law school for three years and then, with her husband, Bill, decided to return to the scene of her banking career, Monroe, and take the reins of one of only seven Chevrolet/Toyota dealerships in the country.

Jean tends to think women are gaining equality in our industry. “As, dealers we see that the factory representatives and regulatory groups are almost fifty-fifty. As more women assume leadership roles in dealerships, they will, in turn, hire more women. As an industry, we’ll have to get more creative with work schedules to attract and retain employees in current times, but I think we can figure it out,” Jean concluded with a smile.



Betty and John Foster

Beginning with a wholesale operation in Chicago to purchasing and closing a relatives’ dealership in Milwaukee, 1973 saw **BETTY AND JOHN FOSTER** take over a Pontiac dealership located at 27th and Loomis, also in Milwaukee. It was not an auspicious beginning. This store had an incredibly bad CSI; deemed one of the worst in the nation! Betty picked up the phone and began calling customers to let them know the Fosters would take care of them. Throughout their tenure at the dealership, she never put the phone down.

The Fosters also did something unique for that time... They created television ads featuring themselves when not many dealers acted as their own spokespersons. It resonated with the public. It could have been their slight southern

drawl or the friendly banter, or perhaps it was the famous “Foster Feuds” where customers chose either John or Betty’s team when they bought a car... whatever it was, the public loved it. According to daughter, Belinda, “They were local celebrities. People loved and respected my parents. They still do. When they come back to town they’re still recognized, even though they haven’t been on TV in years.” As for those Foster Feuds? “I’m pretty sure Mom won most of them,” Belinda reports.

“My siblings and I started working at the dealership at a young age,” Belinda continued, “because our family was so close, if our parents were at work so were we. My sister and I learned to answer the phone when we were twelve and my brother was moving cars around on the lot when he could barely see over the steering wheel. Being in the car business allowed us to be together on a daily basis for a number of years which is something I now miss. You never know how special something is until it’s gone.”

In a recent phone conversation, Betty, now 75 and sounding not a minute older than her TV commercial days, related how she and John worked side-by-side in the dealership. “Our desks were nearly touching in the same office,” she said, “We loved working together then and we love being together now.” Betty went on to relate the difficulties of the 1980’s economy and the irreconcilable differences with the manufacturer that finally ended with the buyout of the dealership and their eventual move to Kentucky. “Do you know what I miss the most?” Betty asked, “I miss the customers.” Betty, you can be quite certain your customers miss you, too.

As for Belinda, she said it best, “I would never have imagined when I was finishing college that an automobile dealership would be where I would spend my career, but it’s in my blood, and I’ve been involved in dealerships since I graduated.” Belinda currently works as Controller for Sommers’ Automotive in Mequon. She states, “I’ve told the owners, this is as close to working for my own family as I can get.”



Left to right: Heather Kruse, GSM, Braeger Ford; Jenni Weiss, Director of Office Operations, Braeger Chevrolet; Carrie Miller, Body Shop Manager, Braeger Chevrolet; Helen Goldman, Parts Manager, Braeger Ford; Sam Rabideau, Finance Manager, Braeger Ford; Jesse Schumacher, Service Manager, Braeger Ford; Jamie Enders, Braeger Chevrolet; Kelly Kaminski, Finance Manager, Braeger Ford

Funding a college education caused **JAMIE ENDERS**, General Sales Manager at Braeger Chevrolet, to find her path to the car business. As luck would have it, she was quite good at selling vehicles. Shortly before she turned 21 she was offered a position as an F&I Manager and jumped at the opportunity.

“That experience,” Jamie relates, “was the most important event that could have happened to me. I was let go from the company. Getting fired is a very humbling experience. But it sparked a drive in me that carried me to where I am today.”

In 2000, she came to work at Braeger as a fill-in F&I Manager. She soon moved to full time and in 2009 was promoted to New Car Sales Manager at Braeger Chevrolet. “It was very different to go from managing paper to managing a staff of sales consultants,” Jamie remarked. She didn’t seem to have any problem overcoming those challenges because in May of 2014 she was named General Sales Manager at the same store. She currently oversees seven managers and eighteen sales consultants. A single mom, her two sons love the fact that every once in a while Mom can bring home “cool” cars.

The Braeger story of hiring women is unique in that over half of the entire management staff is female. When asked who did the initial hiring and if it was designed to lean toward females this was the answer; John Maneage, President & CEO, and Jason Enders (not related to Jamie), VP & COO, did the hiring and, as it was well described by Jamie, “It is a talent contest, not a popularity contest. At the end of the day, it is all about who can get the job done.” It was also pointed out that most of the women managers have advanced from other positions in the dealership.

So many fantastic women contribute to our industry in Wisconsin. To all of you out there who haven’t been mentioned here please accept our kudos and thanks for what you do every day. Thanks to the men who have supported and mentored those who have come before, those who are here now and hopefully, those we will introduce to the wonderful opportunities ahead. As we mentioned earlier in the article, perhaps we should consider finding new ways to reach young woman who just might be our next best employee.

Oh, and if you remember that eight year old kid with the odd talent her Pop would bet nickels on? Yeah, that was me. ●

“It is a talent contest, not a popularity contest. At the end of the day, it is all about who can get the job done.”

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CenterStage

AWARDS, HONORS, MILESTONES

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Russ Darrow was recently inducted into the Wisconsin Business Hall of Fame, which honors individuals whose business innovations, effective management, and civic involvement make a difference in companies and communities throughout the state.

“What a tremendous recognition to be included into this elite group,” emphasized Darrow. “Early in my life, my parents taught me about having an excellent work ethic, the importance

of values and community, and the charitable spirit of people who are successful. When one starts and grows a local company from scratch, it takes a lot of well-qualified, loyal, and dedicated people. Without them by my side, our company wouldn’t have grown to what it is today.”

Russ Darrow joins notable past inductees to the Hall of Fame, including William Specht, Cousins Subs; Robert Harlan, Green Bay Packers; Pleasant Rowland, American Girl; Frederick Stratton Jr., Briggs and Stratton; and Bud Selig, Milwaukee Brewers.

Elkhorn area residents will have access to the Open Arms Free Clinic thanks to auto dealer **Greg Kunes’** donation of space to triple the size of the current clinic. The clinic began in 2012, and is staffed by approximately 200 volunteer medical professionals. Patient numbers have grown from 500 after the first year to about 1,000 today.

Kayser Automotive Group of Madison is celebrating 90 years in business. Paul A. Kayser started the business in 1925 with his brother-in-law, William R. Enneking, at 207 E. Washington Avenue in Madison, and after a year, expanded to 701 E. Washington. By 1950, Kayser had more than 100 employees and was the largest Ford dealership in Wisconsin. Kenneth Kimport joined the company in 1953 and purchased the company after Kayser passed in 1956. In 1971 Kayser moved to its present location on the West Beltline. Patrick J. Baxter bought part of the business in 1985 and became president and general manager. Kimport remained chairman of the board and Baxter eventually purchased the entire business and now serves as CEO. His son, Sean Baxter was named president in 2014 and brothers Ryan and Brendan Baxter are vice presidents. In addition to the Madison stores, Kayser dealerships are also located in Sauk Prairie, Watertown and Pulaski.

Adams-Friendship Chevrolet dealer **A-F Motors** is marking their fiftieth year in business. The Wormet family will host celebrations at the dealership throughout May and June. Father Albert “Bud” Wormet, set the standards for sales and service to the community that created their loyal customer base. Says Tadd, who took over from his dad in 2005, “we were raised to earn that loyalty by doing business honestly and with integrity, and we are proud to carry on that legacy.” Brother Tim who has worked at the dealership since 1984 said, “Dad really loved

meeting customers and personalizing the service.” Stepmom Penny Wormet, who co-owns the business with Tadd, calls herself the ‘corporate mom,’ and although she is semi-retired, she remains active in the business.

Toyota of Wausau was recently presented with the President’s Award from Toyota Motors Sales USA Inc. The award is presented annually to dealerships that achieve high standards of performance in all facets of the profession. Toyota of Wausau is part of the Ballweg collection of dealerships.

After more than forty four years with his family’s dealership, **Finley-Dencker Buick GMC**, Gary Dencker has retired. The family, originally from Milwaukee, bought the dealership in 1968. “Part of the agreement was that they would build a new facility in Beloit within three years,” Dencker recalled. “This building opened in the spring of 1971 and I started in December of that year.” Retirement plans include spending more time with family, spoiling his grandchildren, fishing, golfing and travel with his wife who is also retiring.

American Honda Motor Co., Inc. announced Madison area dealer, **Wilde East Towne Honda**, is among the recipients of the Honda President’s Award for 2014. This annual award is presented to Honda dealerships for exceptional performance in all facets of their operations – profitability, sales, vehicle condition, customer experience, service retention, and brand representation. This is the 2nd consecutive year that Wilde East Towne Honda has earned the exclusive President’s Award.

Zimbrick Honda, Madison is proud to be receiving the President’s Award in 2014, for the 14th year. More than 1,000 Honda dealerships across the country compete to earn the award, with 125 receiving the honor. This annual award is based on exceptional performance in all facets of their operations.

Trecek Automotive of Portage was awarded **Portage** Area Chamber of Commerce’s First Impression Award. They were recognized for the investment in their building including remodeling their showroom to meet Chevrolet’s image compliance and for investing in Portage by acquiring an adjacent lot to expand the ability to showcase their vehicles for sale. Trecek Automotive has created a great first impression as you enter Portage from the south. ●



Marianne Hanson of Portage Area Chamber of Commerce, Sharon Trecek and Dennis Trecek.

Sommer's Subaru Makes New Homestead Pavilion Reality

A proposed athletic pavilion at Homestead High School in Mequon will be named Sommer's Subaru Pavilion as recognition for the dealership's \$250,000 donation to the facility, which has a pricetag of \$500,000. The pavilion is the centerpiece of a planned renovation of the schools outdoor athletic facilities. The building would house restrooms, concessions and two team rooms.

Mequon-Thiensville Superintendent Desmond Means said Sommer's donation was the most generous he's seen in his career. "There aren't a lot of school districts in the state that can say they received a gift of a quarter-million dollars," Means said. "This is an amazing gift."

Don and Wally Sommer, their sisters and families all attended Mequon-Thiensville schools. "Partnering with and supporting this initiative has been an excellent way to express our gratitude and commitment to enriching our community," said Don Sommer. ●



Ewald Auto Group Supports New Veterans Park

Work toward a venue aimed at paying homage to Oconomowoc-area veterans past and present is underway. At a groundbreaking ceremony for the new park, the Ewald Automotive Group pledged \$50,000 to the \$500,000 project. Emil Ewald, the 87-year old chairman of the board overseeing the Ewald Auto Group is a World War II veteran. COO Brian Ewald said, "This is a wonderful opportunity to pay recognition to people throughout the community." The Ewalds seize opportunities to support local events whenever possible. The elder Ewald's direct service in the military was one additional reason to back the veterans park initiative.

The goal is to represent Oconomowoc area residents who have served in all branches of the military as far back as the Civil War; an estimated 2,700 names. Efforts to compile the list include the local VFW and American Legion organizations.

The goal is to have the veterans site completed by Sunday, June 14, which is Flag Day. ●

Wilde East Towne Honda

Donates 2007 Accord and Mentoring Services to Sun Prairie High School



Wilde East Towne Honda donated a 2007 Honda Accord to Sun Prairie High School earlier this spring. The donation, made to the Sun Prairie Area School District, will be used by students in the classroom.

"The Sun Prairie Automotive Program has been working hard to secure NATEF certification. One of the requirements is to have a vehicle no more than 8 years old for the students to train on," said Sun Prairie High School Auto Tech Instructor Jim Halvorson, "Through the generous donation of Wilde East Towne Honda, we now have the modern car needed to ensure the Sun Prairie High School automotive students are receiving the proper training they need to move forward in their path to becoming tomorrow's technicians."

The students were very excited to learn of the car donation from Wilde East Towne Honda and will be using it to train and complete their automotive tasks.

In addition to the car donation, Wilde East Towne Honda is mentoring Sun Prairie youth. Sam Bornitzke-Wolfgang, a junior at Sun Prairie High School, is an apprentice under Honda Master Certified Technician Allen Denui. Sam took first place in tire rotation and the compression test portion at the recent Firestone Challenge at Madison Area Technical College. Sam said his apprenticeship at Wilde East Towne Honda helped him in the contest. This is the second year Allen Denui has mentored a Sun Prairie High School student.

"We are proud to support the auto mechanics program through these donations," said Jorge Hidalgo, co-owner of Wilde East Towne Honda, "We look forward to training and hiring more of Sun Prairie's youth."

The Wilde Automotive Group is celebrating its 70th year of service this year. ●



NADA Director's Report

BY BOB HUDSON

NADA Used Car Guide to J.D. Powers

NADA has entered into an agreement to sell the NADA Used Car Guide Company to J.D. Power & Associates (JDPA). The transaction is subject to approval by the U.S. Justice Dept. and, if that approval is obtained, it is expected the transaction will become final around July 1st.



This development may come as a surprise to some of you, since the Guide Company has been part of our heritage for over 80 years and has been a highly respected and recognized source of vehicle valuation data for just as long. Please be assured that this decision was not reached easily or in haste. NADA staff worked closely with the Used Car Guide Board of Advisors, the NADA Finance & Executive Committees, and the NADA Board of Directors over many months to arrive at this point. In the end,

there was a unanimous consensus that the transaction is in the best interests of our members, the Guide's customers and NADA.

NADA and JDPA have worked together on numerous projects and events over the past few years, so both organizations are very familiar with one another. Our interactions with JDPA during this period reinforced our feeling that it is a highly competent, professional, and ethical company that can grow the business and provide more opportunities for the Guide and its staff. Moreover, as part of the deal, JDPA will continue to regularly provide our members with a copy of the Guide.

Some of you may be wondering about the timing of this, coming on the heels of the recent NADART announcement. Simply put, there is no connection between the two events; they are truly co-incidental. It just so happened that the two situations roughly occurred within the same time period.

NADART

As was previously announced, the NADA board decided to phase-out the current NADART retirement program and replace it with an all-new NADA Retirement Program from *Empower*. Many of you have asked when we will release the new program's fee schedule and fund line-up... wait no more! New listings of dramatically reduced fees, and a side-by-side comparison of the new fund line-up and fund fees are available. For those of you who have your plans with NADART, you have or will receive the attachment in a separate communication but I wanted to keep everyone in the loop with regard to what's happening and what's gone out. Please note that these communications have been sent to dealers that currently sponsor plans through NADART, but not to individual plan participants.

Dealership Workforce Study

We're down to the last few days of the 2015 Dealership Workforce Study (DWS) and we hope you'll participate. As you know, only NADA and ATD members can participate in the DWS, it's free to participate, and participation involves enrolling, completing a survey, and uploading payroll data. Just for participating, members receive two incredibly valuable complimentary reports: the *Basic Report*, which is anything but basic, as it is customized to the individual participating dealership, comparing that store's numbers to the aggregate numbers of peers in the individual dealer's own region and the entire country; and the *Industry Report*, which provides overall analysis, trends, and statistics for every region of the U.S. Participants are also eligible to purchase the *Enhanced Report*, which compares the individual dealership's numbers

to peers who sell the same brand in the same state. By "numbers," we are talking compensation for 60 job positions; retention, turnover, and tenure; benefits; work schedules; and hours of operation. The NADA Dealership Workforce Study is the most comprehensive study available of the retail workforce. With the data participants receive, they can adjust their pay plans, etc., so that they're in position to attract and retain the finest workforce in their marketplace. www.nadaworkforcestudy.com

Consumers Benefit from Competition

What's in 2.2 percent? As a percentage of total sales, it's a number that represents the average pretax, net profit at U.S. franchised new-car dealerships, according to *NADA Data 2014*.

And what may be a startling fact is that the 2.2 percent profit, which accounts for sales in the new- and used-vehicle, service and parts departments, is more than a one-percentage point less than what many other retailers earn.

This figure has remained the same for the third straight year. And this dynamic is attributed to fierce competition at dealerships that benefits car buyers. In fact, a recent study from the Washington, D.C.-based Phoenix Center proves that price competition among auto dealers lowers car prices for consumers, often by \$500 or more per car.

The dealer-franchise network remains the best, most-competitive and most-cost efficient way to distribute and sell new cars.

Contact me

It is a privilege for me to represent the franchised dealerships of Wisconsin. If you have any questions, comments or just want to visit, please contact me at rhudson@middletonford.com or at 1-800-798-7725. ●



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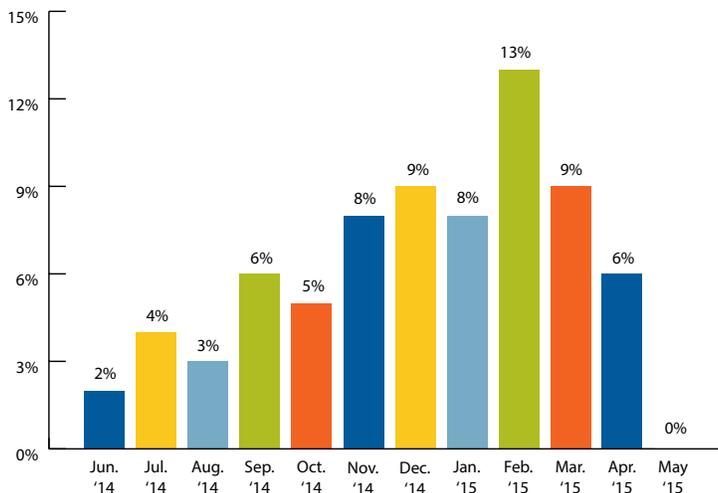


New Vehicle Sales Trends

Wisconsin New Vehicle Trends: May 2015

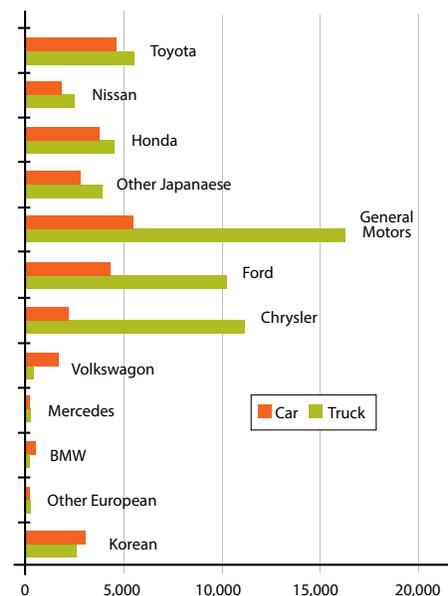
	Previous Two Months			Year to Date			Year to Date Market Share		
	3/14	3/15	% change	'14 YTD	'15 YTD	% change	'14 YTD	'15 YTD	change
Industry Total	39,955	38,459	-3.7%	86,460	88,941	2.9%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Car	16,462	13,804	-16.1%	34,324	30,940	-9.9%	39.7%	34.8%	-4.9%
Truck	23,493	24,655	4.9%	52,136	58,001	11.2%	60.3%	65.2%	4.9%
Japanese	14,018	12,952	-7.6%	29,607	29,529	-0.3%	34.2%	33.2%	-1.0%
Toyota	5,118	4,515	-11.8%	10,402	10,128	-2.6%	12.0%	11.4%	-0.6%
Honda	4,123	3,761	-8.8%	8,503	8,267	-2.8%	9.8%	9.3%	-0.5%
Nissan	1,864	1,741	-6.6%	4,204	4,387	4.4%	4.9%	4.9%	0.0%
Other	2,913	2,935	0.8%	6,498	6,747	3.8%	7.5%	7.6%	0.1%
Domestic	21,054	21,198	0.7%	46,662	49,598	6.3%	54.0%	55.8%	1.8%
General Motors	8,520	9,011	5.8%	19,568	21,715	11.0%	22.6%	24.4%	1.8%
Ford	6,735	6,354	-5.7%	14,485	14,584	0.7%	16.8%	16.4%	-0.4%
Chrysler	5,799	5,833	0.6%	12,609	13,299	5.5%	14.6%	15.0%	0.4%
European	2,102	1,913	-9.0%	4,370	4,150	-5.0%	5.1%	4.7%	-0.4%
Volkswagen	1,108	1,020	-7.9%	2,289	2,197	-4.0%	2.6%	2.5%	-0.1%
BMW	416	353	-15.1%	853	786	-7.9%	1.0%	0.9%	-0.1%
Mercedes	277	266	-4.0%	576	591	2.6%	0.7%	0.7%	0.0%
Other	301	274	-9.0%	652	576	-11.7%	0.8%	0.6%	-0.2%
Korean	2,781	2,396	-13.8%	5,821	5,664	-2.7%	6.7%	6.4%	-0.3%
Other	2,781	2,396	-13.8%	5,821	5,664	-2.7%	6.7%	6.4%	-0.3%

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



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YTD Registrations by Vehicle Type



May Trend Report from Scott Quimby



Tribute

Charles Fredrick Everhart

Charles Fredrick Everhart, "Charlie" passed away surrounded by his loving family on Sunday, March 15, 2015, (his 91st birthday). Charlie lived an extraordinary life that began on March 15th, 1924, at St Francis Hospital in Evanston, Illinois. Charlie's father passed away just before Charlie's birth; he grew up under the guidance of his grandfather William Deya Everhart and his uncle, James William Everhart along with his three older brothers Jack, Tom, and Bob Everhart. In 1944, Charlie joined the U.S. Army and was assigned to "F" company – 38th Infantry Combat Team – 26th Infantry "Yankee Division" – Third Army under the command of General George S. Patton. Charlie fought in the battle of the Hürtgen Forest, which became the longest battle on German soil during World War II, resulting in thousands of casualties. During winter combat in Germany, Charlie was injured and was awarded the Bronze star. When Charlie came back from the war, he pursued the love of his life Jule Marie Byrne. Charlie and Jule were married on December 28th, 1946.

Throughout his life, Charlie had a passion for cars; after returning from the war in 1945, Charlie became an auto adjuster for an insurance agency in Chicago. He was among a group of the first Stock Car racers in 1949 able to participate in a race at Soldier Field in Chicago. He remained a racing enthusiast participating in Bob Bondurant's High Performance racing school at age 73, as well as Richard Petty's NASCAR experience at 77.

Charlie sold Oldsmobile's in Winnetka, Illinois before moving to Janesville, Wisconsin to found Everhart Imports (a Volkswagen Dealership) in 1964. The dealership later became Everhart-O'Leary Motors and through the years held franchises for Volkswagen, Mercedes Benz, Fiat, Pontiac and Mazda.

Charlie gave back to the community by serving as the President of the Janesville Chamber of Commerce, The Sierra Club, and The Janesville Goodwill Ambassadors and was a Paul Harris Rotarian. He served on the Board for the Janesville Savings and Loan and the National Dealer Council for Volkswagen of America. He was also a dedicated volunteer for many years at The Rotary Gardens and St. John Vianney Catholic Church.

Charlie is preceded in death by his wife Jule, his mother and father and three older brothers. He is survived by his six daughters whom he and Jule were so very proud of: Julie (Joe) David, Jean (Ray) O'Leary, Jaine Everhart, Joan (Bob) Sweeney, Janet (Bill) Wixom, and Joyce (Chris) Snyder, 15 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren who truly loved and admired their Papa. ●



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Matt Keller at 866 477 1434
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WISCO Equipment Offerings

BY JOHN HACKMAN



Whether you are planning a new building, a remodel, or your shop is just in need of equipment, you can save money by checking with your co-op. WISCO's entire reason for existing is to save its members money on their purchases. We have several excellent equipment programs in place. There is a reason WISCO has been having such strong years in equipment sales. It is because we have high quality equipment at great prices! Plus, with WISCO being a true cooperative owned by its members, all the year-end profit WISCO earns is paid back to its members in direct relation to how much they have

purchased from WISCO. This is done through the year-end rebate checks sent to you from WISCO. Big ticket items like equipment would earn substantial dollars further lowering your net cost.

WISCO's equipment lineup includes the top names known industry-wide and WISCO saves you money on them. We have Challenger Lifts, Hunter alignment systems, wheel balancers, tire changers, and brake lathes. Borroughs, Shure, and Equipto shelving, bins, and work benches are also part of the WISCO offering. Orion energy saving lighting, Neptune LED lighting for your lot, Robinair refrigerant recyclers, and Nitrofill nitrogen tire filling machines are offered by your co-op. Class C Solutions and Wurth USA offer key cutting machines through WISCO. You can save money on your heating costs with an Energy Logic waste oil furnace or a MacroAir airvolution fan from Black Gold. For body shops WISCO has paint booths, frame straightening machines, welders, aluminum repair equipment, etc. The list continues. Check us out at wisco.com to view our entire product offering.

If you are planning a new building contact us early in the process. You will save money in the installation of items such as in-ground lifts and waste oil furnaces if they are included in the plans before the building is too far along. Call 800-274-2319 for information, demos, or pricing. By checking with WISCO, members can save on their equipment purchases and increase their year-end rebate from WISCO. ●

Naples 2015 – A Night to Remember

It was the 13th of March and the temperature hit 94 degrees in downtown Naples, Florida. That didn't deter 46 guests from attending the annual Wisconsin Dealer Event.

The program, hosted by Gary and Sharon Newman of Cedarburg, Wisconsin, took place at the Naples Sailing and Yacht Club. It was sponsored by BMO Harris Bank and our board member from BMO, Ghram Debes.

Guests attending the business roundtable were treated to an economic outlook report, presented by Ghram followed by WATDA and Foundation reports presented by Bill Sepic and Gary Beier. The roundtable culminated with a sneak preview of the new Team Wisconsin movie being produced by the Foundation and Wells Auto Electronics.

The evening program featured catered hors d'oeuvres and cocktails for all, set off with a spectacular view of Naples harbor. It was truly a night to remember! ●



Gary Williams, Bruce Anderson, IADA President and Bill Sepic



Gary & Sharon Newman and Dave Lynch

From Around the State



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

Lakeside International is investing \$10 million to replace their **Madison** facility on a ten acre site located near the intersection of Hwy 51 and I39-90-94. The new and larger building will have 32 service bays, a retail parts showroom and storage facility, a driver's lounge and a steam and wash bay. The project will include the addition of 25 employees to the current staff of fifty.

.....
Rock County Honda, Janesville is constructing a new larger showroom at their current location. It will feature an open floor plan with more room for vehicles and sales desks on the showroom floor. The project is part of a yearlong makeover for the dealership that has included renovations and an addition to its service center and waiting area.

.....
Eau Claire Automotive Group is adding a used car and service location as well as a credit center to address growth beyond their current dealership and service space. The new lot will showcase about 70 vehicles.

.....
The Wheeler family has acquired the Chevrolet franchise of **Wehrs in Bangor**, and is operating as **Whealers of Wisconsin Rapids**. Larry Wehrs will continue business as Wehrs Truck and Auto, selling used vehicles as well as service and repair work, retaining all of their employees.

.....
Bergstrom Automotive has purchased the Chevrolet franchise of the **Stark Automotive Group's Stoughton** location and relocated the brand adjacent to their Cadillac store in **Madison**. Stark will continue to operate its Buick and GMC dealership in Stoughton.

.....
International Auto is adding a new location in **West Allis** for Maserati and Alpha Romeo franchises. This is the first Maserati dealership in Wisconsin and the second Alpha Romeo dealer in the state.

.....
Groundbreaking was held on June 3 for a new dealership near I43 in Mukwonago for **Lynch Chevrolet of Mukwonago**, the former Lynch's Horter Chevrolet. The dealership is moving from the current downtown location to the eight acre piece of land that will also be home to Lynch's East Troy Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep and Ram dealership.

.....
Ballweg Automotive of Middleton has expanded into suburban St. Louis. Ballweg purchased the Audi franchise of Parktown Imports, and will operate as Audi Kirkwood. They will operate out of the former Parktown location but future plans include a new facility in the area.

.....
Nuss Truck & Equipment opened a new branch location in the **Twin Ports, MN** region. The \$5 million facility includes convenient parking for trucks and equipment, along with easy customer access. ●



January 26, 2015

Ken Vance
Ken Vance Motors
2900 Lorch Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54701

Dear Ken,

My office was recently contacted by the National Auto Dealers Association on behalf of the 17,700 local auto dealers located around the nation, requesting that I sign-on to their Open Letter of Support for Local Auto Dealers. I write to you to let you know that I'm a proud signatory of their letter.

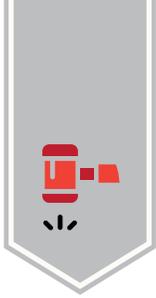
I'm very aware of the valuable contributions to our local and statewide economy that auto dealers make every day. As you know, there are 500 franchised dealers in Wisconsin that employ over 22,000 employees, meet over \$900 million in payroll, and make \$13 billion in sales, which includes nearly 15% of the total retail sales in the state.

It's not all financial however. Local dealers can be counted on to back up the products that they sell regardless of the manufacturer's actions, knowing full well that the secret to a successful dealership is not just in selling a vehicle, but continuing to work with the buyer throughout the life of the vehicle. They provide good jobs that pay family supporting wages, an average of \$42,200 yearly, benefiting the dealership and its employees, with the positive ripple effects spreading throughout the economy. Perhaps most importantly, local dealers have deep roots in the communities, often doing business with generations of vehicle buyers from the same family, and can be counted on whenever they're needed.

I thank you for all you contribute to our local, regional, and state economies, and I look forward to working with you in the future. If my office can ever be of assistance to you, please feel free to call toll-free at 888-534-0091 or via e-mail at rep.wachs@legis.wi.gov.

Best Wishes and Good Luck,

Dana Wachs
State Representative – 91st Assembly District



Legal & Legislative Update

BY CHRIS SNYDER



Dealers Should Make Sure They Have Liability Coverage on Their Inventory

WATDA was recently asked by a legislator from Southeast Wisconsin, why there is no requirement that motor vehicle dealers have liability insurance on their inventory. A few years ago, the Wisconsin legislature passed a law requiring everyone driving a motor vehicle on Wisconsin highways must carry minimum liability coverage. However, there is no such provision pertaining to dealers, nor is it a licensing requirement.

This is an issue that all dealers need to be aware of: YOUR DEALER BOND WILL NOT PROVIDE ANY LIABILITY PROTECTION IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT WITH ONE OF YOUR VEHICLES. Most dealers have vehicle liability coverage through their Property and Casualty (P&C) insurance policies. It is highly advisable that if you do not have P&C coverage that you obtain some. Dealers who operate without any P&C or at least motor vehicle liability insurance for their inventory are just one accident away from losing their business and possibly personal assets.

Regulatory Activity

DMV:

DMV, Dealer Section has gone through a lot of personnel changes over the last couple of years. WATDA staff and dealers (through the DMV Advisory Committee) have worked to keep the lines of communication open as DMV is now on their third Section Chief and second Field Investigator Supervisor. On April 28th DMV announced that they have hired Michael Domke as the new Dealer Section Chief.

In May, WATDA's DMV Advisory Committee met with Michael and Mitch Warren, Director of the Bureau of Vehicle Services. Michael formerly held the position of Field Investigator Supervisor for a number of years. WATDA staff and many of the DMV Advisory Committee members know Michael and have found him to be a fair and consistent regulator. With his prior experience within Dealer Section he will be able to hit the ground running. Mitch was the department's point person on title-to-lienholder and electronic titling. The committee held a detailed discussion regarding issues dealers are encountering with title-to-lienholder and having Mitch at the meeting helped sort through some of these problem areas.

DATCP:

In 2013 the Department of Agriculture Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) began enforcing advertising violations regarding direct mailers that offer prizes. To date DATCP has approximately 18 dealer investigations or enforcement activities taking place. WATDA has published three warnings regarding these practices and the enforcement activities, yet dealers

keep utilizing this method of advertising. Don't be fooled into thinking that just because you have gone through a Civil Investigation Demand (CID) that you are out of the water and safely on shore. DATCP has shown a propensity to engage dealers in follow up investigations just to make sure you are doing it correctly. WATDA continues to try to work with DATCP and looks to provide some guidance and/or training in the near future. In the meantime WATDA suggests that a best practice for dealers is to avoid direct mail prize give away promotion.

FTC: (Federal Trade Commission)

The United States Federal Trade Commission has ramped up their dealership advertisement review and enforcement over the last two years. They announced a new set of dealerships that were investigated and we want to keep both the FTC enforcement and the state agency DATCP enforcement in front of our membership. The FTC actions are being handled by NADA, but WATDA will be assisting them in disseminating information. On March 26 the FTC announced the result of what they have coined "Operation Ruse Control" which was an operation carried out in conjunction with local law enforcement and regulatory agencies wherein they contend that they engaged in 252 enforcement actions for deceptive business practices. Areas of particular interest to dealers are the sale of vehicle add-on products (that may not produce the savings or protections represented), auto loan modifications and deceptive advertising.

CFPB: (Consumer Financial Protection Bureau)

The *Charles River Study*—commissioned by the American Financial Services Association—proved that the CFPB's data was tenuous at best. Not only are the regulators attacking a problem that doesn't exist, but they don't have the methodology to back-up their harmful actions against our industry. It is almost as if they deliberately backed into the numbers to draw the conclusions that they had predicted all along. To that end, H.R 1737 has been introduced by Reps. Frank Guinta (R-NH) and Ed Perlmutter (D-CO), that would force the CFPB to repeal an Advisory Bulletin they published in 2013, without utilizing any recognized formal rule making and/or agency advisory opinion process (providing an opportunity for public scrutiny and/or comment). It would also set up a process for them to follow in the future. Meanwhile, in an effort to help insulate dealers from potentially catastrophic legal actions, NADA has developed and promoted its *Fair Credit Compliance Policy & Program*. You can get more information regarding the Fair Credit Compliance and Policy program by going to NADA's website, www.nada.org.

Legislative Activity

Transportation Budget Funding

2015 is a budget year for the Wisconsin legislature. By the time this goes to print, the Wisconsin legislature may have very well passed the 2015-2016 biennium budget. However, there are certain issues that WATDA has been watching and advocating on behalf of the dealers. In December the Wisconsin DOT submitted their proposed budget to the Governor. The proposal

included a 2.5% sales tax on the MSRP of all new vehicles sold. The tax was estimated to generate \$379 million in revenues for the biennium. WATDA immediately started visiting with elected officials and the Governor's office regarding our opposition to the proposal. The Governor did not include the proposal in his budget that he submitted to the legislature. However, the Governor's proposed budget retains current spending levels for ongoing road projects, but no increases for proposed projects to move forward. Unfortunately current projected revenue streams will not properly fund all ongoing projects, so the Governor proposed bonding for \$1.3B to cover the projected increased expenses or reduced revenues, however you want to phrase it. Indications are that the legislature is not very comfortable with that level of bonding and the ensuing debt load going forward that it will produce.

Knowing that the legislature would look at new and old revenue sources to help shore-up the budget (at no less to reduce the bonding level), WATDA met with the leadership of the legislature as well as the transportation committee members. WATDA shared with officials what areas we believed to be most hurtful to the dealers and in what areas we believed additional revenues could be generated. We stressed that any new revenue streams not hinder or deter people from buying cars in Wisconsin. We indicated that WATDA opposed the 2.5% sales tax on MSRP, elimination of the Trade-in Credit, value-based registration and a vehicle-miles-traveled tax. We shared with them different solutions we believed would get them near the \$379 million to the 2.5% tax would have generated. One new idea being looked into is eliminating self-reporting on private transactions sales and utilizing an average value. (i.e. NADA used car guide) for determining the sales tax due.

GPS Bill:

WATDA has been monitoring a bill that would make it a crime for individuals to place a GPS tracking device on another's vehicle, except for certain situations. Dealers fall under a couple of the exemptions. The reason that this bill is worthy of our attention is that currently the law is silent as to the installation of GPS tracking devices. In the past both DMV and DFI have not favored the use of GPS devices. This bill, if passed (and it will be) will legitimize the use by dealers (classified as lienholders). WATDA has requested a meeting with DFI to go over and set up ground rules for proper disclosures for customers.

Anti-Steering (body shop) Bill:

WATDA is monitoring an anti-steering bill that would prevent insurers from requiring that their insureds take their vehicle to a specific body shop for collision repairs. WATDA has not taken a position on this legislation but is monitoring as it moves through committee.

Employment Contracts Bill:

Traditionally restrictive covenants in employment contracts (commonly referred to as non-competes) are construed and enforced by courts very narrowly. They are universally (at least in the U.S.) construed in a light most favorable to the restricted party (former employee) and must be constructed in a very narrow and limited fashion. Employers must show that they have a legitimate business interest that they are protecting and that they will be unduly harmed if the former employee is allowed to work within an immediate geographic area and compete within the same business industry.

This bill greatly restricts judicial review and shifts the primary focus from an individual's right to earn a livelihood to protect-

ing the business interest of the enforcing party of a restrictive covenant. The bill also lays out specific elements that courts can take into consideration and when reviewing a contested agreement. Such as, in the past if any provision of a restrictive covenant were found to be overbroad the whole agreement could be found null and void; under the proposed laws, courts are instructed that they are to rewrite the provision to facilitate the restriction in a manner that preserves the prohibition of a former employee competing with the former employer.

The bill is likely to pass and probably be challenged in the courts over time.

License Plate Bill:

DMV Advisory Committee has made several requests to DMV to amend the current license plate designations based on the weight of the vehicle. WATDA was told that there was a bill in drafting to address that issue in the last legislative session but it was not introduced. WATDA tracked down the draft and asked Senator Petrowski, Chairman of the Senate Transportation Committee if he would sponsor it. He agreed, but when DMV was consulted about it by his office, they indicated that they do not support the measure. The good news is that we have the framework for a bill. WATDA will continue to work with DOT to seek a solution.

Lemon Law Clean-Up:

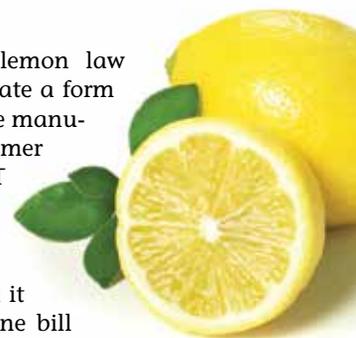
We are still trying to clean-up the lemon law amendments that called for DMV to create a form to document each repair made under the manufacturer's warranty. It requires the customer to fill out a form prescribed by the DOT for every repair performed within the first year of ownership and submit that form to the manufacturer. All parties involved have agreed upon the fix, and it looks as though it may be a stand-alone bill once the budget process is completed.

Warranty Reimbursement Issues:

We have two issues regarding warranty reimbursement. The first is that the manufacturers are growing more and more contentious in awarding dealers their due reimbursement rates. The second is that the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers wants to introduce a new formula for warranty reimbursement but has been evasive regarding what those changes may include. We are watching this closely as to make sure the Alliance doesn't slip something into the budget regarding a new formula. Note: the current formula was developed by the Alliance, GM, Ford, and others in our last franchise law negotiations.

Tesla:

WATDA continues to work the strategy developed after the summer 2014 board meeting. We developed a leave-behind piece that has been successful throughout the campaign season and the first half of the legislative session. As different states alter their franchise laws for Tesla, we continue to share with legislators that doing so would create two parallel auto retail systems among competitors and would open the door to lawsuits challenging the law. Additionally, we point out that



the current law provides for exceptions for a manufacturer to sell direct, meaning that no changes to our law are necessary. Under the Wisconsin factory store prohibition the exception provides for a hearing in front of an administrative law judge. The factory has to show that there are no viable dealers willing to take on the rigors of their unique distribution requirements.

Takata Air Bag Mess

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has announced a national recall on Takata air bags, affecting over 34 million vehicles. All indications are that this will be the largest automotive industry recall in history. Compounding the logistic hurdles of carrying out the recall are that Takata currently supplies approximately a quarter of the automotive air bag inflator market, the number of identified recalled vehicles is likely to increase, the initial estimated cost of paying for the recalls is about \$2.5 Billion (not including legal costs associated with pending and future class action lawsuits) and Takata and three rival suppliers (who are already producing to capacity) supply about 80% of the air bag inflator market world-wide.

The magnitude of this recall issue is sure to fuel the efforts by some in congress who have been pushing for legislation that would ground all vehicles with open recalls at dealerships and car rental companies. Any such measure at this time would surely cripple the supply of safe, albeit subject to a recall, vehicles available to be used as loaners or rentals for people whose vehicle is being repaired, those rented for work or vacation and the supply of used vehicles with non-safety related recalls for sale to the public.

Let's assume that Takata will find lenders willing to support their efforts to fulfill their air bag replacement obligations (because the mess grows exponentially if they go under and they don't have the resources to make it through this without financial help). It is going to take years to complete the recalls. Not only is there a parts production and supply issue, but then getting vehicle owners to bring in their vehicles for repairs has been and will be problematic.

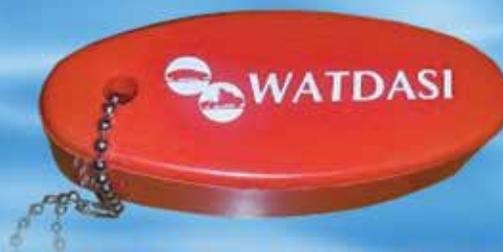
Bottom line is, the auto industry is going to need guidance from NHTSA in setting up a priority system as to which manufacturers and in what regions of the country should be targeted as areas most at risk, so that once production of replacement air bag systems is up and running, there can be an orderly disbursement for replacements. Current testing has shown a rupture rate of less than one tenth of one percent (0.0722 according to Recall 15E-040). Nine of about 12,500 inflators tested ruptured and all nine were from high humidity states (6 - Florida, 2 - Puerto Rico and 1- Georgia). We have not seen any scientific premises as to why temperature and humidity create a higher risk of shrapnel, but the numbers seem to indicate that is the case.

Now that NHTSA has formally issued a recall on the air bags, it means that dealers are not allowed to deliver any "NEW" vehicles that are subject to the recall until the replacements have been performed. Dealers should contact their manufacturer regarding floor-plan assistance for those frozen units. Wisconsin franchised dealers also have an obligation to disclose any outstanding recalls on used vehicles in their inventory of the same make that they are franchised for.

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(9) MANUFACTURER RECALLS. Before delivering to a retail purchaser any used vehicle of a line make for which the dealer holds a franchise, the dealer shall do all of the following that are applicable:

(a) Determine from the vehicle's manufacturer whether or not the vehicle is the subject of any unperformed manufacturer recalls.

(b) If the vehicle is the subject of any unperformed manufacturer recalls for which the manufacturer will reimburse the dealer for performing, perform all such recalls or agree in writing to perform such recalls at a time convenient to the customer not later than 20 days after delivery, unless the unavailability of parts or other circumstances beyond the control of the dealer prevents performance within that time.

(c) Disclose in writing to the purchaser any unperformed manufacturer recalls with regard to the vehicle that have been disclosed to the dealer upon inquiry of the manufacturer.

Therefore, dealers can still deliver used vehicles with unperformed recalls provided they disclose it properly. Franchised dealers can find out the recall status of used vehicles that they hold a franchise for by contacting their manufacturer. Further, dealers wanting to disclose unperformed recalls as a courtesy for their customers can search the new NHTSA recall database by going to www.safercar.gov.

In that Takata was/is producing over 25% of the airbags in the market the existence of a recall on any given make and model vehicle is a moving target at the time. NADA is recommending that dealers disclose unrepaired recalls by providing customers with a printout from the VIN-specific lookup found at <https://vinrcl.safercar.gov/vin/>. You should make a copy of the printout and have the customer sign your (dealer) copy as proof that the printout was provided to the customer, thereby having proof of a timely disclosure at the time of sale.

California New Car Dealers Association Sues TrueCar

The California New Car Dealers Association (CNCDA) has filed a lawsuit against TrueCar seeking injunctive relief. CNCDA is asking the court to examine TrueCar's business practice and determine whether they are operating and holding themselves out to the public as a dealer or broker. Currently TrueCar views itself internally as a third-party lead generator which is not subject to licensing and the California Vehicle Code. However, CNCDA contends that TrueCar's business model and advertisements (how it holds itself out to the public) misleads people into believing that they are in fact a dealer or no less a broker. The injunctive relief being sought would require TrueCar to cease doing business until the court determines their status (auto broker) and consequently obtains the proper licensure and certification. ●

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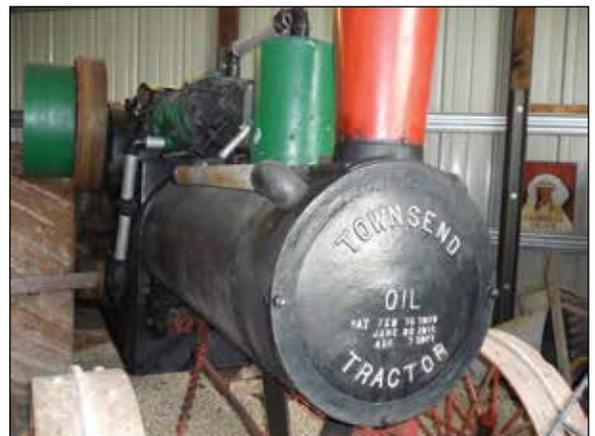
All Steamed Up

BY GARY BEIER, VICE PRESIDENT, FOUNDATION OF WATDA

That's how some in the Algoma area might picture the Rabas brothers- Jeff and Jim, Jr – owners of Algoma Buick GMC. Their collection of 14 vintage steam engines is a popular sight at area festivals, but there's more to it than that.

Actually it was these giants, biggest among them 'Big Jim' that laid the foundation for the Rabas family auto dealership. It began back in 1927 when the late Jim Rabas, Sr. bought a 1924 Minneapolis steam engine. This 13-foot, 16-ton, 75-horsepower behemoth became the center of a 20-year-long threshing operation at farms all over the Kewaunee area. The dealership opened sometime later, but in its early years, it was the threshing operation that often kept everything else afloat.

Today, these giants are the centerpieces of parades and events from Algoma to Lambeau Field, even the Wisconsin State Fair. A great showcase of our mechanical heritage. ●



Beloit AYES Students Recognized for a Unique Fundraiser

BY WHITNEY HELM, BELOIT DAILY NEWS

Students at Beloit Memorial High School are sparking life back into its SkillsUSA club and they want to use your lawnmower to do it.

SkillsUSA is a national organization that helps prepare students for careers in technical, skilled and service occupations. BMHS has had a chapter for a number of years, but the club is hoping to add to its 12-member roster. The students will be tuning up lawnmowers in preparation for spring, and they will use the money they gain from the repairs to help pay for projects and to travel to the Wisconsin SkillsUSA competition next year.

"The way the economy is and the way school budgets are, we have to do fundraisers. This is one of the great opportunities where we can offer a service to the community. It's a win-win for everyone," said Technology and Automotive Education Teacher Aaron Troxell.

President of BMHS SkillsUSA Alyxandrea Richards said she became involved in the club after a teacher suggested it.

"There's a wide range of kids that don't know about it and we're hoping it will grow over time," Richards said.

The statewide club offers a camp at the beginning of the school year, which helps students interact with their state counterparts.

"We learned to write a resume, do interviews and teamwork skills," said Vice President Brandon Wortham, who attended the camp in November.

The only SkillsUSA member from Beloit to ever attend a competition is Junior Dominic Putnam, who said he didn't compete, but still learned while being there.

"It's a real team building experience," Putnam said. "You get to interact with other people and discover other interests."

There are more than 17,000 sections and 52 state and territorial associations of SkillsUSA. ●

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WELCOMING NEW BUSINESS PARTNER: Wells Vehicle Electronics

BY GARY BEIER, VICE PRESIDENT, FOUNDATION OF WATDA

This spring your Foundation was able to produce a new video presentation highlighting the statewide efforts of our *Team Wisconsin* education partners. Three of our AYES sites and the Wisconsin Technical College System provided videos, which were added to our library of some 4,500 still photos taken by Foundation staff at sites throughout the state.

This movie was possible because Mark Hicks, Technical Services Manager at Wells Vehicle Electronics of Fond du Lac, volunteered their state-of-the-art production center to help us get the job done — and indeed they did. The *Team Wisconsin* movie made its debut at the International Technology and Engineering Education Association's international conference held this spring in Milwaukee.

Wells, a vehicle component manufacturer, has ultra-modern production facilities here at its world headquarters in Fond du Lac. Their other manufacturing plant is located in Reynosa Mexico and they have a distribution center in Centerville, Iowa. The Wells Fond du Lac plant was featured last fall on the Science Channel's "How It's Made" series. Their video production operation is a service to technicians world-wide.

Their partnership with us goes back a number of years with their generous donations of component parts for the classroom

training boards, which are assembled by the participating teachers at the Summer Institutes. Three hundred of these are used in classrooms throughout our AYES network.

For the past few months Wells has been offering a "Live" training class every two weeks. The response has been very positive from viewers. One of the classes each month is designed for "Those who do not perform diagnostics every day." In these classes they have been training how to properly use a Digital Volt Ohm Meter. In future sessions we will be training on the use of scan tools and lab scopes.

The other class each month is designed for the more experienced technician. In these classes Wells focuses on how the system functions. By knowing how a system functions it makes it possible for the students to apply the learned information to many different diagnostic scenarios.

Wells Vehicle Electronics YouTube videos continue to receive serve multiple viewers every minute. To date 14,351 active subscribers have used the service for 7,730,568 total views!

You can see the *Team Wisconsin* movie by going to watda.org then open the Foundation's page and click on the AYES movie link. The Wells training videos are available at: <http://www.wellsve.com/videos.html>. ●

What Comes Around: AN ALUMNI PROFILE

BY GARY BEIER, VICE PRESIDENT, FOUNDATION OF WATDA

Earlier this year during our scholarship interview cycle, I was pleasantly surprised when the Dahl Automotive Group hosted the La Crosse area candidate interviews at its downtown Subaru store.

Travis Hubert, the Dahl Service Director on our interviewing team, noted that he had been on the other side of the table when he was interviewed for our scholarship in 1999. He became a Dahl Foundation scholarship recipient back then and has been with them ever since, now as Service Director of the Subaru store on 4th Street.

Travis says it was his dad, a 39-year employee with a service and fixed operations career at the Dahl dealerships, who got him into the business. He says that students should get early experience in spots like the lube rack or something similar.

What personal advice does Hubert offer aspiring students? "Set some goals early on and commit to an organization that's going to commit to you. If you are good to your company, they will be good to you."

Indeed what goes around comes around, and, in this case it was a good trip! ●



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