

# BULLETIN

NATIONAL TRACTOR PARTS DEALER ASSOCIATION

SPRING 2012

"USED, REBUILT AND NEW AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL REPAIR PARTS"

VOL. 22, NO. 1

PRESIDENT'S PEN  
Page 3



MESSAGE FROM  
PHYLLIS  
Page 4



2012 ANNUAL  
CONFERENCE & TRADE  
SHOW  
Page 5



SPECIAL THANKS  
Page 8



EVOLVING BUSINESS  
MODELS  
Page 9



DID YOU KNOW?  
Page 11



MARK YOUR  
CALENDARS!  
Page 18



GREETINGS FROM  
GREASY GIRL  
Page 20



Spring . . .  
A Great Selling  
Season

Inside . . .  
2012 Conference and Trade Show



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# From the President's Pen ..



The Good Old Boys Club..... Really?

Have you heard that term associated with NTPDA Boards – past and present? I have, and I will tell you that there's hardly anything you can say to me about the organization that offends me more. I take that one personal and anyone who is on our current board should as well. The implication that there's an underlying hierarchy that controls the organization is, um, "hogwash". Yeah, let's go with hogwash.



Jeff Griggs - President

When my good friend Carl Vande Weerd stepped aside as the NTPDA President last summer, leapfrogging me into that position about three years early, I inherited great timing.....as it was about the time our trust started eroding dramatically again (due to the stock market spiraling downward). The immediate task at hand for your President and the Board of Directors was to dig hard into the budget and find targets for expense reduction. That sure was a lot of fun!

But it had to be done; and even though it took a lot of our collective time, I'm very pleased with the results. The downside is that most of my first seven months as your President was devoted to that task and not to what I really wanted to accomplish; which was finding new revenue streams for the organization and cleaning up some inaccuracies in member statuses.

Anyway, back to my point: Good Old Boys Club? I equate that to sitting around doing nothing.....and wow, I sure don't feel like that's been the case! I think back to the recent trade show and the major change that was made by scheduling small group rotations and meetings with EVERY vendor. Our Associate member suppliers thought the change was the best thing to happen to the trade show in years, and the surveys we received back from attendees indicated just that. And now we're looking at making more changes to the trade show that should enhance it even more (again, based on member feedback from the surveys).

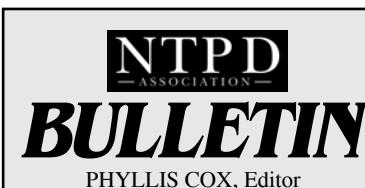
In closing, I wonder if maybe that whole "club" idea isn't so bad after all. Yeah, I'm now thinking I want to be IN the "club" ..... but I want my club to be 179 members strong! That means all of you.

Oh, and let's go find some new club members too.

Take care and have a great Spring selling season.

Jeff Griggs

e-mail: jeff@asapagparts.com



Articles, letters, advertisements and comments are encouraged and should be sent to:

The National Tractor Parts Dealer Association makes every reasonable effort to ensure accuracy of information contained in the *Bulletin* and to give credit to original authors where applicable. NTPDA and/or its agents are not responsible for errors or omissions.

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# Message from Phyllis



Another trade show has come and gone and from the feedback we received via word of mouth (see Kim's article) and the survey we sent out - it was one of our best!

For those of you who have been involved in planning a trade show you know some of the challenges we face every year, trying to make it more interesting as well as educational and to get everyone involved in some aspect of the show. We think we accomplished that this year with our Marketplace I and II which allowed everyone in attendance to visit with each display in small groups. Since this was our first attempt we will be tweaking a few things next year but overall we got a good response from everyone participating - from attendees to displayers.

And...you'll want to mark your

calendars for next year's conference and trade show being held in Little Rock, Arkansas at The Peabody Hotel. It will be a little later this year -January 30th through February 1st - and if you've just taken a look at your calendars - yes....we will end the trade show on Friday night with our very popular dinner and dancing. After much discussion and looking at the cost incurred to the association by having the trade show on Saturday for only three hours it was simply not cost effective. We will make sure that the three hours you lose on Saturday will be absorbed into our trade show hours on Thursday and Friday. We will also be holding our Marketplace I and II and I think you'll see that even though we've reduced the days, you are going to get so much more information than you ever thought possible! We're looking forward to seeing you in Little Rock!!!

I hope you enjoy this issue of the *Bulletin* which highlights our conference and trade show in San Antonio. As always you'll gain insight and knowledge reading the articles presented by our board members - Jeff, Tom and Terri and also Kim's always insightful thoughts for you!

Remember that this is YOUR association and we welcome any thoughts and comments you might have.

Hope your days are getting warmer and longer and that you have a wonderful Spring!

Until next time,

*Phyllis*

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# 2012 Conference and Trade Show



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A HUGE thanks to everyone that helped make our conference and trade show a huge success. We couldn't do it without the combined efforts of the attendees, displayers, sponsors, board of directors and staff. And, an extra special thank you to Mike Hansen for helping make sure the trade show ran without a hitch!!! And...of course, Kim Carroll who without her amazing organizational skills and friendliness and her ability to put up with me...well, it just wouldn't all come together! I also need to thank Kevin Mulder for helping me put together our Marketplace I and II. This was our first year to present this to the attendees and we feel like it was a positive addition to our conference and trade show! We will be continuing it next year in Little Rock.

So...once again...thanks to all you who made our 28th Annual Conference and Trade Show a big success!

# Evolution

# Business Models

by Tom Winkleblack

I was relieved to see such positive response to the Conference and Trade Show in San Antonio. The board has been discussing for at least two years the need to mix it up a little and hopefully stimulate some enthusiasm and ultimately expand participation.

I know it is human nature to resist change because we all get so comfortable in our routines and it is just easier to keep doing things the way we like to or have been doing them. Quite often some life-changing event has to occur before we leave our comfort zone and make adjustments because we are forced to. Think back over your life or business career where you did something because you were forced to and when you look back you realize it was the best thing for you.

I read an article last month from the New York Times about the U.S. Postal Service warning lawmakers that it will lose as much as \$18.2 billion a year by 2015 if Congress does not grant it leeway to eliminate Saturday delivery, slow down first-class mail by one day and raise the price of a postage stamp by as much as 5 cents. Wow—didn't the postage rate just increase two months ago?

Last December David Williams, vice president of network operations for USPS was promoting these lower level services as a means to become financially viable and acknowledged that they had lost 29 percent of their first-class mail volume in the last decade. He also noted that current trends project another 47 percent drop in volume between now and 2020.

The U.S. Postal Service is an independent agency of our government. It does not receive tax money, but is subject to congressional control of large aspects of its operations (proposed changes in first-class mail delivery can be implemented without permission from Congress).

Postmaster General Patrick Donahoe has been suggesting reduced work days, slower delivery times, postage rate increases and reduced health care and other means of controlling labor costs.

After five years of operating in the red, Donahue stated, "We have a business model that is failing. You can't continue to run red ink and not make changes." Really, you think!

During the holidays one of our local postal employees complained that we were bringing too many parcels in one day and asked if we could cut back. This is what develops in a monopolistic situation where there is a lack of competition - higher rates, slower service and employees with attitude.

A free market is a form of natural selection- a business or any enterprise must evolve physically and mentally to survive.

According to Wikipedia, natural selection is the gradual, nonrandom process by which biological traits become either more or less common in a population as a function of differential reproduction of their bearers. It is a key mechanism of evolution; the process in nature by which, according to Darwin's theory of evolution, only the organisms best adapted to their environment tend to survive and transmit their genetic characteristics in increasing numbers to succeeding generations while those less adapted tend to be eliminated.

In very simple terms natural selection has been referred to as survival of the fittest.

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**Quite often some life-changing event has to occur before we leave our comfort zone**

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The U.S. Postal service has not adapted over time as the market they operate in has changed dramatically.

The significance to all of us is that this organization is the second largest employer in the United States and the challenge will be for Congress to make any changes affecting 653,000 employees in an election year.

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# DID YOU KNOW?

By Kim Carroll



Did you know that the NTPDA rewards members for helping grow YOUR Association? One of your member benefits is the Member Referral Program. By taking advantage of this program it could ultimately pay for your yearly membership dues. All you have to do is refer a company who becomes a member of NTPDA and your membership dues for the following year are waived. It is that easy!

The highest compliment this Association can receive is when members refer business associates. Share with the businesses you refer why you feel NTPDA is a viable investment for his/her business. Share your own experiences of what the Association has meant to you and your business. Personal contact from people they know like you is far more effective

than sending information that gets lost in an e-mail inbox or on a desk, or getting another telemarketing type call when they are busy with their overscheduled day already.

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Remember this is YOUR Association. Please feel free to contact us with questions, suggestions, or comments to assist us in making this an association that benefits you now and for years to come!

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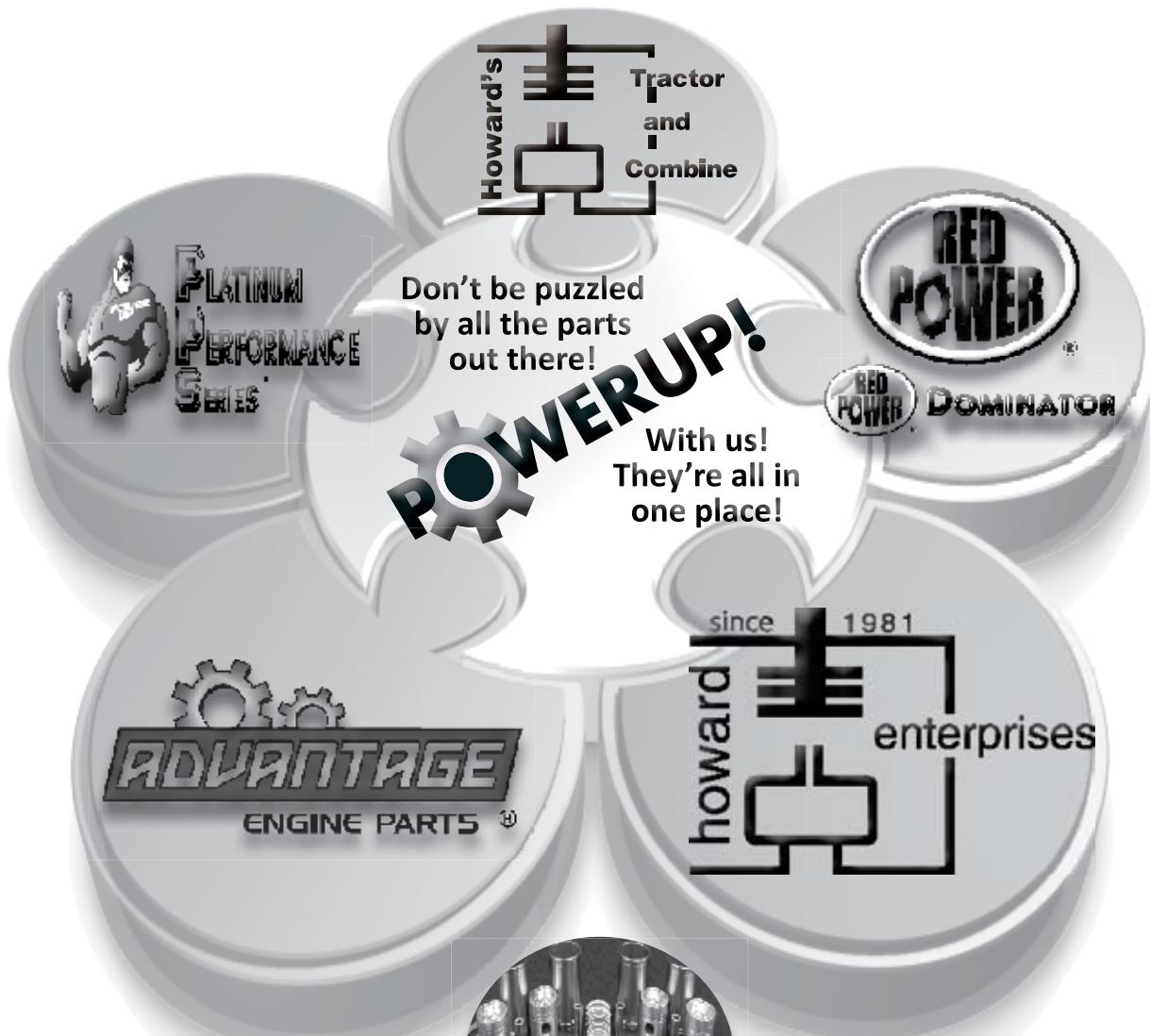


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4-POST HEADLINER



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# Greetings from Greasy Girl

By Terri Stevens

Hello Friends

Do you all like change in your life? Some changes are easy like becoming a grandparent, and then others are more difficult.

It is funny how we as humans like for things to stay the same. Have you ever noticed that a lot of times you will even sit in the same place at church? Now I am not one of those people that gets mad if someone is in my spot but it does throw me off a little bit.

At the Tractor Barn our sign has been an old 8N Ford tractor. One day I got to looking at our old sign and I thought that doesn't really represent who we are as a company. So we took it down and I got a new sign. It was funny people came in and said "Where is the old tractor?" I didn't realize how much people were in the habit of looking at the old sign. I am hoping that people will be excited about

the changes we are making and that they will embrace our new ideas and our new staff.

I have been in a family business all my life and for the first time in 36 years I am not. I no longer have anyone working with me that is a part of my family. That for me is a huge change. I have embraced this change and am enjoying having people working for me that are excited about their job. I had a man tell me that he hadn't seen anyone as enthusiastic about being at work in a long time. I guess what I am trying to say is, make the changes you need to make you excited about your job. I think it is crazy how we spend so much time at our jobs and aren't really that thrilled about being there. I had gotten into that old rut of not being very excited about going to work anymore.

I am trying to see that life is a gift and that every day and all the people that I come into contact with are the people that I need to show kindness to and help them out along their way. I think it is critical that our employees reflect energy and enthusiasm toward our customers. If your employees aren't excited about what they are doing and are in that old rut, do something to shake them up. Take them to lunch, tell them what a great job they are doing, or give them a day off 'just because' or tell a customer how proud you are of your staff and the way that they are helping you run your company more efficiently.

People love to be praised and they love to feel that their ideas matter. So embrace the changes in your life allow them to make you better not bitter.

Look around and see who needs a kind word or a bit of encouragement today. I promise it will make your life better as you look for the good in others.

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