



BULLETIN

NATIONAL TRACTOR PARTS DEALER ASSOCIATION

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SUMMER 2013

VOL. 23, NO. 2

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BULLETIN

PHYLLIS COX, Editor

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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.

Membership ROI – are you getting yours?



Jeff Griggs - President

Association leaders all across the country are continually challenged with bringing value to their members and answering that all important question:

“What have you done for me lately?”

Well the last time I checked, the NTPDA offered nearly twenty member benefits – any one of which exploited

could bring complete return on their investment in membership.

That's right, from ARAMARK to TELEQUIP all the way to our member referral program, there are abundant ways in which you can easily recoup your entire investment in membership.

In my opinion, one of the best benefits is the new SMART SHIPPING PROGRAM that comes from our partnership with the SAV Transportation Group.

SAV recently informed me that although there are still more members to orient, there are an impressive number of our members that have begun to utilize the program.

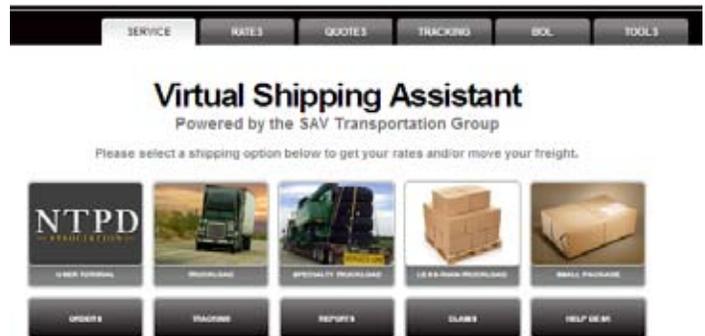
If you've not yet gotten the “memo” then let me review:

SAV has negotiated custom pricing and has done so based off of our collective member “spend” – those who've enrolled in the program have unlimited access to preferred rates for:

- ✓ SAV's fleet and brokerage service for both full and partial truckloads
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- ✓ A full coverage insurance option from folks at Wells Fargo Insurance services.

Aside from this broad range of services, SAV is willing to work with any of our members to arrive at SMART SHIPPING strategies and define custom routing guides and they also plan to offer their SMART SHIPPING SEMINARS at our next annual convention.



Glen Leaders (Leaders Salvage) reports sound customer service, Tracy Carpenter (Pleasant Hill) has continually accessed the special “truck and tractor” rate that SAV has arranged our members and Mat Erickson (Farmland Tractor) shared that he saved \$75 on the very first shipment under the new SMART SHIPPING program.

Anyway, it might be a good idea to visit our website and take a new look at the MEMBER BENEFITS page. While you're at it you can click the SMART SHIPPING tab and get enrolled in the SAV program.

That's what we've done for you lately and there are more good things to come!

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ABOUT GROWING OLDER...

Eventually you will reach a point when you stop lying about your age and start bragging about it.

The older we get, the fewer things seem worth waiting in line for.

Some people try to turn back their odometers. Not me, I want people to know "why" I look this way. I've traveled a long way and some of the roads weren't paved.

When you are dissatisfied and would like to go back to youth, think of algebra.

You know you are getting old when everything either dries up or leaks.

I don't know how I got over the hill without getting to the top.

One of the many things no one tells you about aging is that it is such a nice change from being young.

One must wait until evening to see how splendid the day has been.

Being young is beautiful, but being old is comfortable.

Long ago when men cursed and beat the ground with sticks, it was called witchcraft. Today it's called golf.

If you don't learn to laugh at trouble, you won't have anything to laugh at when you are old.

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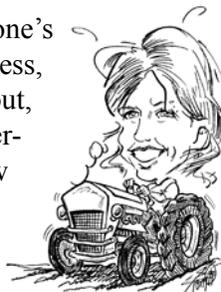


Message from Phyllis

Summer has officially arrived...and here in Texas we are already experiencing 100+ degrees! We've had a little rain but we could sure use some more! Hopefully that will happen before too long.

It also means that we are half-way through the year and Kim and I are getting ready to attend our Summer Board Meeting that we are holding in Kansas City again this year. Kansas City is centrally located for most of us and easy to fly in and out of and close enough for some to drive. We meet Friday night for dinner and hold the board meeting on Saturday. We do this to save the Association a bit of money. But we would love to bring back the old days when we had many of you join us for the board meeting and we

would tour someone's place of business, have a cook-out, visit places of interest, etc. See below for a great group that joined us in Sioux Falls in 2003! Hopefully we'll be able to do that again in the very near future!



In this issue of the Bulletin we will be highlighting the 2013 scholarship recipients. Once again our committee - consisting of Jeff Fawcett, Carol Russell, Brian Kitch and Bob Waggoner had the difficult decision of awarding these scholarships. A big thank you for all the time you spent in doing this for NTPDA...we sincerely appreciate you.

In a few months we will start working on our 2014 Conference and Trade Show to be held in Tucson, AZ. We will be discussing the schedule at our board meeting in July. If you have any thoughts about what you would like to see us bring to this show please feel free to contact myself, Kim or any of the board members. I will also be visiting Memphis this year to begin planning our 2015 Conference and Trade Show and will be bringing you that information when I see you in Tucson.

I hope all of you have a wonderful summer...stay cool and be safe.

Until next time,

Phyllis

Summer Board Meeting - Rapid City, SD - 2003 - Let's bring back the good ole days!!!!



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Whatever happened to Customer Service?

By Tom Winkleblack

Recently we experienced a problem with outgoing toll free phone calls. I called the telephone company that sends us an invoice every month with their name across the top in large print to request repair service. I had to spend 7-8 minutes wading through the usual automated phone answerer only to be told I had to call a different number. At the second number there was the same automated service and then finally, a "customer service representative" started asking me what the circuit ID # was and I couldn't locate that information on their billing statement. The next round of questions pertained to what type of circuit it was and I had to admit that I was not a telephone technician - I was merely a customer needing phone service repair. Finally, 20 minutes into this call the representative told me they had sold off our geographic area two years ago and now I must call another number at a different company to request service.



In the last six months I contacted my local Cable TV provider to inquire about a service upgrade. After agreeing to a new program I was instructed to pick up a new black box from the local office and on my way home from work I stopped to do so. When I arrived I was told that there were none in stock-seems the toll-free number that I called could be any one of three scattered around the United States and the local agent assured me they would have no access to their inventory information (not how they tell it when speaking with them). The local office does not provide ANY phone service - no number listed so you cannot call them - you must walk in their door and wait in line for an agent to wait on you. Their primary Customer Service is afforded with out-of-state phone answerers that can quote promotional rates, recite the physical location and office hours of the nearest agent, but mislead customers about equipment availability.

I have requested that the local electric utility inspect our property and recommend a configuration for establishing back-up generator support during power outages. They have responded by sending the same electrical engineer three times over the last five years and he has prescribed a

couple possibilities. Unfortunately, every option he proposes specifies a manual switch that is no longer in production or available in the market place. I have personally contacted the manufacturer (the engineer provided an outdated sales brochure) and called a couple wholesale electrical distributors trying to either locate inventory on a shelf or verify that it is no longer available. It is definitely not available. Apparently, this individual has enough political clout that the local electricians cannot find anyone in the utility with enough guts to go around or over him for fear of losing their job. We have thousands of dollars' worth of back-up generators on hand and a service provider that could care less how many thousands of dollars we lose because our employees cannot work during a power outage.

Unlike the three aforementioned interactions our industry does not operate in a monopolistic business environment and we will not survive the rigors of competition if we allow our employees or corporate personality to develop such a callous attitude toward our customers.

To be continued.....



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Five steps to customer service improvement

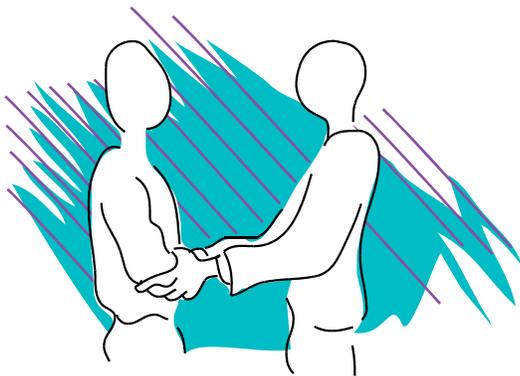
By Kristina Evey

If you are striving to compete or even become the market leader, these customer service tips will help you make the necessary improvements.

Customer service is the one strong advantage that small businesses have over large corporations. Small businesses can form stronger customer relationships that will directly result in higher profits and revenues.

Small business owners and managers can quickly connect with the customer in a personal way, respond to service issues, and quickly work in the best interest of the customer at all levels.

These five simple steps that the successful small businesses use are essential to instilling an excellent customer service experience.



1. Make the Right Hiring Decision

Hire the smile train the skill. Making sure that you hire friendly people is the first important step that you must consider when hiring the team that will be interacting directly with customers. For any public facing position, anyone who's interacting with a customer face-to-face or over the phone, be sure that that person is somebody who will best represent your company. After all, this person is going to be the face of your company to anyone they interact with.

2. The Culture of Your Company Must Be Customer Focused

The culture of your company at all levels from the top-down must be focused on customer at all times. By having a strong customer centric culture ingrained into everyone within your company, your customers and your team will know that the customer is a true part of your business.

3. Set Minimum Service Skills Expectations

Everyone within your business needs to know what the clear specific expectations are when it comes to interacting with customers. Without having defined expectations, everything is left to chance. Minimum service expectations need to be set regarding everything from how the phone is answered, how service related issues are managed, how the last customer impression is formed, handling exceptions to the rule, to follow-up and gathering customer feedback.

4. Ongoing Customer Service Training

Continual training is far more effective than a once a year training session for your team. Regular training reinforces how important customer service is, each and every day. By emphasizing customer focus in every team meeting and every process review, the customer is always held forth as the most important person in your business.

5. Put Your Money Where Their Service Is

Build a certain part of the performance evaluation around the level of customer service delivered. When team members understand that a percentage of their compensation comes directly from quality of customer service they display on a regular basis, the members committed to excellent service will stand out and be recognized for it. Those who don't will feel it in their wallet and hopefully step up or step out.

Bonus step - Have a plan in place and involve your team members in the customer experience. By getting your staff to be part of the process and solution, the ownership of the customer experience awakens the entrepreneurial spirit within them.

About the Author

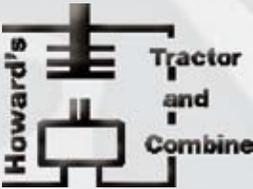
Kristina Evey is improving the way companies connect with their customers and is an accomplished speaker and trainer on Customer Satisfaction and Retention. Info: <http://www.kristinaevey.com>.



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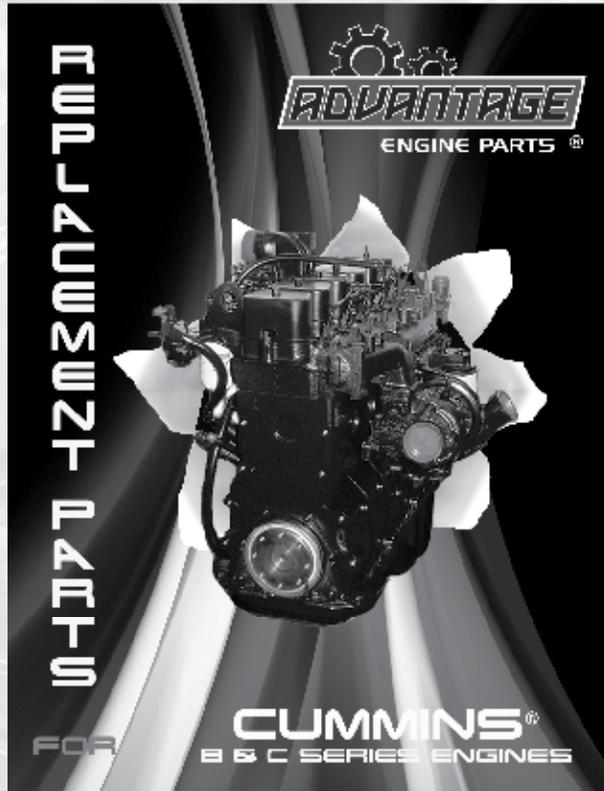
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SCHOLARSHIP

Recipients

Academic Year
2013-14

The NTPDA is proud to announce the 2013 scholarship recipients. To see what some of our recipients from 2003 have been doing over the past 10 years, see pages 14 and 15. It is rewarding to see how our scholarship monies supported them on their journey. We are so proud of all of you!



KATELYN RAEANNE ASMUS

Yale University
Degree: English
Sponsoring Member: All Sates Ag Parts, Inc. – Desoto, IA
Parents: Stephen & Sarah Asmus



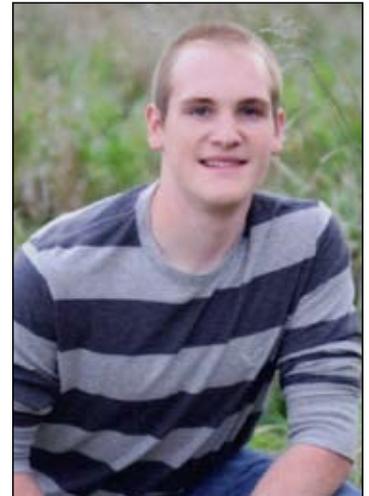
MICHAEL BLANKESPOOR

Augustana College
Degree: Pre-Med and Spanish
Sponsoring Member: A&I Products
Parents: Loren & Phyllis Blankespoor



SARAH ELIZABETH BONSON

Mount St. Mary's
Degree: Chemistry
Sponsoring Member: Hooper, Inc.
Parents: Mark & Ann Bonson



AUSTIN DANIELS

University of Wisconsin – Platteville
Degree: Physical Education
Sponsoring Member: Plastics Unlimited & FabriGlass Composites
Parents: Kevin Daniels and the late Marla Daniels



TANNER DICKERHOFF

Purdue University
Degree: Mechanical Engineering Technology
Sponsoring Member: TTP – Diesel Power & Machine
Parents: Doug & Kelly Dickerhoff



MATTHEW A. DYKE

South Dakota School of Mines and Technology
Degree: Mathematics
Sponsoring Member: All States Ag Parts, Inc. – Downing, WI
Parents: Paul & Lori Dyke



BLAKE EISENMANN

Northeast Community College
Degree: General Studies
Sponsoring Member: Eisenmann Supplies Inc.
Parents: Bob & Mary Eisenmann



K. JANA E HERR

Penn State University – Berks Campus
Degree: Agricultural & Extension Education
Sponsoring Member: Hooper, Inc.
Parents: Eric & Melissa Herr

SCHOLARSHIP

Recipients

Academic Year
2013-14



AMANDA KIEFFER
Kirkwood Community College
Degree: Agriculture Business
Sponsoring Member: Plastics
Unlimited & FabriGlass
Composites
Parents: Terry & Nancy Kieffer

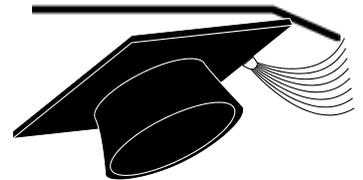


MORGAN KATHERINE LAUER
University of Iowa
Degree: Pre-Medical
Sponsoring Member: Herschel
Parents: Brett & Molly Lauer



JENNA MANUS
Art Institute International
Degree: Interior Design
Sponsoring Member: A&I
Products
Parents: Dan & Sherry Manus

BETHANY NANNENGA
University of Northern Iowa
Degree: Elementary Education
Sponsoring Member: TCM, Inc.
Parents: Randall & Deanna
Nannenga



DESIREE O'CONNELL
St. Catherine University
Degree: Exercise and Sport
Science
Sponsoring Member: Downing
Tractor Parts
Parents: Dan & Joan O'Connell



PAIGE M. OLSON
Concordia College
Degree: Nutrition/Exercise
Science
Sponsoring Member:
Worthington Ag Parts
Parents: Brian & Rachel Olson



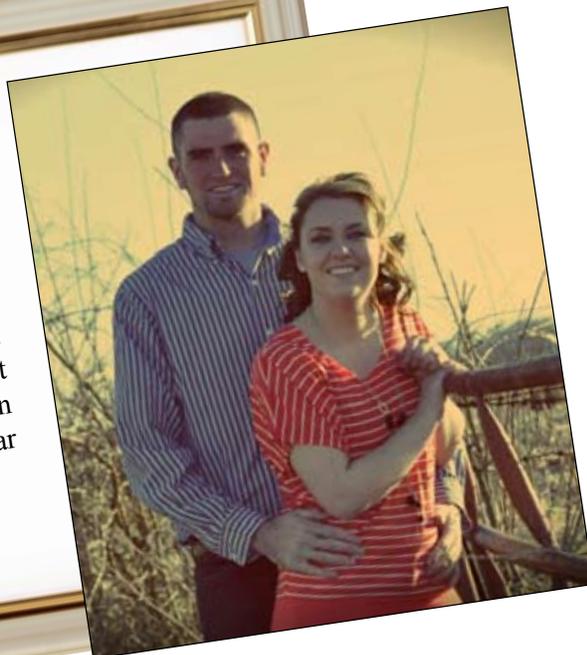
TESS WILNER
Cornell College
Degree: Business
Sponsoring Member:
Worthington Ag Parts
Parents: David & Kristine Wilner

Where Are They Now?

Where Are They Now?
Where Are They Now?

JAKE DENGLER

After receiving his NTPDA scholarship award, Jake attended Ohio State University in Columbus, Ohio. He previously worked for Dengler Tractor as a partsman and is now employed with Koenig Equipment, John Deere, in Oxford, Ohio as a parts man. He married Kristine Kurtz last August and they are expecting a baby girl in September. They live on a farm near the family.



NICK MULDER

graduated from Central College in Pella, Iowa in December 2007 with a degree in Business Management and has since completed a Masters in Business Administration from Anderson University in Anderson, Indiana. In 2009, Nick married Kelsey (Rethmeier) Mulder and they have one daughter named Shaye, who was born December 27, 2011. The Mulders currently reside in Pella, Iowa where Nick is an assistant football coach at Central College.



KRISTA SIMMONS

Since receiving her NTPDA scholarship Krista has received an Associates Degree in Medical Office from Blinn College and a Bachelors Degree in Business Administration from Tarleton State University. Upon completion of her associates degree she worked for the Department Head of Computer Science at Texas A&M University. A few years ago she moved back to her hometown to work at the local bank. She completed my bachelors degree through Tarleton State and at present works for Chadco Construction as an Administrative Assistant. She also works part time at the Horny Toad Bar & Grill.



MOLLY (BLOOM) TYROLER

graduated from the University of Wisconsin Green Bay in 2007 with a degree in Business Administration and an emphasis in Marketing. From there, she moved to Saint Paul, Minnesota, where she attended William Mitchell College of Law and obtained her Juris Doctorate in 2010. Since graduating from William Mitchell, Molly has practiced as a workers' compensation attorney, representing employers and insurers in the defense of workers' compensation claims in both Minnesota and Wisconsin. In August of 2012, Molly married her best friend, Isaac, and they live in Woodbury, Minnesota with their cat, Finley Jennings (can you tell they are big Packer fans?). They are currently enjoying the warm weather, and Molly is having fun finally being able to dig around in her gardens again.

JASON WITTE

Ten years ago Jason received an NTPDA scholarship and graduated from college at TSTC in Waco, TX.

His major was in Industrial Maintenance Engineering and he graduated with a Associate of Applied Science Degree. He started work for Bimbo Bakeries in Waco, TX. while attending school in the Co-op program. He worked in the maintenance department keeping the machines running and even continued working there after graduation. The business decided to close this warehouse down and move to another town. Jason then went to work for Allergan in Hewitt, TX where he maintains the machines that package the eye products. He and his wife, Megan, live in Valley Mills, TX with their daughter, 20 month old Cadence Harper.



Marc Johnson, a long-time member and one of the founders of NTPDA passed away on March 23, 2013. Marc had many friends within the association and we send our condolences to Marc's wife, Betty and their family. We thought it would be fitting to reprint the article that Marc wrote some time ago about his journey to Cranfills Gap and how he became the owner of Gap Tractor Parts.

As you can tell...this is in "his own words".



Me and Bet got out of the Navy in 1961 and headed back to the Gap from California in a 1950, hot water six, Ford 2 door sedan. Made it fine. I went to work fer my dad at "Johnson's Garage" fer fifty bucks a week. No set hours. Harvest time, mebbe 24 hours a day. Got to keep them farmers in the field. Got a call from a friend of mine up in Garland who said he could git me on at the plant where he worked as a maintenance mechanic fer just a bunch of money a week. We moved up there in 1967. Makin' more money than a country boy could hardly dream of. Livin' in a rat nice apartment with cold air.

Hooooeeey! Late '68 got the chance to buy me and Bet a house. One of them tract houses what was the model home. Seventeen hunnerd square fee, with cold air and even a built in vacuum cleaner.

Now, me and Bet had growed up what most folks would say was sorta poor. We didn't know it at the time; cause everybody in the same shape. I'll tell ya though, that she had it tougher 'n me, fer reasons I won't go in to here. Anyhow, we was livin' purty high on the hog.

Got a phone call from a friend of mine down in the Gap probably about March of '69. Said he wanted me to come to the Gap and have a meetin' with some folks down to the bank. Wouldn't tell me what it was all about but assured me I shore 'nough oughtta come. So I did. Seems Carroll Knudsen and J. J. Lee owned some lots and building up on the corner of FM 219 and SH 22 that was vacant. This was once the site of the Gap gin. They had held a tractor and equipment auction since '57 but had moved it to Clifton in '67. Them and a group of town leaders was tryin' to git somthin' goin' in the Gap. They had been in the tractor and equipment bidness fer a number of years and noticed many salvage yards around in their travels; especially up in Missouri. Thought that would be a good deal fer the Gap. Wanted me to take a share of it and run it for them. Handshake deal that they'd pay me a salary and that they'd want me to buy them out in 3 to 5 years if'n it looked lak it was gonna work.

I went back up to Garland and announced to Betty and the kids that we were movin' back to the Gap. Her response was, "Marc, if you think I'm movin' back to the Gap, and starve to death, you crazy as hell"!!! But, I done tol' 'em we're comin'. Well, she didn't like it; but hoped to heck I knew what I was doin'.

June the 5th, 1969, and we opened "Gap Tractor Salvage, Inc". We still had the "hoot and holler" phone system and our number was 58. Yep, 58 is all it was. Arnold & Agnes, the operators knew all them numbers and how many rings on each line to git anybody. But, that's another story; I'll share with ya sometime.

Best I remember my first sale was to a local feller. Sold him a running board off a 9N Ford for \$4.50; cash money. Carroll and J. J. was buyin' salvage tractors fer us and just bringin' 'em in. We'd tear 'em down and hope to heck we could sell the pieces. Didn't take long fer the word to git around about the Gap. Took out a small ad in the Progressive Farmer and ran it on a till forbid basis. Best money I ever spent.

Well, in about '74, I bought out the other eleven folks what had helped start this bidness and became sole owner. Over all the years I tried to let folks know that they would be dealt with fairly, in all aspects. And, it paid off. I am really proud of the reputation we built up over them years.

Elliot Brody, of Central Tractor, came to the Gap in 1988 and wanted to know if I'd be interested in sellin' Gap Tractor. Well, we made a deal and my last day was December 31, 1988. I was, supposedly, a man of leisure. Out of a job, but with a little money in my pocket. Not a clue what I was gonna do next. But, Betty said she could probably keep me busy for a while.

Well, in '92, Central announced to Larry Simmons, their Manager, that they were either gonna close up the Gap, or sell. Larry put together the deal to buy it from them, and let them go hack up north.

Well, in '95, I done realized that there wasn't no home-less shelters in the Gap, and they didn't feed senior citizens but three days a week, so I talked Larry into puttin' me to work. I shore thank him fer this job. Gap Tractor is still goin' good; and we all hope it continues fer many a year to come. We git to deal with some of the finest people on this earth. From the American farmer, to our colleagues in the bidness. I always stressed that I didn't have no competition; just "colleagues" in the bidness. And might nigh all of 'em is fine folks.

It's been a great life; but like I told a lady the other day when she asked if I'd lived in the Gap all my life. My reply was "not yet".

See ya down the trail, and may God bless all of ya.

Marc at the Gap

DID YOU KNOW?

By Kim Carroll



Did you know the NTPDA office is moving? That is right. . .we are moving on down the road. The landlord we have had since 1999 is building a new building for a company he owns and has included NTPDA in the plans to share the office space. It is a block from the downtown courthouse square and will be in a much better location than our current building. At right is a picture of the progress as of the first of June.



This summer is a time of cleaning out files in preparation for the transition. In doing so, I have come across old Bulletins, pictures, articles, correspondence, etc. One document I found was a questionnaire asking members why they think it is important for them to be associated with NTPDA. The one theme that came up as I read the comments was about networking and gaining knowledge from other members in the same business. I know long term friendships have been formed as a result of being involved in this association. That is just one of the

many benefits that members have received over the years. Our annual conference and trade show is a great time to connect with other members. It is a time to form those friendships and collaborate in sharing ideas. If you haven't already scheduled to join us for the 2014 Conference and Trade Show, January 22 – 25 in Tucson, AZ, I encourage you to start making plans now. Join us in making the 30th Annual NTPDA Show memorable.



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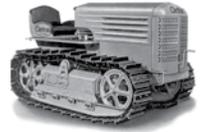


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DON'T FORGET!

IT'S TIME TO ENROLL IN THE NTPDA SMART SHIPPING PROGRAM

The screenshot shows the NTPDA Virtual Shipping Assistant website. At the top left is the NTPDA Association logo. A user greeting says "Welcome back JEFF | [Logout](#) | [Help](#)". Below is a navigation menu with tabs for SERVICE, RATES, QUOTES, TRACKING, BOL, and TOOLS. The main heading is "Virtual Shipping Assistant" with the subtext "Powered by the SAV Transportation Group". A prompt asks the user to "Please select a shipping option below to get your rates and/or move your freight." There are five main service tiles: "NTPDA VIRTUAL", "TRUCKLOAD" (with a truck image), "SPECIALTY TRUCKLOAD" (with a trailer image), "LESS THAN TRUCKLOAD" (with a pallet of boxes), and "SMALL PACKAGE" (with a box image). Below these are five smaller tiles: "ORDERS", "TRACKING", "REPORTS", "CLAIMS", and "HELP DESK". A footer contains copyright information for SAV Transportation Group.



That's right; NTPDA members have saved time and money by enrolling in our new SMART SHIPPING PROGRAM - which offers:

- ✓ Fleet and brokerage service for both full and partial truckloads
- ✓ Less-than-truckload (LTL) freight service from over forty qualified carriers
- ✓ Domestic and International Small Package service from FedEx, UPS and DHL
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- ✓ A full coverage insurance option from folks at Wells Fargo Insurance services.

CONTACT STEVEN HAAS TO GET ENROLLED IN THE PROGRAM NOW – YOU CAN REACH HIM AT 612-296-1806 OR AT: SHAAS@SAVTRANS.COM

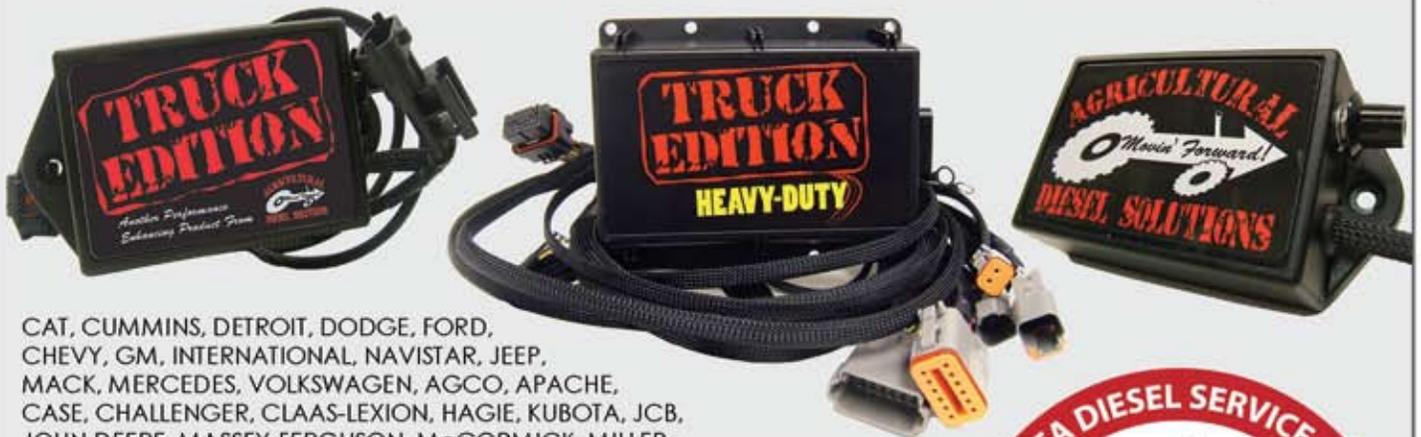
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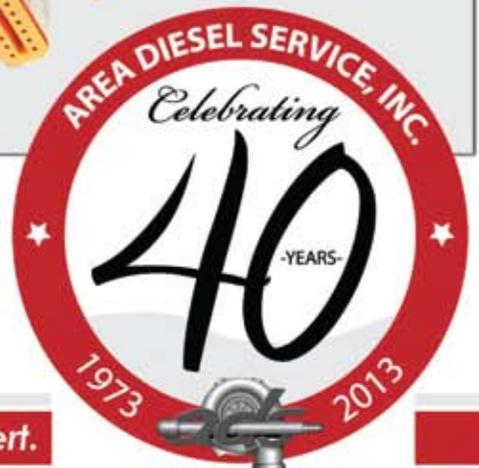
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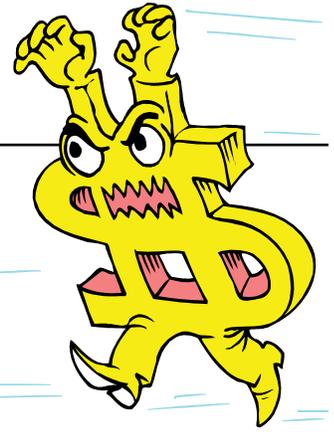


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\$12K in Checking? You're Lemon-ing



In one of the early episodes of the recently concluded NBC series “30 Rock,” Jack Donaghy, played by Alec Baldwin, asks Tina Fey’s character Liz Lemon where she invests her money. She replies, sheepishly, “I have like 12 grand in checking.”

But the latest numbers from the Federal Reserve reveal that Liz is far from alone in keeping a big chunk of her money in checking. Checking account balances have risen sharply since the financial crisis rocked markets and interest rates on certificates of deposit have fallen to all-time lows. Now, there is \$902 billion sitting in American checking accounts, the highest it’s been since the Fed began collecting data in 1959.

In fact, the amount of money sitting in checking accounts actually has exceeded the total amount in CDs since late 2011, which hasn’t been the case since the early ‘70s.

Of course, you could always put your savings into a balanced portfolio of stocks and bonds designed to grow wealth over the long term. But if you’re committed to

keeping a ton of cash in a checking account, there are ways to earn a return.

Many online banks and credit unions offer high-yield checking accounts that can pay up to 2 percent annually on your checking account funds as long as you meet a few conditions such as making a minimum number of transactions per month.

If that doesn’t work for you, you can always link your checking account to a high-interest online savings account.

What do you think? Do you have most of your money in a checking account? Are you earning any interest on it?

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Business Trip vs. Family Vacation

The line between home and work is certainly more blurred today than it was a generation ago. Many of us telecommute or work in home offices, and we may frequently adjust our work schedules for family matters. There is a renewed focus on life-work balance, and in most companies, no penalties are doled out for leaving early to catch the middle school soccer finals or the first day of kindergarten. These changes are affecting business travel also, as parents consider combining a work trip with a family vacation. But is it a win-win?

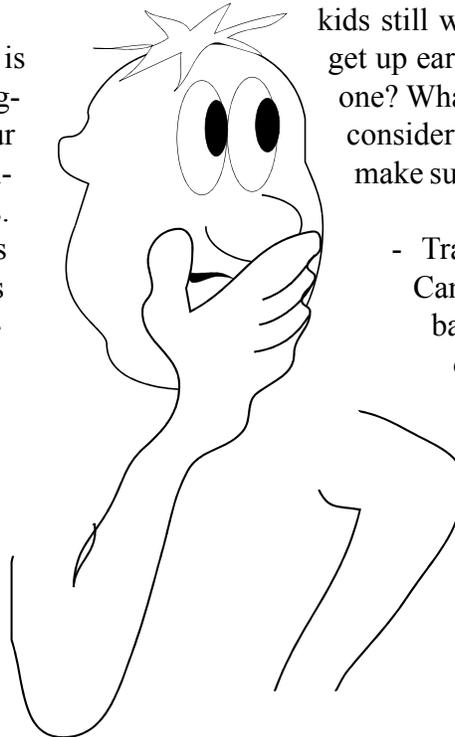
Bringing your family on a business trip is tempting. It reduces vacation costs significantly, if your company covers your airfare, hotel room and rental car. It allows you to rack up extra award miles. It introduces your family to destinations they might not otherwise see, and gives you a chance to experience those places together. Perhaps most important, it helps keep you connected. For those who spend a good part of the year traveling, it can ease the burden of so much separation from loved ones.

These are all strong arguments for bringing your family along on your next trip, but you'd be wise to also consider these points before making a decision:

- It can be a struggle to feel responsible for your family's fun when you're supposed to be focused on work. This is especially true if your spouse and kids signed on for this trip expecting a true vacation, and the hotel or destination is not all that you had hoped it would be. (If it pours the entire time you're in Florida, for example, will you have to field complaints and worry about what everyone should do?)
- The flip side can also be a challenge. Say the place is fantastic — there are lots of things to see and do — and your family gets to go have a blast while you are stuck at work. This might pull your focus and make you resentful, as you daydream about roller coasters, beaches or restaurants you're not able to experience.

(Possible solution: Tack a couple of work-free days to the end of the trip.)

- Just like at home, life with kids can be unpredictable. "My wife and toddler both got the flu on our trip to California," recalls one frequent business traveler. "I ended up distracted, and I had to leave business dinners early to help out. It was not ideal." Keep in mind your kids' sleep patterns as well, and how peaceful everyone will be in a hotel room. Do your young kids still wake up at night? Will you be able to get up early for work without disturbing everyone? What if someone falls ill? Do you need to consider an upgrade to a suite or larger room to make sure everyone's comfortable and rested?



- Travel logistics can get complicated. Canceled flights, missed connections, bad weather or problems with the hotel or rental car might not be a big deal to a solo traveler, but can be when traveling with the whole family — leaving you feeling drained for work. Once you arrive, you also have a lot to coordinate, from deciding whether your family needs its own car to figuring out how to keep all your receipts separate.

In the end, only you can finally decide whether it's right for you to mix business with leisure on your next trip. If it's going to be a particularly demanding one — including presentations or intense negotiations — you may want to maintain maximum focus by flying solo. But if the work feels manageable, the destination is appealing, and the kids are at comfortable travel ages, you can create a memorable family experience for everyone ... and still get your job done.

Retrieved from: <http://connections.msn.com/articles>

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Sympathy is extended to the Eftink family on the passing of David's sister, Barb Jarvis. Doris said that Barb was a true angel and will be missed. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family.

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Three Tips to Increase Business

By Michael P. Libbie

Everybody wants to draw more customers to their online store, physical store or the service they provide. Sometimes we look at the competition and wonder how it is they are building their business while ours may seem stagnant. Here are three simple, fast and proven ways that you can boost business and begin to build a larger client base.

Marketing Plan – Most small to mid-size business fail to put together a strategic marketing plan that focuses on business growth. Far too

often advertising/marketing are secondary thoughts and not a very large portion of the budget. How do you change that? You've got to sit down and spend some quality time to learn the truth. For example, Where are my customers? – Sounds easy right? "Hell, Michael, they are on farms!" True but what is attracting them to the competition? What kind of producers are they? What is the snapshot of your existing customer and what can you do to attract more of them? All of this takes time and often you'll have to step out of your current role to get the bigger picture.

What Tools to Use? – You can't plant with a combine. You've got to be using the right tools to put your message in front of your perspective customer. Just because a media sales person tells you they are the best answer for your advertising dollars doesn't mean it's true. When you create a marketing plan you'll look at everything you are currently doing and then change it to match the tools your perspective customers are using.

Am I Pretty? – Face it some of your marketing messages are getting a little "long in the tooth". Same logo, same website, same print message, same, same....same. Even worse we've seen really bad stuff that is new but it's still... bad. Just because it was your father's logo or because "Dad always used black and white print ads" does not mean it will work today. There is a reason why burger companies take great pains in producing "glitzy burger ads". Hey, it's just a hamburger but man does it look...pretty.

OK, I lied. All of this stuff takes work and while they are proven ways to increase your business you can't do it that quickly. It is going to take some time to turn things around and you're going to have to be dedicated to the effort.



If you want to learn more about how we think when it comes to advertising and marketing I'd invite you to visit our website, sign up for our blog, watch our broadcast Insight on Business all designed to offer your business ideas that will help your business succeed in this market or any.

Thanks for reading! – Michael

Michael P. Libbie is the "Chief Chair Mover" at Insight Advertising, Marketing & Communications and a long-time member of NTPDA. For more about Insight you can visit www.InsightCubed.com or feel free to call Michael at 866-331-3206 or Michael@InsightCubed.com



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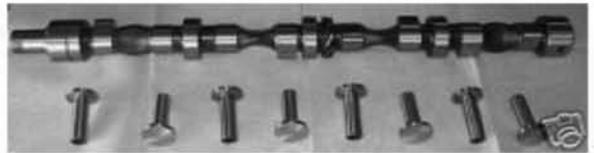
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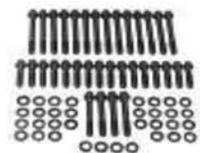
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Greetings from

Greasy Girl

By Terri Stevens

Dear Friends,

Things have changed A LOT from last year at this time. Last year we were in the high 90's and even some 100's with no rain. Very dry! This year we are in the high 70's and LOTS of Rain! Yippee! Much better than last summer.

However, that doesn't mean that all things are running smoothly. Last week I had an employee quit. I thought "REALLY . . . it is JUNE!!!" Not the best time to leave. I had a small breakdown and thought "what in the world am I going to do?"

When you only have 5 people working and one quits, it puts a strain on everyone. It seems that help is hard to find. You hear a lot about people wanting work but you don't have a lot of people looking for work.

Also, the working environment isn't the best of conditions, it is Hot, Dirty, and Hard Work. That is the tractor business! That is Farming! It doesn't appear there are a lot of people that want to have

those working conditions.

After venting and expressing myself, I finally came to realize that I was living without trusting in God. Nothing happens that He isn't aware of and I basically have to trust Him with the results.

It is so interesting when we look at life thru our own eyes instead of how

God looks at life. We tend to get tunnel vision. It is so wonderful when people help us see things in a different perspective and to realize that good things can come out of difficulties. Don't you just love that when something happens and you think, "OH NO this is bad," and then in a little while you see that maybe it was a good thing after all.



Today is Monday and I have hired two new guys to work for me. I am excited to see what God is going to do thru these young men. Perhaps they will teach

me something and perhaps I will teach them something. I am hoping that I can help them to

learn to trust God and to have faith in God. In Matthew 6:33-34, "But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." So, as a gentle reminder try not to worry. God has you covered no matter what you face. There are a lot bigger things to deal with in life than losing an employee. May this summer be one that you enjoy the beauty of everything that is around you. Let's all try to remember to keep things in perspective.

God is good all the time, All the time God is good! He is with you always no matter where you are at in life.

Be Blessed and Be a Blessing.

Let's all try to remember to keep things in perspective.

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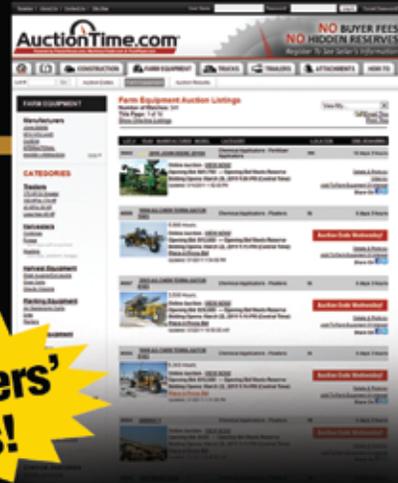
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