

DEALER POINT

Official Publication of the Wisconsin Automobile & Truck Dealers Association | 1928-2022 | Volume 64 | Spring 2022



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- HD Truck Dealer Spotlight: Bob Nuss Family

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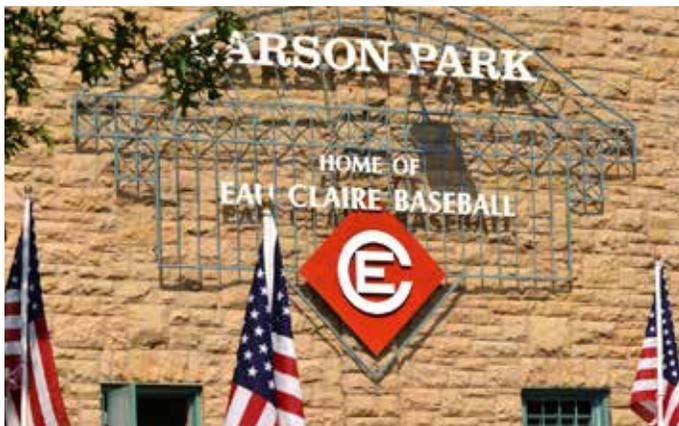


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PASSION FOR BASEBALL LEADS TO TOYCEN BASEBALL CLUB

BY JULIE FARMER



The Eau Claire Express baseball team is a member of the Northwoods League, a developmental league for elite college baseball players. The Northwoods League is the largest organized collegiate baseball league in the world, with 22 teams. Its friendly ballpark settings and high level of competition, draws significantly more fans than any other league of its kind.

It's that quality of baseball that attracted partners of Toycen Baseball Club to purchase the Eau Claire Express in February. The Toycen family has been involved in automotive sales in the Chippewa Valley for over 70 years, it's those local roots and Eau Claire's rich baseball tradition that managing partner Craig Toycen says made taking over the Express so appealing.

The Eau Claire Express was owned by Eau Claire Baseball, managed by Bill Rowlett, Dale Rowlett, and Andy Neborak.

The Toycen Baseball Club is owned and managed by the Toycen Family, owners of Toycen Ford in Chippewa Falls.

"We are extremely excited to continue the legacy that Eau Claire Baseball has had on the Express over the last several

years," Craig Toycen, managing partner, said. "We are huge baseball fans in our family, and we know what a rich baseball history there is in the city of Eau Claire. Knowing that legends like Hank Aaron have played at Carson Park, we are honored to be involved with this historic stadium and great baseball team.

"The Northwoods League is crazy with talent. We have eleven guys who have been in the big leagues right now. The known ones are Jordan Zimmermann, Kole Calhoun, Daulton Varsho, Griffin Jackson who just went up with the Twins last year and there's more coming. It's just good, quality baseball."

"You don't really need to be that big of a baseball fan to come out to the ballpark as long as it's a nice environment which is what we have here at Carson Park, we've got a legendary stadium with a long of tradition, a lot of history," says Toycen.

Toycen says one of his first priorities is working with the city of Eau Claire to secure the necessary funding for the \$3.5 million dollar Carson Park Baseball Renovation Project. Mark Faanes, chairman of that project says COVID slowed fundraising efforts. Faanes stated that \$1.5 million dollars still needs to be raised to replace the current aluminum bleachers, dugouts, and concession areas, create more space for apparel, upgrade bathrooms and meet requirements for the Americans with Disabilities Act.

"This isn't just for the Eau Claire Express; this is for the whole community. They always say this is one of the jewels of Eau Claire. The history is crazy on this field. We're hoping to build off that and hopefully have people that will give towards the project and getting it done because I think it will be fun to have everyone enjoy the games here," says Dale Varsho, Eau Claire Express Field Manager.

Varsho is the only manager the Express have had as they enter their 17th year in the Northwoods League. He credits his longevity to his passion for baseball and commitment to developing future big leaguers.

"We made Dale know very early in our talks that it was important to us to have him stay on with the Express," Craig said. "His experience is invaluable, and we want him a part of the Express for years to come."



"It's the players, I mean, the only reason why I do it and Vic Cable has been at my side the whole time. We do it to develop the players. It's fun for us, it's fun to see kids come in and sometimes you even know who they are. To get to know them and just to help their careers, that's kind of what we're all about and how we've always been, and it's been fun," says Varsho. He's looking forward to working for the Toyцен family, joking he'll work for them "as long as they want him."

"We don't know each other that well yet; so far, I've heard nothing but great things about the Toyцен family and I'm excited to work for them and excited for them to just to be part of this and continue the growth. I think that's the key for everyone and for them to just let me do what I do."

Toyцен says the commitment to delivering a platform for college baseball players to better themselves on and off the field will continue, adding the Express and Carson Park are a pride point for the Northwoods League.

"This is an important middle point of what the Northwoods League is. We're in the western part, the Plains Division so we play Duluth and La Crosse, St. Cloud; we don't get over to play Wausau and Wisconsin Rapids but as the league continues to expand, we might see some of those things grow again, so we are excited for that. I know the Northwoods League feels good about our location and what we have for capabilities here moving forward," says Toyцен.

According to Faanes, 75,000 to 100,000 guests pass through the Carson Park gates for baseball or other events making it one of the most heavily used facilities in the city

The organization will continue to deliver a platform for college baseball players to better themselves both on and off the field while pursuing their dreams of becoming professional baseball players.

The Express looks to ramp up for their 17th season in the Northwoods League with their home opener slated for Monday, May 30th against the La Crosse Loggers. ●

The Eau Claire Express promoted Sammi Costello as the first female General Manager in franchise history.



Costello becomes seventh General Manager of the Express organization. Sammi, 25, started her career in baseball back in 2016, where she interned with the Medford Rogues for two summers before graduating from the University of Oregon with a degree in Public Relations.

Costello made the move to the Midwest in the spring of 2018, where she had the opportunity to intern for the St. Paul Saints organization. A few months after her internship with Saints ended, Sammi was hired as the Director of Ticket Sales and Community Involvement for the Express. Costello started to make an impact on the Express organization early on by working with local non-profits for her *Non-Profit of the Night* program building relationships with season ticket holders, host families, and fans.

"We had an extensive conversation with past ownership, host families, and vendors. In all of those conversations, it was apparent that Sammi had earned this opportunity," Express Owner Craig Toyцен stated. "We are all rooting for her, and we're excited for her to have this opportunity to be a trailblazer."

"I am grateful for the last three and half years that I have been able to share the with the Express organization, and for Craig and the rest of Toyцен Baseball Club for giving me this opportunity," Costello stated. "As a woman in sports, it's important to feel appreciated and valued in your field. That is something I have felt every day with the Express. I'm excited and honored to be the first female General Manager of the Eau Claire Express, and I hope I'm not the last."

Costello assumed the Interim General Manager position during the 2021 season after previous General Manager Jacob Servais accepted a position with Green Bay Packers. Servais promoted Sammi to Assistant General Manager in the fall of 2020 after two years as Director of Ticket Sales and Community Involvement.



CRAIG TOYCEN

As far as baseball, it's always been my favorite sport. It started with reading the back of baseball cards when I was a little kid and expanded to me buying the yearly baseball almanac to really study the players. I played throughout high school but that is where my talent peaked, and my playing career ended.

My father, Dan played in high school and in college at Lawrence University in Appleton.

Ownership of the Express really appealed to me on a lot of levels. When it was apparent that I wasn't going to play any baseball beyond high school, I thought that I'd love to get involved in the business side of the sport. For whatever reason, it just never happened. So, in a lot of ways, this is the revisiting of a childhood dream. It's something that I can do with my family while still living in my hometown.

What's great about this is the fact that my family is fully behind this. My wife, Holly, was an All-State softball pitcher in high school and my sons, Isaiah, and Adrian, are huge baseball fans and excited to spend summers at the stadium. We were just on Spring Break in Arizona, and we watch baseball every day that we were there.

This would never have happened without the success of our dealerships and the support of our staff, so I am extremely grateful for them.



DAN TOYCEN

In all truthfulness, I'm just along for the ride regarding the baseball team. It's the next generation of Toycen's vision and passion. It was their interest and willingness to get involved that is making this deal work. The "boys" have varied skills that seem to mesh well. My involvement was suggested by me to add some gray hair and maturity to the group.



As Craig mentioned, I did play baseball for Lawrence University and for the Bloomer City league for a few years. I have always had a special love of baseball and look forward to just being an extra set of hands at the ballpark. The product we hope to deliver will be family-oriented with the emphasis on fun. However, for the young men playing in the league, this is a real opportunity to show off their skills and we want them to have the very best opportunity to do so.

We are excited! The community has been gracious and welcoming of our involvement and we appreciate that very much!

MIKE TOYCEN

I don't have too much to add onto what's already been said by my father and brother. They're more of sports fans than I am. I can say that I'm looking forward to spending more time at the ballpark this summer than I have previously. I've never really followed any major sport—but I enjoy the experience of being at the ballpark more and more as I get older. I think I'm interested more in the concessions and merchandise aspect of it than that of the players of the game. A few of my friends and family already have some interesting ideas cooked up for fun things to do at Carson Park Field. We'll see how it goes as the season proceeds.





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Legislative Commentary

BY CHRIS SNYDER

The 2021-22 legislative session has adjourned. That means, unless there's an emergency that needs to be addressed, there will be no more legislative activity until January 2023. Below is a brief description of a few bills that WATDA lobbied on or watched intently through the past session.

Direct sales

This bill was introduced on July 12 and would have allowed all motor vehicle manufacturers to sell solely electric vehicles direct to the public in any manner they see fit. Right out of the blocks bill authors (Senator Dale Kooyenga R-Brookfield and Representative Adam Neylon R-Pewaukee) had problems getting co-sponsors. Ultimately, the bill was co-sponsored by Representatives: Cindi Duchow R-Delafield, Dora Drake D-Milwaukee, Deb Andraca D-Whitefish Bay, Kalan Haywood D-Milwaukee, Jessie Rodriguez R-Oak Creek, Michael Schraa R-Oshkosh, Shelia Stubbs D-Madison and Francesca Hong D-Madison and Senators: Kelda Roys D-Madison and Kathleen Bernier R-Chippewa Falls (Senator Bernier withdrew her sponsorship in December).

The bill was assigned to the Senate Committee on Government Operations, Legal Review and Consumer Protection and had a public hearing on August 25. It was amended on October 20, to only allow manufacturers of solely electric vehicles who do not have any dealers to sell direct. On October 26, it was voted out of the committee on a 4-1 vote with Senators Duey Stroebel R-Saukville, Julian Bradley R-Franklin, Mary Felzkowski R-Irma and Kelda Roys D-Madison voting for the bill and Senator Jeff Smith D-Brunswick, voting against it.

From that point on, there was no real activity in either house, though it was eligible to go to the Senate floor for a vote by the full Senate, it was not scheduled. It did not have a committee hearing in the Assembly.

While, we were successful in defeating the bill this session, the proponents of this bill will surely be back next session. The Wisconsin franchise law currently provides a way for manufacturer to sell direct if they request an administrative hearing with the Division of Hearings and Appeals. But the electric vehicle manufacturers (Tesla, Lucid, Rivian, Fisker and Lordstown) would rather disrupt the industry instead of playing by the same rules that all motor vehicle manufacturers follow.

Wholesalers

This was a DOT bill that was introduced to rectify a fast-growing problem in the state of Wisconsin. For some reason the legislature did not feel that an increase to the tune of

millions of miles of odometer fraud and dramatic increase in consumers being duped by unlicensed sales activity (defined by me as entities posing as dealers on social media offering to sell motor vehicles) was sufficient to create tighter regulations on wholesale dealer facilities and the issuing of Buyer's Licenses.

This phenomenon is not unique to Wisconsin, but the legislature deciding not to curtail the activity is. To the best of our knowledge the business model started in Indiana, where the incidents of consumer fraud and odometer tampering became so overwhelming that they did away with wholesalers all together. So, the "business" moved to Washington state and the used vehicle market affects from Indiana followed, therefore the state of Washington followed Indiana's lead and did away with wholesale licenses. The "business" then moved to Missouri, with the same results as Indiana and Washington. And viola, here they are in Wisconsin, where they have survived the legislative challenge to continue their "business" model and activities for another 18 months at the very least.

Charging stations

The object of this bill was to allow private entities who own a motor vehicle charging station to assess fees to people who use them: this bill did not pass. One thing that was discovered over the process of attempting to move the bill forward is, the existing energy utilities are diligent in protecting the investments that they have made in the industry. In the end, there were so many cooks trying to have access to the pot that the bill failed. However, this is an issue that legislators know must be resolved and after debating and assessing all the various issues surrounding the distribution of electricity, they should be able to hit the ground running in the next legislative session.

In the meantime, dealers can charge fees for parking in stalls that have charging capabilities. So, if you have a parking stall where the parking party can charge their vehicle, you can charge a flat fee or hourly fee for parking in that stall.

Catalytic converters

To manage the onslaught of catalytic converter thefts the Wisconsin legislature has included catalytic converters as a proprietary product and stepped-up the record keeping and audit process on salvage dealers. The logic behind the legislation is if they increase the scrutiny on salvage, dealers will cut off the end market to the stolen products.

Under the new law, scrap dealers must maintain records for receipt of catalytic converters not less than two years after receipt, and city, village, town, or county law enforcement

officers may request that all scrap dealers in the municipality furnish reports of proprietary article purchases. Upon such a request, the scrap dealers must furnish the reports no later than the business day following the purchase.

A scrap dealer's intentional failure to comply with the above requirements is a misdemeanor. A first-time violator is subject to a fine of up to \$1,000 or imprisonment for up to 90 days or both, and a repeat violator is subject to a fine of up to \$10,000 or imprisonment for up to nine months or both. Owners of proprietary articles who incur injury or loss because of a violation of the above requirements may bring a civil action against the person who committed the violation.

Maps

Over the past year the state legislature and the governor's office have been sparring over the state and national legislative district maps. Without diving into legal analysis of each twist and turn, here is a blow-by-blow of just the facts. Initially the governor presented maps to the legislature, and they rejected them. Then the legislature presented maps to the Governor, and he vetoed them. Then the issue was turned over directly to the state Supreme Court. They chose the governor's maps. The legislature appealed that decision to the U.S. Supreme Court. They ruled that the State Supreme Court erred in justifying their decision of choosing the governor's maps by misapplying the Voter's Rights Act and sent the case back to the state Supreme Court. However, they only ruled on the state districting maps and not the congressional maps, therefore the congressional district maps drawn up by the governor were allowed to stand.

Addressing only the state legislative districting maps the State Supreme Court chose the legislature's maps for defining the state's legislative districts. The result is, there is very

little change to the state's legislative districts and the only congressional district that is affected is the 1st Congressional District, which is currently held by Rep. Bryan Steil, whose district was redrawn to take away sections of Waukesha County (traditionally republican) and add sections of Rock County (traditionally democrat).

Legislature turnover

There will be some significant turnover in the Wisconsin legislature due to a substantial number of retirements and/or people seeking other public offices or career opportunities. At the time of writing this article there are seven state senate seats (four republicans and three democrats) and 22 assembly seats (thirteen republicans and nine democrats).

This presents a great opportunity to educate legislators and prospective legislators about the benefits dealers and their employees bring to their communities. Dealerships are key economic drivers at the local level. They provide good, head-of-household jobs, service vital transportation needs, local property taxes, state income, unemployment, social security, and Medicare taxes. Most dealership profits stay and are reinvested in the community. Dealerships also provide a platform for numerous, local and statewide charity benefits. In fact, WATDA recently published a Member Spotlight, magazine (31 pages featuring 76 dealership rooftops) highlighting Wisconsin dealerships doing good things in their communities. And those were just some of the activities that were shared with us for the publication.

As election activity picks up and you have an opportunity to speak with those seeking office, take the time to find out where those people stand on the value of the franchise law, which regulates the relationships between dealers and

...continued on page 21

Gregg Kunes, Wisconsin Dealer of the Year captures Midwest regional TIME Dealer recognition.



Pictured with his family. From Left to right: Scott Kunes, Mike Kunes, Debbie Kunes, Gregg Kunes, Kelli Kunes Zdaniewicz, Bobby Zdaniewicz, Katie Summerell & Kyle Waschow

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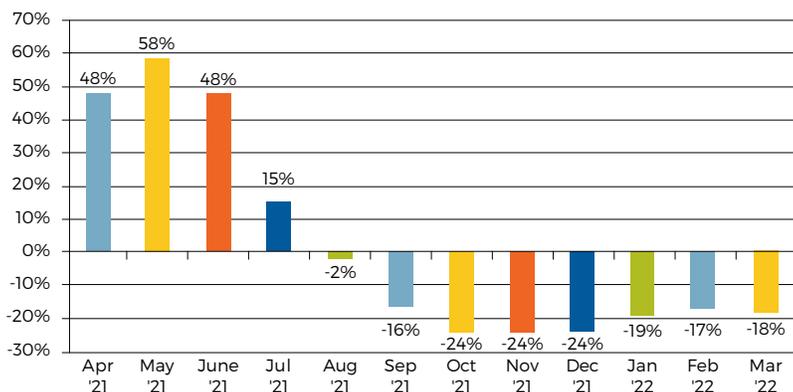
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New Vehicle Sales Trends

Wisconsin New Vehicle Trends: March 2022

	Previous Two Months			Year to Date			Year to Date Market Share		
	2/21 to 3/21	2/22 to 3/22	% change	'21 YTD	'22 YTD	% change	'21 YTD	'22 YTD	change
Industry Total	37,565	30,957	-17.6%	54,130	44,532	-17.7%	100.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Car	5,205	4,219	-18.9%	7,296	5,876	-19.5%	13.5%	13.2%	-0.3%
Truck	32,360	26,738	-17.4%	46,834	38,656	-17.5%	86.5%	86.8%	0.3%
Japanese	12,848	10,715	-16.6%	17,932	14,977	-16.5%	33.1%	33.5%	0.4%
Toyota	4,606	3,678	-20.1%	6,359	5,137	-19.2%	11.7%	11.5%	-0.2%
Honda	3,715	3,051	-17.9%	5,198	4,160	-20.0%	9.6%	9.3%	-0.3%
Nissan	1,133	960	-15.3%	1,601	1,400	-12.6%	3.0%	3.1%	0.1%
Other	3,394	3,026	-10.8%	4,774	4,280	-10.3%	8.8%	9.6%	0.8%
Domestic	19,817	15,478	-21.9%	29,046	22,666	-22.0%	53.6%	50.9%	-2.7%
General Motors	8,662	6,740	-22.2%	12,905	9,436	-26.9%	23.8%	21.2%	-2.6%
Ford	5,473	4,324	-21.0%	7,865	6,381	-18.9%	14.5%	14.3%	-0.2%
Chrysler	5,504	4,130	-25.0%	7,974	6,422	-19.5%	14.7%	14.4%	-0.3%
Tesla	178	284	59.6%	302	427	41.4%	0.6%	1.0%	0.4%
European	2,024	1,861	-8.1%	2,999	2,763	-7.9%	5.5%	6.2%	0.7%
Volkswagen	1,106	987	-10.8%	1,593	1,410	-11.5%	2.9%	3.2%	0.3%
BMW	342	398	16.4%	493	590	19.7%	0.9%	1.3%	0.4%
Mercedes	236	216	-8.5%	357	352	-1.4%	0.7%	0.8%	0.1%
Other	340	260	-23.5%	556	411	-26.1%	1.0%	0.9%	-0.1%
Korean	2,876	2,903	0.9%	4,153	4,126	-0.7%	7.7%	9.3%	1.6%
Other	2,876	2,903	0.9%	4,153	4,126	-0.7%	7.7%	9.3%	1.6%

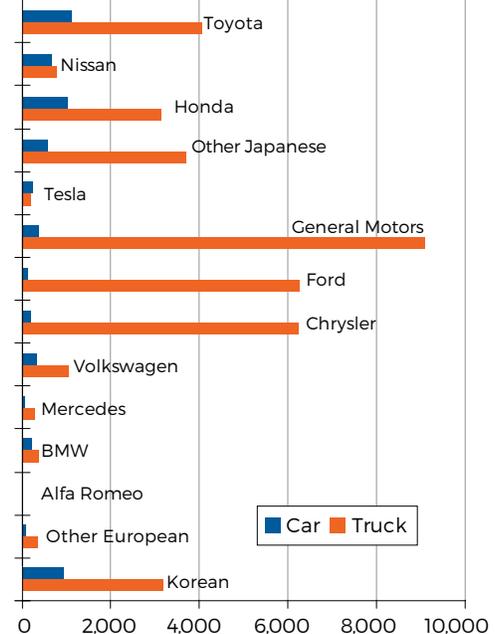
3 Month % Change – and view annual trend. Compares most recent 90 days vs. same 90-day period from last year.



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March Trend Report from Scott Quimby

YTD Registrations by Vehicle Type.





NADA Report

JOSHUA JOHNSON • jjohnson@donjohnsonmotors.com



The automobile and truck industries have made a tremendous comeback this year. And WATDA and NADA are working harder than ever to capitalize on opportunities available. Our national association started the spring season with an in-person celebration.

In March, NADA returned to its live show in Las Vegas—our association’s first in-person reunion in two years since the pandemic began. NADA Show 2022 was a resounding success, bringing four days of renowned programming, five-star education, networking opportunities, make meetings, and live performances to thousands of dealers and industry allies.

NADA is working harder than ever on the path to an electric future, and dealers are essential to this evolution. At the New York Auto Forum held in April, NADA Chairman Mike Alford shared some compelling data from the research firm Escalent and its recent landmark study. Escalent performed the largest and most comprehensive study ever conducted of future EV buyers, including analyzing consumer perspectives and the role dealers should play in selling EVs. The consensus is this: **Consumers DEMAND that dealers exist in an EV world.**

Research showed that future EV buyers don’t want to conduct business exclusively through a website; they want access to tens of thousands of retail and service points located in every corner of the country. They also don’t want to rely exclusively on a 1-800 number for their service needs; they want trained sales and service staff operating at all retail locations. In short, future EV buyers are asking for the proven model that dealerships have provided for over 100 years.

NADA is providing the tools, partnerships, and resources to tackle the most significant transformation in our industry’s history. In fact, NADA has recently announced a new program—in collaboration with the *Center for Sustainable Energy and Plug-In America*—to enhance EV education at franchised dealerships nationwide. The goal is to better prepare dealers and their employees for the widespread adoption of EVs. The EV training program is an online, interactive model designed to complement

OEM model-specific training and serves as a brand-agonistic review of essential content that sales staff need to communicate with customers and efficiently close EV sales. It’s also supported by the Alliance for Automotive Innovation. In bringing these two EV-focused powerhouse organizations together with NADA, we will educate dealers and help accelerate the mass-market adoption of EVs.

I’d be remiss if I didn’t mention electrification in the truck industry. The commercial truck industry supports the road toward cleaner and greener trucks, and different states are rolling out incentives to move the initiative forward. State-by-state strategies include new incentives, grants, and partnerships with private industries. However, the reality is that dealers have been selling cleaner, greener, and safer trucks since the early 1990s. The problem today is that we have two sets of emission standards: The “Cleaner Trucks Initiative” from both CARB and EPA.

The American Truck Dealers (ATD) advocates for *one set* of national standards that are practical and cost-effective for customers. ATD has communicated to regulators that dealers are against overly stringent CARB standards that won’t work as a national standard. And we are against policies that could disrupt the entire U.S. trucking industry, raise customers’ costs, increase unemployment, and delay the purchase of newer and cleaner trucks.

Throughout the year, both NADA and ATD will continue to advocate for the interests of all auto and truck dealers—whether it’s the battle against harmful taxes, harmful stairstep programs, or overly broad regulations that lead to impractical policies. In addition to that, though, we need the participation and engagement of dealers everywhere. We simply cannot leave the fate of our industry in the hands of others. Please visit the NADA and ATD websites often and stay updated on the latest issues and industry highlights. Please get to know Wisconsin’s state association executives and keep in touch with WATDA throughout the year. We’re all in this together! ●

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HEAVY DUTY TRUCK DEALER SPOTLIGHT

BY JILL SUKOW, DIRECTOR OF MEMBERSHIP

Nuss Truck & Equipment owned and operated by the Bob Nuss family

What does a day in the life of Bob Nuss look like? I sat down with Bob recently, and this was his answer:

"I visited five of our branches today—left home to make a 9:45 am Monticello meeting with a CE industry public relations person who is from AED in Chicago. He wanted to visit our new branch facility and take some photos for an article in their industry magazine. Next, I drove to our St. Cloud branch and bought lunch for our oldest Mack Truck salesman. I visited with the parts and service team there, along with our corporate customer finance manager and office manager. I picked up a part that was needed back in Rochester.

Next, I stopped at Roseville to inspect the office remodeling and visited with my son Greg, as well as the leasing and sales managers. I met to discuss a new fleet purchase of used trucks and a trailer package. In addition, I met with a truck salesman from Mankato, followed by a meeting with the parts manager, to discuss some strategies and current opportunities. I visited with the lease manager on a couple of lease deals, prior to heading to Burnsville, where I met with our parts manager, who introduced me to a new parts employee. I also looked over the shop with the foreman and the large amount of truck and equipment in for repairs. Lastly, I headed for Rochester to drop off the part from St. Cloud. I filled up my car with gas and checked my miles, which covered 337 miles, round trip to five branches. A new record, at least for me.

Where did all of this begin?

In 1923, right after 8th grade, my father, Charles B. Nuss, Jr. started as a shop helper for an auto & truck repair shop on the west side of Rockford, IL. He became the lead mechanic and was so critical to keeping that garage running during WW2, that he was not drafted during the war.

My father learned to fly from his brother Howard, who was a Navy pilot and was aware of surplus training airplanes that were for sale. In mid-1944, my father and a friend purchased two surplus Vultee BT-13 training planes from the military for \$500 each, in Tennessee.

The planes needed some updates, but the military allowed the planes to be ferried back to Rockford with a road map and some basic flight planning. My mother Janice told me many years later that I had my first airplane ride before I was born. I do remember climbing aboard the aluminum skin airplane with two seats and sliding canopy, when I was about 6 years old.

My father was able to buy out Brander's Garage in the mid-1950's, changing the name to Charley Nuss Garage, which is where the Nuss success story began. My dad also worked as a service dealer for the Rockford Mack Truck distributor, Fred Smith, who rented an office at the garage and just handled truck sales. Late in 1959, an opportunity came up with Mack Truck to become owner of a full sales, parts and service

distributor and the name of the business was changed to Mack of Rockford. My father sold his first new Mack Truck in early 1960, to Chas. Ind Construction, Rockford; the first contractor to pave one mile of concrete road in a day. My father showed me the check; the truck sold for \$17,775.

Where did you get your start?

I grew up on the west side of Rockford, working in my father's small shop and learning the basics of the truck industry.

When I graduated from college, I wasn't ready to go back to my father's business, so I accepted an offer from Valspar Corporation to enter their sales training program to sell paint products. Once I finished my six-month training, I was assigned a territory based in Memphis. I was only on the job for two months before I was called to active duty by my National Guard unit for basic and advanced infantry training. Luckily, I was sent to AIT for truck driving training. After the eight-week training, I finished the program at the top of the company academically and was offered to attend Officer School, but I declined because my plans were to return to my job at Valspar and I had a new wife. Valspar had filled my position in Memphis, and I was assigned to the Chicago market and stayed there for more than two years.

At the end of 1969, I decided it was time to go back to the trucking industry; I worked for my father as parts manager until 1973. Our parts sales were up to \$25,000 per month in 1972, which was a good for a small dealership. In 1973, my

father decided to retire, and I felt that Rockford was not the best opportunity for my family, my wife, and three-year-old son Greg. My father sold Mack of Rockford and I took the reins of our family business to become manager of Mack Trucks of Rochester, MN, in July 1973. I helmed that dealership business growth and guided it to become my first acquisition in 1979.

What does Nuss Truck & Equipment look like today?

The legacy of Charles Nuss Jr.'s commitment to family and community, passion for business, and drive for service continues to this day. I grew up with the family business and learned from my hardworking father and role model the nuances of what it takes to make a business thrive. Along with my two sons Greg (COO) and Brad (CFO), the business has continued to flourish, adding two iconic brands; Volvo Trucks and Volvo Construction Equipment, as well as multiple related business lines to better serve our customers and their needs. Nuss now offers trailers, leasing, rentals, financing, full-service body shops, and custom engineered solutions for trucks and trailers.

We've grown from a one truck dealership in 1979, to a regional truck and equipment dealership group with eight branch locations in Minnesota plus one Eau Claire. We became the largest volume Mack Truck sales dealership in the Central Region and were awarded Mack dealer of the year in 1997. American Truck Dealers awarded me as Truck Dealer of The Year in 2017.

Nuss Eau Claire store, their fastest growing truck dealership is situated on 28 acres that border I-94. In 1996 they purchased 25 acres and built a new Mack Truck dealership in 1997. We added the Volvo Trucks in 2001 as well as Isuzu Commercial Trucks. The main building has been expanded twice and are currently designing a shop and parts addition. This location has an award-winning truck body shop and paint facilities. The separate restoration shop was built two years ago.



What do you value most about all you have accomplished?

We value our customers. We look past the client and see the person. We see more than our employees; we see the families and communities they are a part of. For over 25 years, Nuss Truck & Equipment has donated hundreds of thousands of dollars to a multitude of charities. Nuss' dedication to giving goes beyond monetary donation. It's integral to our cornerstone of service. We pride ourselves on the impact we can make in our communities while making our employees part of that giving. We work hard to support charities selected by our team members in all our markets.

What are two things you are most proud of?

Receiving our 2021 Platinum HIRE VETS Medallion award from the US Department of Labor. We received the Gold Medallion award in 2019 and 2020. The award is based on hiring efforts, retention and total employees who are veterans.

We were extremely honored to host President Trump at our Burnsville shop in April 2019. Our employees were proud to show off the facility. I couldn't be more grateful to the previous president for the chance to share our success story with him; the positive results of tax reform for our small business; and



Honored to host The White House tour and roundtable discussion on the economy and tax reform at our Burnsville location.



At Nuss Collection museum—1959 Mack B model in honor of my father.



Nuss family photo with Sheri, Brad, and Greg

to discuss issues facing our industry. We delivered a letter to President Trump asking for his support for FET repeal, and included an infographic showing the historical growth and expansion of the FET, and World War I-style posters promoting repeal of the 102-year-old tax. It was a big day for all of us.

Do you have a fun fact that not many people may know about?

The Nuss Collection, our Rochester-based Museum opened in September 2021. The public is invited into the story of the rise of the trucking industry, celebrating the vintage vehicles that built America and honoring the many inspirational individuals who worked to preserve its legacy.

Celebrating 60 plus years in the trucking and service industry, the Nuss family and Nuss Truck & Equipment are proud to share The Nuss Collection. The Nuss Collection is a tribute to the trucking industry of the early to mid-1900s. Beginning with the early inventions from Mack Trucks, Inc., this collection follows the story of American innovation and the pioneering vehicles that built our iconic infrastructure from the first skyscrapers to the national highway system. Featuring carefully preserved antique Mack trucks and construction vehicles, this collection salutes the powerful machines responsible for building America. The Nuss Collection is the longtime passion project of Greg who began the collection over 30 years ago.

"Growing up around Mack Trucks, the deep history of American Trucking has been a part of our family for years. Our passion for preserving old historic trucks has become much more than a hobby. It has become an incredible opportunity to share the history and American legacy, preserving it for many generations to enjoy with the new museum," said Greg Nuss, Executive Vice President/COO, Nuss Truck & Equipment.

Visit <https://www.nussbuildingamerica.com/>. Tours are available by appointment, please contact the curator for details. ●



CenterStage

AWARDS, HONORS, MILESTONES

► Holiday Automotive Team Members Donate Over \$10,000 to Those Impacted by War in Ukraine

When Holiday Automotive chose to fly the national flag of Ukraine to show solidarity with the people of the war-torn nation, the Fond du Lac car dealership drew attention from passersby as well as their own team. The three flagpoles anchoring the corner of the Holiday Automotive campus at Highway 23 and Rolling Meadows Drive are currently flying the American flag, the Ukrainian flag, and a Wisconsin flag. The adjacent digital message center reads “WE STAND WITH THE PEOPLE OF UKRAINE”. The same three flags adorn the entries of Holiday Ford and Holiday Mazda on the same block.

“Seeing the people of Ukraine rising to defend their country and others fleeing their homes to escape the destruction in their communities, raising their nation’s flag just didn’t seem like enough. Our team wanted to support the efforts more directly to aid them in this dire time of need,” said Mike Shannon, Chairman. A group of employees identified Catholic Relief Services as a suitable conduit for financial assistance and passed-the-hat amongst their 300+ team members.

According to the Catholic Relief Services website, CRS and Caritas partners are on the ground across Ukraine and in bordering countries, providing safe shelter, hot meals, hygiene supplies, transport to safe areas, counseling support and more.

The employees of Holiday Automotive along with the Mike Shannon Automotive Foundation, collectively donated \$10,475 to CRS to aid the Ukrainian people. “Seeing this support from our team tells me there are a lot of people out there who want to help; they just don’t know how. Hopefully our donation will encourage other businesses and individuals to join in,” Shannon added. According to the CRS website, 92% of all donations to the BBB Accredited charity are utilized in direct aid. ●



An American flag is flanked by the flags of Ukraine and the State of Wisconsin at Holiday Automotive on the corner of US Highway 23 and Rolling Meadows Drive in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin.



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Wisco: Renewed Dedication

BY JOE MAASS, WISCO PRESIDENT

Solutions + Savings = Value



As Wisco enters the 50th year of serving Members we give thanks to all those across the decades who have made today possible. Imagine the challenges dealers faced in 1972: The rising cost of energy, global instability and political turmoil makes it difficult to discern between perception and irony. Take comfort in knowing those challenges were overcome through innovation and adaptation just as we're seeing today.

Volatility in petroleum markets has pressed EV deeper into the collective vernacular and Wisco's committed hybrid partnership: SemaConnect, renowned manufacturer of EV charging stations, and Graybar Electric have entered into an agreement providing Members expertise and savings. Industry leading hardware, assured guidance and aggressive pricing committed to Wisco Members.

With rising energy costs and higher overhead, it's the right time to reconsidering outdoor lighting. The smart lighting system by Trydon will guaranteed LED savings plus theft deterrence to

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keep after hours pirates at bay, further protecting profits. Now is the best time to consider investing or updating with Black Gold Environmental. Their Energy Logic WO heating systems convert waste to ultraclean reliable heat along with adding Macro Air HVLS shop fans to create employee comfort while reducing ventilation costs.

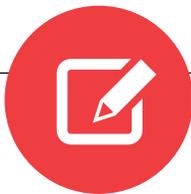
2022 is off to a busy start bringing evermore saving opportunities to Members. Cintas has been Wisco's partner in garment rental service and we're proud to announce Unifirst has joined the Wisco Team to offer another quality service with exclusive savings! More than just rental, Unifirst Apparel Program is an easy means to keep your staff looking great, in comfort and at an unbeatable price. Name brand clothing including Under Armor or Nike, embroidered or silk screened to represent your business professionally.

Growing choice continues with Curt Manufacturing. Proudly made in Wisconsin, Curt has brought a new price program to Wisco Members with industry leading products such as their Echo Brake Control: Wireless Bluetooth Control. Along with DrawTite on the Wisco line card we're certain to have every towing need covered.

As factories struggle to fill new vehicle needs reliance on auto auctions grow and Wisco has two (more) new answer to common issues. One story we've heard far too frequently is beautiful auction cars arriving with a smell reminiscent of Woodstock. Hours of scrubbing, chemicals and shampooing can't erase the smell of high times. Biocide's Auto Shocker is a simple, safe self-contained product that emits chlorine dioxide vapor capable of penetrating porous surfaces neutralizing any odor. Don't waste labor or expensive chemicals as Auto Shocker is all you need.

Save the Date: June 28th is Wisco's Annual Meeting and Golf Outing. Gather your four person team and meet us at 9:00AM at Lake Arrowhead Golf Course in Nekoosa. This year we're expanding the event inviting more vendors bringing a host of additional prizes, more food and refreshments. Call or log onto www.wisco.com to register your team.

Until then keep Wisco in mind on anything from paper products to shop equipment. ●



Members can always access WATDA legal manuals and Bulletins on the WATDA E-Learning Site:
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From Around the State

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

Wheeler Family Auto Group Expands

Charles Automotive Incorporated of Coloma was recently acquired as the sixth location of the Wheeler Family Auto Group. Co-Owner and Dealer Principal Mary Jo Wheeler-Schueller said Charles Automotive did a fantastic job of serving its customers and Wheelers looks to continue that trend. "Obviously Charles GM had a great reputation, and we hope to carry that on," Wheeler-Schueller said. "We're proud to be able to work with a new, state-of-the-art building and some great staff members that Charles GM has left us." Added Co-Owner and CFO Daniel Wheeler, "I would say our ability to get inventory from all our other locations will be an exciting aspect that we can bring to the area."

Gross Motors Fire Upends Operations

A Sunday morning fire that started in a utility closet at Gross Motors of Spencer wiped out most of the businesses sales and parts areas. Owner Mike Gross said that internet and phone service would be restored soon and that the sales department will be working out of portable trailers until repairs can be made. The fire was reported by a passerby who noticed smoke rolling out of the shop. The Spencer Fire Department immediately called for help from the Loyal and Abbotsford departments. Crews were able to extinguish the fire quickly, but not before flames and smoke caused considerable damage. The estimated loss totals \$75,000. "the whole building was affected, said Gross. "The sales department took the brunt of the damage; there's a lot of soot and smoke in the shop. It's a mess." "We got lucky, he said. We didn't have any cars in the showroom and there were no customer cars in the shop."

Van Horn Automotive Group News

Employees of Van Horn Auto Group recently transitioned the status of their Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) from 30% to 77%, giving employees majority ownership of the company. "Our employees are passionate, dynamic and innovative team players," said Jeff Niesen, president of the group. "The proof is in our consistent growth of both sales and profits. It only makes sense for our employees to have a greater stake in the continued success of this company." The ownership shift also comes with executive-level transitions. After 35 years, Chuck Van Horn is pivoting from co-CEO of the auto group to focus on Van Horn Development, LLC; an independent real estate development and property management company. Teresa Van Horn will serve as the sole CEO for Van Horn Automotive. Lastly, COO Richard Strong is moving to chairperson of the Van Horn Board of Directors. ●



Van Horn CDJR in Plymouth has completed a recent expansion of 7,800 square feet, including remodel of much of the original building including new floors, offices, bathrooms, customer lounges, lighting, Jeep graphics and an historic photo of downtown Plymouth. The store now totals 23,800 square feet. The new space includes a dedicated Jeep showroom, two new car delivery bays and a larger service center with six additional bays.

manufacturers, manufacturers and consumers and dealers and consumers. Inevitably, there will be a push by electric vehicle manufacturers and traditional manufacturers to tear down the franchise law, specifically manufacturers' ability to sell direct to the public.

It is important to point out that dealerships can and are willing to sell and service all types of reliable transportation. Dealers have made considerable investments in facilities and employees in their communities and a robust dealer network serves all corners of the state, not just population centers. Be sure to stress the activities of your store and employees' generous charitable activities that make your community and the legislator's district a better place to live. And don't forget to mention that the Wisconsin law provides a way for the "Tesla's" to sell direct, but they won't utilize the law as written.

LIFO

Last In First Out is an accounting method that a lot of dealers use to manage inventory. As a result of the pandemic, micro-chip and semi-conductor shortages and supply chain disruptions, most dealership inventories are at an all-time low. This can have a detrimental tax effect on dealers who utilize the LIFO accounting method. For decades, there have been rumblings by some politicians in Washington DC, to do away with LIFO all together. Consequently, WATDA and our members have lobbied Congress to provide a soft landing for dealers by phasing out the tax method overtime to prevent catastrophic tax bills for some dealers. However, the current inventory situation has created the same effect as simply doing away with the method in one felled swoop.

To that end, NADA has been working hard to rectify the issue. Currently, there is a provision under the law that would allow the Secretary of Treasury to suspend the tax obligation and allow taxpayers a period to spread their obligation over a three to five-year period, if they find that the inventory shortage is due to a foreign trade disruption. They began by approaching the Treasury directly, seeking relief under a never used section (473) of the Internal Revenue Code, but made little progress. Then they got members of congress to send letters to the secretary urging her to exercise her powers under section 473. The secretary's office responded that, they needed proof that the supply shortages were due to major foreign trade interruption that prevents the replenishing of inventory. The Alliance for Automotive Innovation (formerly the Alliance of Automobile Manufacturers) assisted by providing a very detailed report, proving that the pandemic created work shortages across the globe and specifically foreign manufactured semi-conductors and micro-chips. Further, supply chain stoppages (due to the pandemic) prevented foreign manufacturers from getting the raw materials to keep up with demand. And still, the secretary has not relented. (Even though the federal government has printed and distributed trillions of dollars of new money, the

bureaucrats at the IRS know they must find every tax dollar they can to solidify the value of the dollar.)

Therefore, House Bill 7382 – Supply Chain Distribution Relief Act, is before the House Committee on Ways and Means authored by Rep. Daniel Kildee (D- MI) that would allow dealers to make up inventory levels by 2025. While this bill currently has 22 cosponsors, there are no Wisconsin representatives signed on. NADA has also indicated that a Senate companion bill authored by Senator Tim Scott (R-SC) will soon be introduced. So, if you have the opportunity to see your congressional representative ask them to consider signing on and voting for HR 7382. If you would like to contact your Representative, you can find their contact information at <https://www.congress.gov/>.

Lincoln Lawsuit

In 2021, eleven Wisconsin Lincoln dealers jointly filed a lawsuit against Lincoln over the Brand Exclusivity Standard (Lincoln Commitment Program). The crux of the matter is that once again, a manufacturer has crafted a program that requires substantial investment in facilities and operations to receive a reasonable return of the sale of their vehicles. Typical to these types of programs, Lincoln has dramatically reduced the dealer holdback and awards portions of it back to the dealers if they can prove their compliance.

This case was presented to the U.S. District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin (Madison), on a summary judgement basis, meaning that the facts of the case are not in dispute and therefore the judge can rule based on briefs submitted by the parties that analyze the law to the undisputed facts. On February 28, 2022, the court ruled in favor of Lincoln on all counts.

Without getting into legalize on this or going through the analysis on each count, the court basically found that the Lincoln program was voluntary. That all dealers who want to participate must make a business decision whether to make a substantial investment. There is no guarantee for any dealers participating that they can recoup that substantial investment before Lincoln can pull the plug on the program. While larger dealers may be able to turn more product at a higher holdback rate than smaller dealers, the larger dealer investment is proportionally greater than the smaller dealers; and, it does not create a two or multi-tiered pricing structure because the additional holdback is earmarked as compensation for the facility improvements and there is no guarantee that Lincoln would continue the program long enough for those dealers to be fully compensated for their facility expenses before the program ends.

The dealers have subsequently appealed that decision to the U.S 7th Circuit Court of Appeals (Chicago). They will have the burden of proving that the Circuit Court misapplied the law to the facts. ●

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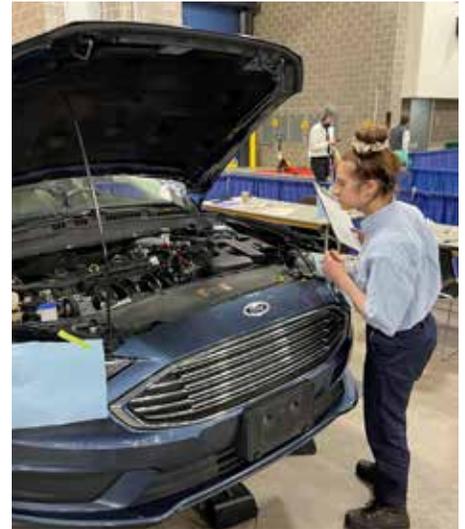
SkillsUSA Wisconsin Automotive State Championships

BY BRENT KINDRED - VICE PRESIDENT, WATDA FOUNDATION

On April 5-6, 2022, the WATDA Foundation hosted approximately 50 high school and technical college students at the 49th annual SkillsUSA automotive championships in Madison. The Foundation has been hosting this competition for over twenty years and it is an important part of the work we do.

The competition is comprised of twelve stations ranging from brakes, engine performance, electrical diagnosis, wheel alignment, automatic transmission, safety, and more. This event evaluates student's preparation for employment and to recognize outstanding students for excellence and professionalism in the automotive field. Most of the stations are proudly led by our dealers from around the state.

All Wisconsin gold medal winning students advance to the SkillsUSA National competition, in Atlanta Georgia, to compete against gold medal winning students from the other 49 states. Ultimately, national gold medal winning students can advance to the World Skills competition. The last time a Wisconsin student advanced to the global stage (from Racine Park High School) was the 2015 Leipzig, Germany competition.



High School

Gold - Owen Pryga - Grafton High School
Silver: Michael Rose - Grafton High School
Bronze: Andrew David - Stevens Point Area High School

Technical College

Gold: Benjamin Black - Fox Valley TC
Silver: Jacob Guerra - Fox Valley TC (2020 WATDA scholarship recipient)
Bronze: Joel Kos - Lakeshore TC (2021 WATDA scholarship recipient)



Every Gift! Counts!



Your WATDA Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization that has the mission of supporting educational initiatives and ensuring Wisconsin has a highly skilled transportation workforce. Part of this work is accomplished through the scholarship program that was started in 1991.

Last year, the Foundation was proud to award **96 scholarships** to young people pursuing automotive, collision or diesel careers. **Without donors, this would not be possible.** **Together we can make a difference.**

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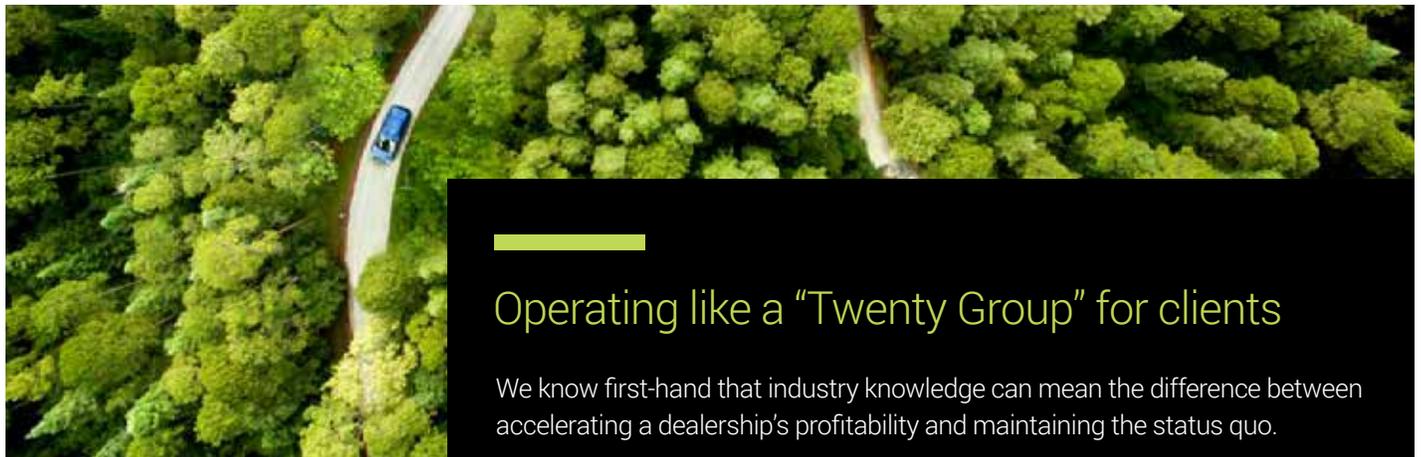
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Tribute

Jerome E. "Jerry" Brickner

Jerome E. "Jerry" Brickner, 83, Marathon, died Wednesday March 9, 2022, at Aspirus Wausau Hospital surrounded by his family on his journey home.



He was born June 24, 1938, in Milwaukee, to Jerome and Pearl (Church) Brickner. On April 11, 1959, he married the love of his life, Grace Wagner at St. Mary's Catholic Church, Marathon. She survives.

Jerry was a member of the Army Reserves. He was owner of Brickner Motors, Brickner's

of Wausau and Brickner's of Antigo prior to his retirement. Going to the cottage, annual trips to Canada fishing with family, and hunting trips out West and in Canada were among his favorite things to do. He loved animals and kids, and dearly loved his grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Survivors include his wife, Grace, their children and grandchildren; Jerry M. III (Jane) Brickner, Wausau and their children, Janessa Grace (Tom) Ress and Jerry IV; Michael (Cheryl) Brickner, Tomahawk, and daughter, Michaella; Steve (Linda) Brickner, Tomahawk and their children, Steven (Katie) Brickner, and children, Paityn and Abigail, Melissa (Kurt) Seubert, and children, Madalynn, Quinnlynn and Conrad, Shawn (Joey) Brickner, Melanie (Scott) Heinz and son, A.J.; Maria (Tom) Olson, Wausau, and their children, Thomas Olson, Michael (Kaylee) Olson and children, Alyssa and Braylee, and Grace Olson; his siblings, Romaine (Joe) Breaman, Irma, Carol (Jim) Studzinski, Wisconsin Rapids, Lorraine Wilichowski, Minnesota, Ginger Weiks, Marathon, Gail (Steve) Studinski, Marathon, Vicky Ramsey, Marathon; sister-in-law, Linda Brickner, Marathon.

Besides his parents, Jerry was preceded in death by an infant son, Bryan, two granddaughters, Tara and Kendra Brickner, two brothers, Raymond and Wayne, brothers-in-law, Gerald Wilichowski and Bob Weiks. ●

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Pat J. Ringold

It is with extreme sadness that we announce the passing of Pat James Ringold, age 69, on Friday February 18th, at his home in Florida. He was born on May 31st, 1952, and was raised in White Bear Lake, MN. Pat fought pancreatic cancer for seven months.



Pat is preceded in death by his father, Doug Ringold, his mother Nancy (Egan) Ringold as well as his brother Mike and sister Kerry. Pat is survived by his loving wife of almost 49 years, Carla (Tankoff) and two sons; Tim (Heidi Heckes - Parker, Bella, Owen)

and Johnny (Kim Beeson - Nora, Jameson, Aurelia, Skylar, and Mirabelle). Further survived by brother Doug Jr. (Teresa), sister, Julie (Mike) Jensen as well as his extended family and an abundance of friends. We will miss him more than words can say.

Pat was a go-getter and a caretaker right out of high school. Pat is a graduate of class 1970 from White Bear Senior High. He started in the car business in 1970 and then went into the construction business in 1982, only to go back to the auto business he loved five years later. Pat continued to run several dealerships in the Twin Cities area. In 2000, Pat & Carla moved to Duluth, MN to be owner/partner of Benna Ford in Superior. Pat had a strong work ethic and was passionate about the business. Pat was on Dealer Council, Chairman of Ford Credit 2007-2012. During his six years as chairman, he was one of six who helped Ford through a total reorganization and positioned the Ford Corp. as a leader without the need of a government bailout. Pat received the 'Salute to Dealer' award several times given by Edsel Ford, for his compassion and dedication to worthy causes in the community.

Pat was known for his Saturday morning cartoons and radio jingles in Duluth as well as the Twin Cities. He was also known for his unwavering devotion to his family, employees, and his tremendous generosity to many charities.

Pat loved his boats and boating on the St. Croix River and being involved with the St. Croix Yacht Club. He also enjoyed golfing and travel. ●

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A FASTER WAY TO TRANSACT

REG AND TITLE SOLUTIONS FOR HAPPY CUSTOMERS AND HAPPY TEAMS



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Car buyers have many different needs and preferences, but one thing that they all have in common is a need to handle their purchase and trade-in process quickly and efficiently. As a dealer, you know your trade-in process and CSI scores can take a hit when there's too much of a lag before lien and title release or before a customer can drive off the lot in their new car.

Connections that speed registration & title transactions

Manual registration and title processes can contribute to delays for the car-buyer and for the dealership's back office, so having the right electronic solutions can empower your staff to get customers into their cars and on the road more quickly.

Back-office solutions that make reg and title processes clean and simple reduce the headaches of travel and paperwork. Features like full DMS integration and a direct connection to the DMV save time, increase accuracy, and prevent setbacks from bottlenecks and surprises. Dealertrack's Ohio Title solution was designed with these advantages at its core, to keep your office humming and create happy customers who leave great reviews.

Connections that speed lien and title release on trades

A faster trade-in titling process can eliminate payoff surprises for speedier lien and title release, helping to turn trades quicker and boost cash flow.

When it comes to trade-ins, dealers are often faced with time consuming process steps and a lack of insight that impacts

their bottom line. Dealers who have visibility into title details can help ensure that payoff surprises, such as customer address changes or undisclosed co-owners, don't cause problems for their dealership or customers that can unravel a deal. These same dealers, upon adopting a faster trade-in process can recognize fuller profit opportunity on each trade due to getting liens and titles released quicker — allowing dealers to save on holding costs and keep cash flow moving. Dealertrack Accelerated Title® is the industry's only solution that speeds lien and title release on trades up to 70% faster,¹ by connecting to a growing lender network made up of more than 100 key auto lenders.

PAYOFF, LIEN & TITLE RELEASE

UP TO **70% FASTER¹**



See customer satisfaction soar

Our innovative solutions help you finalize more deals in less time to deliver a fast, positive experience every time.

Schedule a no-obligation call with Jerrod Wertz, Regional Sales Manager for Wisconsin, to discuss how to increase accuracy and efficiency to your back-office processes.

¹ Based on average industry timeframe for vehicle title release and vehicle payoff process of 18+ days, as determined by 2021 Dealertrack data.



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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT



This publication showcases some of the good things that dealerships and their employees do in their communities. Wisconsin dealerships, through their employees, throughout the state not only serve their customer's motor vehicle needs, but also seek out ways to help others in need. WATDA likes to brag about it and those engaged in it seem to feel great about helping make their communities a better place. Share your stories with us by contacting Megan Markovich (mmarkovich@watda.org).



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