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Road Signs Articles

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Mission Statement

The mission of APSA of Illinois is to provide communications, education, legislative and regulatory advocacy and group purchasing of services for its members while promoting the motor vehicle aftermarket industry.

Bit of History (page 14)



Headlines

Plan to attend the 50th Anniversary Annual Meeting & Conference (page 3) - Register now for you and your employees to attend the 50th Annual Meeting and Conference at Peoria, Illinois on September 19 - 20th, 2008.

"Under the Dome" (page 4) - In a surprise move this month, the Illinois General Assembly approved an amendatory veto (AV) to HB 5285 written by Gov. Blagojevich that requires health insurance coverage for unmarried dependents up to age 26, and if a veteran up to age 30.

Trademark Battle Stuck in Park (page 6) - The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) appears nervous about the growing number of design patents it is awarding to auto manufacturers.

Line Between Parts, Service Blur in Changing Aftermarket Business (page 9) - Numerous parts distributors are jostling for position in the crowded, \$107 billion heavy truck aftermarket by pursuing the same goal: to become the vehicle-repair service of choice for small, midsize and large fleet operators.

New Requirements for Vehicle Recyclers, Vehicle Crushers and Scrap Metal Processors (page 11) - Beginning on September 1, 2008, all facilities that recycle vehicles will be required to remove mercury switches before crushing or scrapping the vehicles.

New Members

Welcome New Members!

Felty's Auto Repair, Mt. Vernon

Fenton's Repair, Wayne City

Fry's Garage, Fairfield

Rogers Family Tire, Mt. Vernon

Vadas Auto Parts, Paris

Message from the President



Welcome to September. Where did the summer go? It seems like I just finished the June newsletter and was contemplating a nice relaxing summer. Now, here it is September and the kids are back in school. The summer came and went so quick that I didn't get any of my summer resolutions completed. I never did get to go camping. Not only has the summer flown by, so has the last

year.

This will be my last "Message from the President" letter. As most of you know, my term as President will end at the Annual Conference on September 19th & 20th in Peoria. After that date, Ken Kalina, from Kalina Machine & Engine Parts in Peoria, IL, will become your new President. I have known Ken since he started on the Board of Directors' with APSA of Illinois. He is a very good person and will be a very good president to represent our Association.

Most of the work and responsibility gets put on the APSA of Illinois staff. The staff consists of Matt Wells, our Executive Vice President, Marsha Fogleman, our Comptroller, Bill Richards, our Products Services Manager, Sue Brookman, Membership Services and Penny Bagby, Membership Field Representative. Our staff at APSA of Illinois is just wonderful. I have enjoyed working with each and every one of them during my term as President, and the years I spent on the Board of Directors. I thank the entire staff for their hard work and dedication to make APSA of Illinois a strong and competent association. I would also like to thank the staff for putting up with me. I hope they have enjoyed working with me as much as I have enjoyed working with them.

I very much treasure the experience and knowledge that I have gained being your President. I feel that it will most certainly help me to be a better business person and will also help with future success. What I have enjoyed most about being President, is the many good people I have met and come to know. Our industry and association is full of many good, smart business people who care about the industry. I am happy to be associated with them.

As we move into September and our Annual Conference, our association will be celebrating its 50th anniversary. What a great milestone for this organization. To mark this occasion we are having our conference at the same location as the founding meeting in 1958. As I mentioned earlier, we will be meeting in Peoria, IL at the Pere Marquette Hotel. I am looking forward to the conference and I hope everyone will plan to attend. It is an ideal way to meet the many good people in our industry. The Association has put a lot of effort into planning the 50th Anniversary Conference. They intend for it to be a meeting in which you can learn something to take home with you and help make your business better.

Please plan on attending the conference and also consider getting actively involved with APSA of Illinois. We need your help, your thoughts and ideas to make APSA of Illinois an even better association. As much as our association needs you, we all need our association to make

the automotive parts and service business a better industry in Illinois.

Thank you for the past wonderful year and thank you for letting me be your President.

Jeff Dust

Dust & Sons Auto Supplies, LP
Effingham, IL
jdust@dustandson.com

APSA of Illinois Board of Directors

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APSA of Illinois 50th Anniversary Annual Meeting & Conference



Register now for you and your employees to attend the 50th Annual Meeting and Conference at Peoria, Illinois on September 19 - 20th, 2008.

As with many of the other changes you have seen within APSA of Illinois, this Annual Meeting and Conference is no different.

During the Reception on Friday night, we will feature a slide show presentation highlighting the accomplishments and achievements of the Automotive Wholesalers of Illinois and Automotive Parts & Service Association of Illinois over the past 50 years.

We will be recognizing those who have been members of the organization for 49 and 50 years and celebrating their dedication and service to the Association.

A 50th Anniversary Trivia Game will be conducted throughout the entire conference. Attendees will be asked to answer questions about the Association and the industry. The winner will be awarded \$100 cash at the closing ceremony on Saturday afternoon.

For your convenience, a block of rooms have been reserved at the Hotel P re Marquette at a room rate of \$102 per night. Please contact the hotel directly to make your room reservations at (800) 447-1676 or [email pere@hoteleperemarquette.com](mailto:pere@hoteleperemarquette.com). Check-in is at 4:00 p.m. and check-out is at 12:00 p.m. The hotel has complimentary self-parking.

Member registration is \$50 per person for the entire event. Non-Member rate is \$100 per person. To download a registration brochure, please visit our website: http://www.apsail.com/Documents/AnnualMeeting/2008_AM_Brochure.pdf or contact the Association office.

Friday, September 19th

- 12:00 p.m.** Registration - Marquette South
- 12:30 p.m.** Tour of Caterpillar Casting Foundry, Mapleton, IL
- 5:00 p.m.** Registration - Marquette South Room
- 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.** Reception & 50th Anniversary Celebration - Marquette South Room



7:30 p.m. Central Illinois Cruisers Cruise-In



Both cars will be on display Friday night at the Hotel

Saturday, September 20th

- 7:00 a.m.** Registration - LaSalle Room
- 7:30 a.m.** Welcome, APSA of Illinois Annual Meeting - LaSalle Room
- Election and Installation of Officers and Directors
- Recognition of President and Outgoing Directors
- 8:50 a.m.** Break

Educational Session

- 9:00 a.m.** *Biodiesel Myths & Basics* with Hoon Ge - Cheminee Room



Concurrent Educational Sessions

- 10:00 a.m.** *Legislation Forum* with Jay Shattuck & Matt Wells - Cheminee Room

or

- 10:00 a.m.** *Marketing & Advertising Strategies* with Jill Schuller - Marquette North Room



- 10:45 a.m.** Break

Educational Session

- 11:00 - 11:45 a.m.** *Disaster Planning* by Corey Rekers - LaSalle Room



- 11:45 - 12:30 p.m.** Networking Box Lunch - LaSalle Room

Closing Program

- 12:45 - 1:45 p.m.** *The Future of the Automotive Aftermarket Industry* with Jon Hedges - LaSalle Room
- 2:00 p.m.** Closing remarks by President Jeff Dust
- 2:00 - 5:00 p.m.** Board of Directors' Meeting - Blackhawk Room

Any member is welcome to attend the Board meeting. Please designate on your registration form so that seating will be available.

We are looking forward to seeing you all at the 50th Anniversary Annual Meeting & Conference.

“Under The Dome” Governor Seeks to Expand Social Obligation of Small Business for Healthcare

by Jay Shattuck, Shattuck & Associates



In a surprise move this month, the Illinois General Assembly approved an amendatory veto (AV) to HB 5285 written by Gov. Blagojevich that requires health insurance coverage for unmarried dependents up to age 26, and if a veteran up to age 30. This issue was one facet of the Governor's plan to expand healthcare coverage. It requires that an employer provide the higher age coverage if dependent coverage is provided to its workforce. An employer is not required to provide dependent coverage nor pay any of the dependent premium. But, the most egregious provision of the Governor's AV is the provision that does not require any creditable coverage for the dependent. In other words, no pre-existing exclusions can be applied. This would be like a homeowner waiting until the house catches on fire to buy homeowners insurance.

I liken this latest move to the “Bride of Frankenstein” approach. The doctor (Blagojevich) must create a new monster to help tame the Frankenstein monster (AllKids/Medicaid). The Governor's expansion of publicly provided healthcare through the AllKids program and his attempted illegal expansion of it has been the budget-busting monster for state government. Now, the Governor redirects his poorly designed healthcare expansion upon the small business community. Since we have the AllKids/Medicaid mess, one would think that our state legislators would be reluctant to extend the Governor's ill-conceived plans upon small business. But, that would mean that our state lawmakers respected the business owners in their district. Unfortunately, there is no respect by a majority in either the House or Senate for small business owners, therefore we get public policy that shifts the responsibility of healthcare coverage for young adults to small business.

While there are certainly valid reasons that raise questions as to the public policy value of the proposal, the AV is questionable also as to its constitutionality. Illinois is one of the few states that provides their Governor an amendatory veto pen. But the courts have provided limits on that power. In this instance the original, underlying bill expanded coverage to dependents. It allowed full-time college students to extend their dependent coverage by one year if they were injured or sick and left school as full-time student. The Governor's addition is clearly related to the original legislation, but the question is whether the courts will allow such a drastic change. The language added by the Governor was never debated or voted on in either chamber of the legislature. In fact, bills introduced that dealt with this issue were never able to advance out of any committee in the Senate or House. If changes of this magnitude are allowed to be made by the executive branch, one questions the need of the legislative process.

There are a number of other troubling features of this proposal. This mandate impacts only small employers that are unable to self-insure. These employers are the least able to afford this type of coverage. As of last year, only an average of 61% of employers with less than 200 employees provided healthcare benefits to their workers. That number was 69% just six years ago. Illinois also led the nation in the percentage of employers dropping coverage (15.6%) from 2001-2005. (source: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation State by State Analysis, April 2008)

As proposed by the Governor, the dependent may not

actually be a “legal” dependent of their employee. In fact, the individual does not even have to live with the employee to be eligible for coverage. Federal tax law defines a “dependent” providing certain tax advantages to the parent. The Governor's AV is inconsistent with the federal definition. Therefore, an employer must deal with imputed income issues and pay payroll taxes on any imputed income for the employee.

Supporters claim that employer premiums will be reduced because the vast majority of young people are healthy and low users of services. Yet in states with a similar mandate, there is no evidence of a higher take-up rate of young adults. Since there is no mandate requiring all young adults to be insured, this proposal likely will lead to adverse selection and higher costs for small employers.

Also, supporters of this mandate contend that employers can require the employee to pay all of the premium. However, most employer health insurance plans charge one family rate for all dependent children and will not be collecting any additional premium on these young adults if there is more than one dependent.

There are marketplace and other established regulatory solutions. Illinois has a very competitive individual policy market. I recently went on the internet and found over 100 individual policies available in Illinois, competitively rated with numerous carriers and policy options. Rates for a 24 year-old male, full-time student started as low as \$28 per month with a \$5200 deductible to \$171 per month with no deductible. Rates for a 24 year-old female full-time student started at \$47 per month with a \$2500 deductible to \$187 per month with no deductible. In addition, there are carriers in Illinois that already provide an option for employers to extend their dependent coverage to young adults in their group plans. Federal law also provides up to three years of benefit continuation rights (COBRA) for individuals that lose dependent coverage. Finally, unhealthy young adults who experience difficulty in obtaining private insurance have the option of enrolling in the state-provided Comprehensive Health Insurance Plan (CHIP).

Illinois has a lower rate of uninsured than states that already mandate this coverage. Illinois has a rate of 18% of its non-elderly population uninsured. The national average is 20%. Florida's rate is 27%, New Jersey's is 19% and Texas' rate is 30%.

I contend that if the Governor's AV to HB 5285 becomes law, access to care for young adults in Illinois will actually diminish. As costs increase, employers will seek to mitigate their costs and avoid this requirement entirely. How? First, this will drive more employers to try self-insurance. Second, more employers will either discontinue to provide dependent coverage or will alter their plans, like some already do, and charge more premium if the employee has multiple children on the plan.

The point is, businesses in our state are in business to make a profit not to assure their employees that their young adult children are provided health insurance coverage. With Illinois' unemployment rate as one of the higher in the country and reaching levels not seen in decades, it's proposals like these that make Illinois a difficult state to do business in.

Good government...for the people, by the people, says GAAS speaker

Publish date: May 20, 2008 By: Sue Angell

CHICAGO — Are you for good government? Of course you are. But are you for better government? According to Leslie Waters, a former legislator with the Florida House of Representatives and a political grassroots facilitator, if you're a business owner — big or small — better government is in your best interests.

But what is good, or better, government? "Good government is not the gray granite buildings in your state capitols," Waters said during a panel presentation with Ray Pohlman, vice president and government relations director for AutoZone, at this year's Global Automotive Aftermarket Symposium (GAAS). "Good government is not keeping your fingers crossed and sitting on the sidelines and hoping your legislator will do the right thing. It is not. Good government is the elected officials who threw their hat into the ring, but it is also you. Government is people. Elected officials are people. They are your government. You need to know who they are, and to build a professional, business relationship with them."

According to Waters and Pohlman, one of the most important things a company can do to impact their business is to make government affairs an integral part of their strategic operating plans. The plan can be as simple as keeping a list of all elected officials — local, state and federal — on hand and encouraging employees to write letters or call legislators to discuss issues that are pertinent to the business and its bottom line. Or, it can be as elaborate as hiring a dedicated government relations director to keep tabs on officials and contact to educate and inform them when issues affecting the industry arise.

Sound complicated? It doesn't have to be. In fact, many of the trade associations and business groups that business owners can join already offer some manner of government affairs support as a membership perk. Granted, Pohlman admits that most businesses don't join a trade association for that reason, but says that almost all businesses do like someone watching their backs and "tempering the foolishness that is termed 'good government.'"

"Politicians need your votes. You and those who think like you have the power," says Pohlman. "Your vote is the currency that they are really looking for and desperately need. Your vote should be tied to their willingness to hear about your needs and your customers' needs. You need to build relationships with those who represent you at all levels of government."

A simple formula to follow while implementing a political action plan within your business is Waters' patented, tried-and-true "GET" plan. In other words: "G" stands for getting your employees involved in the political process so they can talk to elected officials about industry issues. "E" stands for educating and energizing employees who affect your bottom line and encouraging them to participate in the process. And "T" stands for thanking the employees who have helped you contact legislators, as well as the legislators who have supported your cause.

"So now, GET moving," Waters says.

According to Waters, elected officials represent the people who vote them in and keep them in office. So there's no use in complaining that the political process is distasteful — it's the cost of doing business. Paying attention to your government officials and building a political action plan into your business is not only a necessity — it's a requirement.



"It's your responsibility as business people to keep an eye on politicians who have your vote," Waters adds. "Do you know the name of your state representative? If you don't go home and find out. It doesn't matter if they are a Democrat or a Republican. After they are elected, they represent you, and the issues that matter to you."

Illinois Updates: New Requirements for Vehicle Recyclers, Vehicle Crushers and Scrap Metal Processors

Beginning on September 1, 2008, all facilities that recycle vehicles will be required to **remove mercury switches** before crushing or scrapping the vehicles. If for some reason, mercury switches are not removed prior to receiving the vehicle, vehicle crushers and scrap metal processors are required to remove them. While this program had been voluntary, the new mandate to remove mercury switches comes with a bonus - **recycled mercury switches will now be worth \$2 each.**

The automotive industry created End of Life Vehicle Solutions (ELVS) to manage and recycle the collected switches. Information on how to participate in the ELVS program and proper removal and storage of switches can be found at the ELVS website: <http://www.elvsolutions.org/index.htm>

ELVS also provides collection buckets and pays for the cost of shipping and recycling the switches removed by dismantlers and scrap metal recyclers. Information on which vehicles contain switches, switch locations and switch removal will be sent with the bucket. The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) is also developing a guidance manual that were mailed to recyclers, crushers and scrap metal processors in August 2008.

Recyclers, crushers and scrap metal processors will be required to maintain records and submit annual reports to the IEPA of the number of vehicles recycled, number of switches removed and the number of vehicles received. The IEPA mails annual reporting forms in July of every year, and the reports must be submitted to the IEPA by August 15th of each year.

For more information about the new requirements in Illinois, you may contact Becky Jayne at the IEPA (217) 524-9642. You may also contact the Small Business Environmental Assistance Program at (800) 252-3998 (TDD: 800-785-6055) or email at dceo.sbeap@illinois.gov.

Trademark Battle Stuck in Park

By Stephen Barlas,

Published: August 1, 2008

The U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) appears nervous about the growing number of design patents it is awarding to auto manufacturers. Many of the patents cover collision parts, but the USPTO also grants design patents for items such as exterior mirrors and wheel covers, among other items sold in every auto aftermarket retail stores in the U.S. The unease surfacing in the PTO was reflected during two meetings earlier this year when the floor was opened to discuss its policies on automotive design patents.

Jennifer Rankin-Byrne, PTO spokeswoman, says the introduction of H.R. 5638 by Rep. Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., stimulated the meeting discussion. Lofgren's bill aims to make it much harder for U.S. auto companies to get design patents for ornamental car parts. The bill pushes back on a recent International Trade Court (ITC) decision allowing automakers to assert patents on ornamental and cosmetic exterior vehicle part features to prevent repair part manufacture or importation.



The United States Trade Representative office has let ITC's decision stand unchallenged. Yet even before the ruling, OEM parts were 35% to 100% more expensive than non-OEM secondary repair parts.

In the first of the two legislation-focused meetings, Ford, Chrysler, General Motors, Toyota and the Auto Alliance discussed Lofgren's bill and a complaint filed by Ford with ITC to block the import of Mustang replacement parts, alleging design patent infringement. The complaint says eight companies, most in Taiwan, are importing Mustang hood, fender, bumper, side-view mirror and tail lamp parts using patented designs. Ford already has succeeded in blocking F-150 truck replacement parts.

But Lofgren, a senior Democrat on the House Judiciary Committee - where the bill has been referred, is pushing back against manufacturers, positioning the bill as a consumer method to reduce auto repair and insurance costs. Groups such as the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association (AAIA), Automotive Body Parts Association (ABPA) and Coalition for Auto Repair Equality (CARE), among other consumer and insurance industry groups, have pledged support.

Aaron Lowe, AAIA's vice president of government affairs, also spoke out against automakers during a June hearing at PTO's Alexandria, VA-based offices. Even though car companies' cosmetic parts continually "fail to have any distinctive design" worthy of patent, manufacturers "seemingly are receiving rubber stamp approval," he says.

Over the past five years, design patents encompass almost 25% of the total U.S. patents granted to automotive manufacturers, Lowe continues. "Further, crash parts account for anywhere between 50% to 93% of the U.S. design patents awarded to major car companies," Lowe says. "These numbers are staggering and should be of great concern to this agency."

Despite industry concern, Lofgren's bill is stuck in park, despite her success at securing senior Democrat sponsors that sit on the Judiciary Committee. The problem is that Rep. John Conyers, D-Mich., the chairman of the committee, is from Detroit. It is safe to assume that he will not let any anti-auto company legislation through his committee, at least not without a pitched battle.

Stephen Barlas has been a full-time freelance Washington editor since 1981, reporting for trade, professional magazines and newspapers on regulatory agency, congressional and White House actions and issues. He also writes a column for Automotive Engineering, the monthly publication for the Society of Automotive Engineers.

Right to Repair Act Protects Car Owners, Repair Shops in Rural Communities

Legislation Requires Equal Access to Repair Information
The need for the Motor Vehicle Owners' Right to Repair Act (HR 2694) is even more critical to car owners in rural communities and their trusted local repair shops, according to Kathleen Schmatz, president and CEO of the Automotive Aftermarket Industry Association (AAIA).

Because vehicles are becoming increasingly sophisticated with virtually every system either monitored or controlled by computers, servicing these vehicle systems to keep them in safe and efficient working condition requires ready access to complete and accurate repair information from the car companies. The Motor Vehicle Owners' Right to Repair Act (HR 2694) was introduced in Congress and in many states to ensure that car owners and their trusted repair shops have the same access to safety alerts and repair information as the franchised new car dealer network. "The cost of owning and operating a vehicle will significantly increase if motorists are forced back to the dealer for service, making convenient and affordable local auto repair a thing of the past," said Schmatz. "This is particularly true in rural areas where many motorists may forgo important vehicle repairs due to higher dealer repair costs, plus the additional cost of fuel and travel time required because there is no dealership in the area."

The cost to consumers, when they can only have their car repaired at the dealership, is estimated to be as much as 25 % higher with labor charges alone, according to a study comparing dealer repair tags with those of an independent service center. For motorists in rural communities, the added cost of fuel and travel time to a dealership in other area is an added burden. "In order for neighborhood repair shops throughout the country to be able to serve their customers, they must have access to the tools, software, safety alerts and repair information necessary to diagnose and repair all systems on modern automobiles," continued Schmatz. "Right to Repair merely seeks to restore the competitive repair market that has been in place since the invention of the automobile. Clearly, using advances in technology to create a vehicle repair monopoly is a misuse of these computers and certainly not in the consumer's best interest."

A complete list of co-sponsors and a copy of the Motor Vehicle Owners' Right to Repair Act (HR 2694) can be found by visiting www.righttorepair.org.

It Is Really Hard To See The Forest For All The Trees

By Matt Wells, EVP



"It is really hard to see the forest for all the trees." It is truly amazing how we get so caught up in the daily grind of getting the days tasks completed that we never seem to have time to focus on; the strategy of running our business, store or shop. How do you get out of the trees to see the forest? And what does that really mean?

You hear so many times that you need to step back and look at the bigger picture, but any time you step away from the counter or your desk, it seems someone else is standing there to present you with another problem or challenge. The reality of focusing on your businesses future or business strategy seems as far away as Timbuktu. Why do you need a business strategy and how does that tie into trees and a forest? That has nothing to do with cars and auto parts. Don't worry, I am getting there...

The best definition of business strategy that I have found is this: "A *business strategy* is a set of guiding principles that, when communicated and adopted in the organization, generates a desired pattern of decision making. A strategy is, therefore, about how people throughout the organization should make decisions and allocate resources in order to accomplish key objectives."

You and I cannot deny that the automotive parts and repair industry is in a dramatic state of evolution. The reality of managing your business the same way you did the previous year, or years before, is a perfect plan to be out of business very soon. The time you spend on a business strategy will help you:

1. Actually make more money. Think about it, if you take the time to figure out how much money you realistically want to make in the next three years, you now have something to base your P & L ratios and pricing plans on instead of making them on the fly and hoping you have money in the register at the end of the month.

2. Will allow you to grow or evolve your business. So you have always wanted to set up another store in a nearby town because you see the market there, or you only have one lift in your three bay shop and would like to have another lift to increase turn-around in your shop. If you take the time to organize the steps you need to integrate those changes without disrupting your current business (*which, by the way, is how you are staying open*). Now you can plan those changes in your business strategy without losing money by making a decision on the fly and having a major, **unmanaged** disruption in your business.

3. It will make those day to day decisions much easier. With a business strategy, comes focus. When you have underlying principles and an overall goal for your business, all of the sudden you have something to compare your decision against in order to move closer to your goal. Those firefighting decisions you make every day now make sense and are easier to come by.

Being active in this Association and participating in the Annual Conference and Town Hall meetings will give you just that opportunity to focus on what is important in your

business and talk with others in the industry who have shared the experiences and decisions that you are facing. Your Association dues not only bring you legislative representation and expense reducing programs, but also the opportunity to get out of the trees and turn around to see the forest of decisions you need to make to survive in this evolving industry. Check out the lineup of programs on September 20th and mark you calendars for the Town Hall meeting nearest you. These small windows of time you spend at an Association function I promise will help bring clarity and perhaps a little enjoyment to your everyday grind. See you in Peoria!

Slate of Officers and Region Directors

The APSA of Illinois Nominating Committee presents the following members as the slate of Officers and Directors for 2009 - 2010.

Each has been considered as to character, business practices, leadership abilities and willingness to contribute to the general welfare of the APSA of Illinois. Also, each nominee has been contacted personally by telephone, and has verbally made a commitment to attend and participate each year at all Board of Directors' Meetings. The official election and installation will be held at the Association's Annual Meeting, September 20, 2008 at Hotel Pere Marquette in Peoria, Illinois.

President

Kenneth A. Kalina, Kalina Machine & Engine Parts, Peoria

Vice President

Douglas Layhew, A & B Auto Body Supply, Inc., LaSalle

Treasurer

John F. Rice, Jr., The Jopac Companies, Bloomington

Secretary

Clinton W. Taylor, Mac-Weld, Inc., Carbondale

Region Directors

Region 2 & 6 - No candidates

Region 5

Mark Hagler, Mark's Service Center, Shorewood

Region 9

Dean M. Kinkelaar, Effingham Regrinding, Effingham

Region 10

Alan D. Martin, Martin's Automotive Center, Mt. Vernon





The Automotive Parts & Service Association of Illinois Board of Directors' recently endorsed an exceptionally successful credit card processing service to our membership. Find out what your fellow APSA of Illinois members already know: In a time when customer service is often lacking, Qualified Processing Services (QPS) provides a level of service that is unsurpassed.

QPS partners with our members to help reduce the overall cost of credit card processing. It is their emphasis to create true relationships with their clients. Through relationships, they not only teach our members how to process correctly, but QPS also monitors their accounts to ensure they always process correctly.

QPS will work with your company to remove the extra fees from your merchant account statement. Their approach is different, but the net result will be significant savings, delivered through reduced charges and low rates.

	<p>For more information contact Matt Wells or Bill Richards (217) 786-2850 matt@apsail.com or bill@apsail.com</p>	
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APSA of IL Member Benefits

- ➔ **Five percent (5%) of the gross profitability from member accounts will be refunded back to participating APSA of IL members on an annual basis***
- ➔ **Free Statement Analysis & Savings Proposal**
- ➔ **No Obligation - 60 Day Trial Period**
- ➔ **No Application Fee, No Set-up Costs**
- ➔ **Free Licenses for Web-Based Processing (\$300 value)**



**Refunds will be proportional to processing volume*

Line Between Parts, Service Blurs In Changing Aftermarket Business

By Mark Solomon

Publication: *Transport Topics*

Date: Monday, July 7 2008

Numerous parts distributors are jostling for position in the crowded, \$107 billion heavy truck aftermarket by pursuing the same goal: to become the vehicle-repair service of choice for small, midsize and large fleet operators.

The purpose is to woo truckers with both service and parts from one all-encompassing, geographically comprehensive source.

Moreover, as traditional truck parts distributors encroach on the service side of the business, looking to grab market share in a difficult economy, a major player in automotive parts is setting its sights on truck parts.

The National Automotive Parts Association (NAPA), with its vast resources and brand power, is making an aggressive push, with about half of its 6,000 outlets already selling heavy-duty parts as part of the company's strategy of marketing the one-stop idea.

NAPA, however, has no plans to penetrate the service side of the heavy-duty segment, Jay Lott, general manager of NAPA's heavy vehicle parts group, told *Equipment & Maintenance Update*.

Still, crossovers are blurring the familiar lines defining the truck aftermarket - which is all about taking care of the vehicle after original warranties expire.

By adding service to its portfolio, a parts distributor tries to strengthen its market control. The company that owns the service space will be better positioned to sell its own parts in support of the maintenance, industry participants said.

"The way we look at it, for every dollar of labor, we sell two dollars of parts," said Pat Biermann, president of HD America, a parts cooperative and one of the nation's biggest heavy duty distributors.

In 2000, HD America began offering an integrated parts service solution by linking with independent garages. Under the initiative, HD America provides discounted parts and sales, marketing and technical support to its maintenance network. In return, HD America is a member's "first call," as Biermann puts it, when network members need to replenish their inventory. In 2007, HD America increased its service locations by 10% over 2006, a rise Biermann said is because of its partnership program's growing popularity.

Analysts note what is going on.

"We feel that the service component has become critical [to parts distributors] because one then has leverage over the parts distribution," said Stuart MacKay, president of MacKay & Co., a marketing research and consulting firm in Lombard, Ill. MacKay's firm is encouraging traditional parts distributors to expand their repair and maintenance capabilities on the truck side.

One firm MacKay cited as headed in that direction is *FleetPride*, a Houston-based parts warehouse and distributor with 176 locations nationwide that some say is poised to begin repair and maintenance work. *FleetPride*

declined comment for this story.

"If I am a mid-size fleet, where I am going to buy my parts is where I am going to get the service," said Michele Calbi, vice president of procurement and shop operations for Swift Transportation, the large truckload carrier based in Phoenix. Swift does virtually all of its maintenance work in-house but farms out a portion of its emergency roadside work to a network of independent garages.



Aftermarket parts and maintenance work have long co-existed on separate levels. Fleet operators still do most of their own maintenance - 75% - in their own facilities. Data show the percentage has remained remarkably constant through the years, though changing labor realities and economics may erode that position.

By contrast, the parts side has seen dynamic shifts. According to MacKay research, original equipment dealers controlled 43% of the parts market at the end of 2006, the largest market share and up from 38% in 1989. Independent distributors experienced the largest share decline, dropping to 26% from 34%. MacKay tracks market of parts sales at the retail or end-user points. Sales to wholesalers, including independent garages, are excluded from the data.

Independent or third-party garages grew their share of the parts segment to 13% from 5% during that time, though as independents, they lack the punch that big distributors can deliver. Yet third-party garages have reaped the benefits of moving aggressively into the service space, especially if they handle increasingly complicated engine maintenance, a major component system with which parts distributors generally don't get involved.

Experts have said for several years that the service side should be fertile ground for supplier growth and opportunity as truck operators outsource shop work. Although freight tonnage's flat curve has prompted fleets to bring more work in-house - down time has increased for both fleets and technicians - the long-term trend is expected to head in the other direction.

Whoever is doing the work faces the same difficulty, however.

"Truck operators would rather not be in the service business. They are doing more work [now] because they can't find qualified technicians outside of their shops to do it instead," said MacKay.

The trade needs an additional 1,000 technicians to meet growing demand, according to estimates from the Heavy Duty Manufacturers Association, an industry trade group. That figure "is not a drop in the bucket" when compared to the size of the total mechanic workforce, said Tim Kraus, HDMA's president.

Biermann of HD America is blunt in predicting the fate of companies that invest in hiring and retaining skilled labor, as well as those who don't.

"The ones that have the technicians that understand the complexities of today's vehicles will

Continued on page 10

Line Between Parts, Service Blurs In Changing Aftermarket Business

(continued from page 9)

benefit. Those that don't will get shut out," he said.

Kraus said service work may shift to dealers and away from independent garages because dealers have access to the high-tech information and the equipment needed to work on today's advanced systems and have the resources to hire and keep skilled mechanics. Independent garages "may have a struggle because of the complexity involved in maintaining the vehicles and the cost to attract and train qualified labor," he said.

Dealers have about a 7% share of the service market, while independent paint and body shops control 7% and independent repair garages control 9%, according to MacKay's breakdown of the data.

Another issue for fleet owners is the lack of service points needed to do the work. Many owners have maxed out their in-house infrastructure and are incapable of taking on any more jobs. Inadequate internal capacity was the reason most cited by fleets when deciding to outsource their maintenance, according to MacKay's data.

"Availability of service points is a major problem. Fleets can't handle much more maintenance than they currently perform," said Robert Braswell, technical director of the American Trucking Associations' Technology & Maintenance Council. Kraus of HDMA predicts consolidation among dealers leading to fewer players, but he said those remaining are likely to increase the size of their service networks.

Tension has always existed between original equipment manufacturers, their dealers and independent garages. However, experts such as Calbi of Swift believe that shortages of skilled workers and declining maintenance touch points should drive dealers and garages toward each other rather than apart. But Calbi, who built such an alliance during her days with Freightliner, said the initiative probably will have to come from the independent.

"If I were an independent garage, I would hook up with an [OEM] and build a satellite network of repair stations," she said.

Uni-Select to Acquire Parts Depot's Mid-Atlantic Operations

From aftermarketNews Staff & Wire Reports

BOUCHERVILLE, Quebec -- Uni-Select has entered into an agreement to purchase the Mid-Atlantic parts distribution operations of Parts Depot Inc.

This is a significant addition to Uni-Select's U.S. operations, potentially bringing Uni-Select just below Pep Boys in terms of store count. Parts Depot ranked No. 13 on [Counterman's Super Stores of 2007 list](#); Uni-Select came in at No. 9.

The assets and operations to be acquired by Uni-Select include nine regional parts distribution warehouses and 67 parts stores located in Virginia, West Virginia, North and South Carolina, Delaware, Maryland, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Tennessee, which cater to independent jobbers, installers and, to a lesser extent, retail customers.

Parts Depot will retain its Florida-based warehouse and store operations.

The acquired business and its assets will be included in the activities of Uni-Select's Automotive Group USA. The acquisition is expected to add annual sales of \$180 million. Willi Alexander, Parts Depot president and CEO, will join Uni-Select USA along with the operating management team assigned to the acquired operations.

The transaction is expected to be completed on September, 15, 2008.

"This transaction supports our strategy of expanding our distribution footprint in the United States. The Parts Depot operations cover a territory that is almost completely complementary to Uni-Select's Distribution Network and this acquisition provides a wonderful opportunity to continue our growth in the U.S. market," said Richard Roy, president and chief executive officer of Uni-Select Inc.

"This is exciting news for our employees, customers and vendors," added Rollie Olson, chairman of Parts Depot Inc. "It will allow both companies to more effectively compete and grow in our consolidating industry. Also, we have found the right partner in Uni-Select as its culture, values and business model, including support of the independent Jobber, are so similar to ours."

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Energy Source Answers Some Old Problems

The Paper, June 25, 2008

MONMOUTH - James Hunt, who was a jet mechanic in the Navy for eight years, was just taking classes at Carl Sandburg College to transfer to Western Illinois University when he came up with a practical way to extract hydrogen from water. Events at Akvo Energy America have moved at light speed since.

Hunt, the company's president/owner, is an example of dreaming no small dreams. A 1980 fire truck, which he has dedicated to his wife's grandfather, Bud Wilkins, is his pride and joy.

"This truck is special," he said, not just because of its namesake, a former Galesburg Fire Department deputy chief, who retired in ... 1980. "We're going to turn it into a mobile power plant, a desalination unit."

Hunt said the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina is a good example of how his non-polluting, inexhaustible power source could help, in addition to reducing the world's reliance on fossil fuels and cutting down greenhouse gas emissions.

"They needed power, they needed fresh water," Hunt said of New Orleans residents. He said his hydrogen fuel generation system could have addressed those needs.

"Using our process on a larger basis, you could terraform the Earth," he said, "turn the desert into a prairie. Think about the Third World countries we can get power to," providing fresh water to villages and farms. "There's so many applications this has started up."

When The Register-Mail first reported Hunt's invention in April, there were some naysayers. Hunt knows there are still people who will not believe his process can work.

He listened intently as one e-mail sent to the newspaper in April, following publication of the article, was read to him. The writer wrote, in part, "The 'create' hydrogen at the 'point of use' is, from an energy-efficiency standpoint, nonsense."

Hunt said the science cited by the writer is sound.

"You can't generate hydrogen. We use a small amount of electricity to release hydrogen from water," he said. "We don't generate, we convert. ... The newest system I'm working on, it will triple that output."

Another e-mail called Hunt's invention "old news." The writer compared it to a hydrogen/carbon monoxide blend known as "bingo fuel," popular in Europe during World War II.

"This method of fuel gas production is not carbon neutral, as the carbon monoxide portion of the gas is toxic, and when burned it produces carbon dioxide," according to the writer of the e-mail. "This causes greenhouse gases, just like any other hydrocarbon fuel."

Hunt again said the science cited was sound but not valid in this case.

"We already took that into consideration a long time ago," Hunt said. "He hasn't seen my system. He thinks we let that gas go, but there's an entire additional process that doesn't allow the carbon dioxide to be released."

"There's a lot of hydrogen systems out there. They all



produce chemical wastes in the end or release gases," Hunt said, also pointing out that hydrogen fuel cell systems are incredibly dangerous.

Hunt did not want to discuss how oil companies may feel about his process but said, "Oil does a lot for this world. I'm not trying to stop oil production. We need it for plastics."

But there's no doubt he totally believes in his hydrogen generation system. Pointing to a small generator, he said, "That will power my house. I won't pay any heating bills this year."

The generator will use the hydrogen conversion process.

Hunt said it would take more than 32 years to convert all vehicles now in existence to the new fuel system, but "any new vehicle could have our system. They're spending billions every year at GM and we did this at the college for less than \$22,000."

Dave Kniss, one of Akvo's employees, as well as Hunt's father-in-law, said being part of the new company is "very exciting. I just look for new surprises every day. It's really come to fruition, hasn't it?"

For those who don't think Hunt's process will ever be feasible for everyday use, he looks at it philosophically.

"The world will decide if they want to use something that's feasible and works," Hunt said. "It has the merit to at least be considered. The truth of it is, we want to get it out there."

EPA Suggests Administration's Proposal to Increase Fuel Economy Standards is Lax

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) filed comments on Aug. 18th on the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration's (NHTSA) draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in support of the proposed increase in Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards. However, EPA suggested that the Department of Transportation's proposed increase is not sufficiently stringent, stating that the EIS data underestimated the economic and environmental benefits of increased fuel standards. Specifically, EPA urged NHTSA to carefully consider projections for fuel prices that will be more realistic and higher for the final EIS; hence suggesting that more fuel efficient vehicles are more economical. In EIS, NHTSA estimated that the price of gasoline would be \$2.45 in 2015.

From an environmental perspective, EPA pointed out that NHTSA's \$7-per-ton of CO₂ emitted estimate to gauge the social cost of CO₂ emissions was too low, and failed to account for the international impact of emissions. The purpose of NHTSA's EIS is to comply with the Energy Independence Security Act, which requires fuel economy standards for cars and light trucks to be 35 miles per gallon (mpg) by 2020, up from the current level of 25 mpg. EPA and many activists groups believe that standard should be met by 2015.

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Leverenz Automotive & Truck Parts, Inc., Danville

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Lincoln Land Community College, Springfield

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Congratulations and thank you for your continuous support!

Technicians We Need Your Help!!

We need technical information on repair/replacement parts and services that reduces vehicle emissions.

State Representative Karen May has introduced HB 3424 in the Illinois House of Representatives. HB 3424 is called the Clean Care Bill. If this bill's language passes; it will possibly evoke the California Air Restriction Board (CARB) Emissions and Extended Warranties Rules, and additional regulations of the vehicle owners of the State of Illinois. Basically, the State of Illinois will prohibit certain vehicles from being sold in Illinois, while copying California Environmental Protection Agency and CARB's excessive warranty requirements. It is our opinion that this is a Federal issue and not State. If all States issue their own regulations, the vehicle manufacturers will have to produce products separate for each state. This will add extra burden on the manufacturers and additional cost to the consumer while limiting consumer choice. In addition, it will render Illinois EPA ineffective and useless in vehicle emissions regulation.

As a member of APSA of Illinois, we need your help to defeat this proposed legislation. The position of APSA of Illinois, is that everyone would like to make positive strides in reducing emissions. We would like to accomplish this without adding further burden on the consumer and the vehicle manufacturers. APSA of Illinois is working on legislation that *ENCOURAGES* consumers to maintain their vehicles which will reduce emissions, give the vehicle owner additional incentive to do so, and not create new burdensome state specific rules.

We are asking for help from technicians that can provide specific examples of service/parts replacement that will *POSITIVELY* enhance the efficiency of a vehicle. We need specific examples, that include the associated costs of improvements that will directly reduce the emissions of a vehicle that consumers can voluntarily have performed on their vehicle.

Items such as:

- Inflation of tires with Nitrogen to reduce leakage and maintain proper pressure thus decreasing roll resistance, resulting in better fuel economy and less emissions. Cost approximately \$8 per tire.
- Repair/replacement of O2 Sensors and associated costs.
- Vehicle all wheel alignment, to assure all wheels are following each other properly, have the proper camber, caster, toe, KPI and turning radius. Reduces tire wear, reduces roll resistance, increases fuel economy and increases driver safety with improved handling. Cost varies with vehicle size type and condition (a sliding scale will have to be developed).

If you have examples and/or suggestions, please email them to Matt Wells as matt@apsail.com or call (217) 786-2850. Thank you in advance for your efforts.

New Membership Field Representative - Greg Williams



I was born and raised in the Quad Cities, but have slowly moved myself into Central Illinois. I've been around the central part of the state for approximately 20 years. I know the kind heartedness of the heartland people and their businesses. As a result, I believe in "building those relationships with those local area business owners is one of the keys to growing the APSA of IL and any other successful business." But, family is another key to that - successfulness within any business - with my family consisting of my wife, two boys and one on the way from Guatemala.

I graduated from Illinois State University with a degree in Public Relations and a minor in Business Administration. I started my career, after graduating in the Sales/Management field with Rent-A-Center. After that, I moved into the hotel arena with such companies as Signature Inn, Marriott International and the Crowne Plaza Hotel, where I expanded my abilities in sales, service and management for myself and for many others. Next, I tackled a new challenge, the business arena for a pest management company, Orkin Commercial Services, to customize programs for companies big and small and did it very successfully since 2006.

With all my experience in sales, service and management, I'm on to my final challenge to cultivate those experiences and relationships to grow the APSA of IL within its existing clients and find new ones.

Now, that I'm with the APSA of IL, I see the opportunity to have a good mix of professional growth with personal growth. I see this happening, by all the past organizations and people that I have had a good business relationship with, and was an asset for their organization now and in the future. Finally, one might say to be successful in any organization - "you reap what you sow!"

A Little Bit of our History



The 25th Anniversary Annual Meeting & Trade Show was held October 16 - 17, 1985 at the Holiday Inn O'Hare, Chicago with over 1,700 attendees.

As was stated at the close of the first 25 years of APSA of Illinois, "we should not look back to remember, but look back for inspiration. Success is to be measured not so much by the position reached in life, as by the obstacles which one has overcome while trying to succeed."

Don't miss out on the 50th Anniversary Celebration - Register today by downloading the registration brochure at [www.apsail.com/Documents/Annual Meeting/2008 AM Brochure.pdf](http://www.apsail.com/Documents/Annual%20Meeting/2008%20AM%20Brochure.pdf)

RSMF Scholarship Fund Drive Winners

Congratulations to Dave Shetler of Morrison Auto Supply, Morrison, Illinois the Grand Prize Winner of the Ralph Silverman Memorial Foundation Scholarship Drive Cubs vs. Cardinals package. The Grand Prize package includes: Box seat tickets to the game on September 11th, 2008, one night's stay at the Airport Hilton with free shuttle service to the game and \$100 in free gas!

And to **Breck Loos of Sterling NAPA Auto Parts**, Sterling, Illinois, winner of the Second prize which includes: Two tickets to the Cards vs. Cubs game on September 9th, 2008.

Thanks to members like these, your RSMF Scholarship Foundation has raised almost \$1,000 this year. With a goal of raising \$5,000 from July 2008 to July 2009, the Foundation Committee would like to thank everyone who has paid their voluntary donation with their Association dues. Your continued support to this foundation ensures that students from Illinois who are interested in a career in the automotive aftermarket industry have the opportunity and finances to get the education they deserve.

If you would like to make a general donation to the RSMF Scholarship Foundation (which is a 501 (c)3 charitable foundation) please make the check out to: RSMF Foundation, 6450 S. 6th Street Road, Springfield, IL 62712.

2008 - 2009 Calendar of Events

September 1

Labor Day - APSA of IL office closed

September 3 - 5

AAIA Fall Leadership Days, Grand Hyatt, San Antonio, TX

September 3 - 5

SAE International Powertrain Conference, Chicago

September 7 - 11

Chicagoland Indy 300, Joliet, IL

September 19 - 20

APSA of Illinois "50th Anniversary" Annual Meeting & Conference, Hotel P re Marquette, Peoria, IL

October 13

Columbus Day - APSA of Illinois office closed

November 4

Election Day - Don't forget to VOTE!

November 4 - 6

AAPEX 2008, Las Vegas, NV www.aapexshow.com

November 12

Town Hall Meeting, Rusty's Bar & Grill, Decatur

November 18

Town Hall Meeting, Stoney Creek Inn, Peoria

November 19

Town Hall Meeting, Chicagoland area - Location TBA

November 20

Town Hall Meeting, The Elk's Lodge, Mt. Vernon

November 27

Thanksgiving Day - APSA of Illinois office closed

February 14 - 15

Race & Performance Expo, St. Charles

March 4 - 6

The Work Truck Show, Chicago

March 10 - 11

AASA Vision Conference 2009, Rosemont

March 11 - 12

Aftermarket Legislative Summit, Washington, DC

May 5 - 6

Greater Chicago Job Shop Show, Schaumburg

April 2 - 4

Car Care World Expo, Las Vegas, NV

April 21 - 25

AAIA Spring Leadership Days, Huntington Beach, CA

May 25

IRL Indianapolis 500, Indianapolis, IN

If you are planning an event in 2008, please let us know the details and we will include the information in the next quarterly issue of **Road Signs**.



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Automotive Aftermarket Calendar Program



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For more information on 2009 Calendars or to place an order, please contact Bill Richards in the Association office at (800) 369-2964 or (217) 786-2850.

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This newsletter is designed to provide accurate information, but the discussion is general in nature and should not be acted upon without obtaining professional advice from a licensed attorney or certified public accountant.



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