



Service Specialists Association

2300 State St.
Hamden, CT 06517

Return Postage Requested

the LEAF

Find us on



facebook

Keep An Eye On Our Site
www.SSATruck.com



Service Specialists Association

the LEAF

SUMMER
2022

President's Letter

Summer is here! My kids and I are starting to enjoy the fresh air and our evening scooter rides around the block. Parks are open and pools are warming up! In my neighborhood, we also look forward to "driveway drinks!" That is one good thing that came out of Covid. People are finding other ways to get together and enjoy each other's company.

I hope all of you are doing well and that your shops are packed with work! Allied Spring is busy! Thank you, Lord! And, we have finally been able to hire a few employees in our Syracuse shop! We continue to forge ahead, even with some continued challenges in inventory availability, delivery issues, price increases, fuel and energy rising costs, etc. Nevertheless, at the end of the day, we remain grateful for a business that remains strong and "essential."

The SSA Board of Directors is working hard on planning for our convention in Coral Gables, Florida. We are excited to be able to cover some very relevant topics by a fantastic list of speakers. It is Florida in October, which means lots and lots of fun stuff to do outside of the convention. We are planning for that too!

I hope you all have a wonderful summer. Stay safe and healthy. The Board looks forward to seeing each



Jodie Cresswell
President

of you, as well as all of our suppliers and vendors, in October.

"If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito."

Dalai Lama

Most sincerely,
Jodie Cresswell

Prices keep going up for fall flights...

be sure to book your October SSA Convention flights early and save!

Once in Miami, please note there is no shuttle to the hotel from the airport. Taxi and Uber options are available for around \$25. For those of you who are planning on driving to the hotel, self parking is available for \$30 a night.



SHOP PROFILE



Allied Spring & Services was started in Syracuse, NY in 1965 by Jack and Verna Seguin. In 1986 the business was sold to their daughter and son in law, Tom and Lonnie LaRochelle. Tom and Lonnie expanded the business to a second location located in Elmira, NY in 2002. When the LaRochelle's wanted to retire they put their business up for sale. That is where we come in!

Jodie and I are often asked "Why would two girls want to buy a spring shop?" I am not sure that in 2014 we knew what we were getting ourselves into. I can honestly say that it is better than I even thought it would be! Despite the challenges of late, we have managed to take a successful existing business and expand it to a third location located in Rochester, NY. We are now up to 28 employees!

From the time I could walk I spent a lot of time in my grandfather's shop. He repaired small engines such as motorcycles and lawn mowers. I came inside covered in grease every day. Those are still some of my favorite memories! I love the smell of a shop, so I am definitely in my element! While in college, I landed a job working for a Heavy Duty Parts Distributor here in Western NY. I got married in 1995 and went to work for my husband who owns a light/medium duty repair shop and towing company. I was blessed being self-employed as I had my son, Kyle (now 28) and my daughter Jenna (now 25). I was able to tailor my work schedule around their needs. For that I am truly grateful!

Although my current titles are Co-Owner and Vice President, I spend a good portion of my time in the parts procurement and inventory management world these days. I have to guess that all of the shop owners are wearing multiple hats now. While we would love to grow Allied even bigger than it is now, we would like to do that with the three existing locations. We are adding more product lines each year to enhance our needs, as well as our customer's needs. Each day I try to back up our sales associate both in house and on the road. I like to get their orders processed and out the door quickly. I also try to talk to as many customers as possible each day. I find that taking the extra few minutes and building those relationships are not only good for business, but good for my energy too. It keeps me focused and moving! I have met some of the most amazing people ever by just taking a few minutes each day to connect.

Jodie and I made an immediate decision to join the SSA when we bought Allied. It is probably one of the best decisions that we made early on. We have met a lot of nice people and have made so many friends. I appreciate that the SSA conventions are on the smaller, more intimate size. I also love that this convention moves every year. We get to visit with people that we have grown to care about and appreciate in a different atmosphere annually. The amount of industry knowledge in one place is astounding to me! The SSA has been a great way to build relationships with our suppliers. We have been able to bring home an idea every year whether it was from a class or a colleague. The round table discussions where we have shared best practices have been invaluable to both the parts and the service sides of our business. Thank you to all of you who have shared their experiences and helped to guide us through these first eight years!



BUSINESS
women find niche in heavy truck repair

ring opens Rochester, lots of snow

Allied Spring & Suspension

Customers include all heavy-duty trucks, including school buses and garbage trucks. The shop has customers from throughout western New York, and each of the three locations.

Allied Spring stands on property through both its fittings and its customer Phaneuf and Lay make a client needs a part, even if the other warehouse for a customer can have one.

"We know these people own these vehicles for a long time. They lose money the longer they're out of the road," Phaneuf says.

Last fall Allied Spring attorneys and women's enterprise certificate says they are hoping to bring tool.

"We are attending a minority-owned event. So we're really stony and meet with people start to get into the shop."

Phaneuf enjoys her new owner because they've been in the business for years. And for her, it's a relief. "I've been in the business for 15 years. And for me, it's a relief. I've been in the business for 15 years. And for me, it's a relief."

Skill, with the newly opened Rochester repair shop, the owners expect to increase business by 30 percent.

"The services we offer are mostly spring and suspension, medium- and heavy-duty vehicles," Lay explains. "We do some brakes, wheels, that sort of thing, but it's mostly steering and suspension."

"Last year we virtually had no snow, and so we obviously didn't have a \$4 million year," Phaneuf acknowledges. "The business fluctuates. That's just how it is in the heavy-duty industry."

But the business is cyclical and depends somewhat on weather. Bad winters mean more business at Allied Spring, so last year was not as profitable, Lay and Phaneuf say.

"Last year we virtually had no snow, and so we obviously didn't have a \$4 million year," Phaneuf acknowledges. "The business fluctuates. That's just how it is in the heavy-duty industry."

But the business is cyclical and depends somewhat on weather. Bad winters mean more business at Allied Spring, so last year was not as profitable, Lay and Phaneuf say.

"Last year we virtually had no snow, and so we obviously didn't have a \$4 million year," Phaneuf acknowledges. "The business fluctuates. That's just how it is in the heavy-duty industry."

But the business is cyclical and depends somewhat on weather. Bad winters mean more business at Allied Spring, so last year was not as profitable, Lay and Phaneuf say.

CORAL GABLES



SSA Members...

Our annual SSA Convention will be here before you know it and we will all be down in sunny Coral Gables, Florida on October 11th through the 13th!

Here is what we already have planned for you:

- Sessions to improve your daily operations and fill you in on the latest safety knowledge out there.
- Cybersecurity - What to be aware of. How Ransomware can compromise your operations.
- Presentations on niche services you can add to your service menu.
- Learn why OSHA expects you to have your lifts certified every year.
- Education session on what are your level of exposure is if one of your drivers has an accident in your company vehicle or while test-driving a customer's vehicle; what the insurance industry calls a "nuclear event".
- Suppliers' presentations on "what's new with their products."



2022
SSA CONVENTION

CORAL GABLES, FLORIDA
October 11th - 13th

Block Rates Available: Oct.10th to Oct 15th

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

- The always popular "round table discussions."
- Annual Golf outing - Tuesday, October 11th!
- An exciting opening night theme reception!
- And of course, seeing your colleagues again in a fun educational environment.

Don't forget to pack your white blazer and practice your best Crockett & Tubbs impersonations. It's only a few months away!