



Service Specialists Association

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Service Specialists Association

# the LEAF

FALL  
2019

## President's Letter

### Greetings!

The 2019 SSA meeting is approaching quickly and planning is in the final stages. This year's event, located in Newport, RI., will be kicked off by a golf outing on Tuesday, October 1st at the Valley Country Club followed by two days of programs focusing on top industry trends, product profiles and reuniting with friends and suppliers. Be sure to take time in between to get outside and enjoy what Newport has to offer! The restaurants, shopping, and beautiful seaside historic mansions are a great way to spend an afternoon.

David Saline from Drive, one of the industry's top business consulting firms, will be speaking on Wednesday and Thursday morning about innovative technology, training, and management systems. Rick Martin will also be presenting on Wednesday, sharing his experience from 48 years in the trucking industry training professionals on brakes, steering, drive lines, transmissions, collision mitigation systems and more. Other learning opportunities include shop profitability online training, succession planning, round table networking, and product profiles, to name a few.

To conclude, this is the last Leaf of my presidency. When I first joined the Board of Directors this association, near and dear to us all, was in need of some changes to stay viable. Having worked with "the best Board of Directors" along with our new Supplier Liaison Don Jones and our new Management team, the organization has undergone positive changes



**Jim Parsons**  
*President*

and progress that continues to gain momentum. It took a village and we couldn't have done it without our members and suppliers. Thanks to everyone for this experience and your knowledge and support. Without our dedicated members, suppliers, and Board of Directors we would not be where we are today.

Rest assured you are in the best of hands with new incoming President Mark Broehm. He has been incredibly helpful and will lead the SSA into the future. Thank you Mark for being the best vice president anyone could as for.

**I look forward to seeing everyone in October!**

Sincerely,  
**Jim Parsons**  
McFarland Spring Corp.  
Portland, Maine

## SSA Convention 2019

Be committed to the industry we share.  
Join the SSA (Service Specialist Associates) and enjoy the benefits.

October 1-3 | Newport, RI | Newport Marriot Resort

## BOOK NOW!



# SHOP PROFILE

McBrides Spring & Welding has been a member of the SSA - Service Specialist Association since 1983.

McBride's has been focused on fulfilling the Albuquerque, NM area spring & suspension needs for over 75 years.

The organization is in its third generation of family ownership and operation with its roots in blacksmithing & welding repair, started in 1943 by Joel McBride. When Joel's son Harold McBride got back from "touring" around the South Pacific during WWII, he started working with his father as a welder & spring furnace man. As the Albuquerque area grew, so did the need for more Auto & Truck suspension repair. McBride's evolved into more of a truck & auto spring repair & manufacturer in the 1950s.

In 1986 Sharon McBride, daughter of Harold, recruited Warren Wild, a recent MBA graduate from the University of Denver, to help out part time by com-

puterizing the inventory system for this unique business.

"Going to an SSA convention in Washington D.C. with the McBride family in 1986 was a very enlightening experience. This wasn't just a trade show, but a chance to develop friendships and connections with individuals in our industry" Warren recalled. "The thoughtful members were dedicated to our unique profession. They knew what was going on in our shop because others may have experienced a comparable work or business event in their own shop."

When Harold McBride passed away in 1993, the leadership baton was handed to Warren to run the company. He credits much of the ongoing success of the company to how friendly and supportive the SSA community was during this transitional time. He says that their ongoing flow of information about current industry trends and happening keeps him updat-



ed. He has even been able to get immediate help from a supplier just because he had made that crucial contact during an SSA convention.

25 years later, McBrides is still using new SSA ideas. The most recent was to implement a "grow your own" employee with an apprenticeship program. Instead trying to hire the right employee, we try to locate an individual with good tool skills and personality qualities that would lend an individual to be a good match for our team. The apprentice can work there full

time, or even part time if they are enrolled in a trade school. McBride's uses the experience of our core seasoned employees and match them up with an apprentice. The apprentice is paid hourly, but gains no benefits until they are hired on full time. The seasoned employee gets a helper who is learning on the job."

Warren says the company core business is still a big part of the picture, but he has had to continuously innovate to keep the business in focus. The SSA has been a big part of that process.



## A New Networking Opportunity at SSA Annual Convention Attendees!

Members contend year after year that one of the more enjoyable sessions is the roundtable discussions. What makes roundtable discussions successful is learning other viewpoints on a subject. This year's SSA convention in Newport, RI will have three roundtable discussions.

With the success of roundtables in mind, this year's convention will have a new segment called "Shop Talk". Here is how it will work. Starting with the opening of the convention on Wednesday October 2nd, you as members and suppliers will be invited to submit questions or concerns to SSA board members. These questions or concerns are items you struggle with on a regular basis. You can submit your concerns throughout the two days. The earlier the better! Your questions or concerns can be anonymous.

At the last session on Thursday October 3rd, your questions will be answered and/or discussed. With members and suppliers in one area for two days, this will give you the most professional approach to answers or directions you need in moving forward. What a great way to use the convention resources!

You can even start to submit your questions or concerns now.  
Please send them to: [www.servicespecialists@outlook.com](mailto:www.servicespecialists@outlook.com).

***Thanks in advance, and we can't wait to see you at SSA Convention 2019!***



**Rence Oliphant**

Vice President of Global Sales for Hendrickson

*will be our keynote speaker for our October 2019 SSA Convention in Newport RI.*

### SHOP SAFETY TIP

#### Machine Guarding

OSHA regulations 1910.211 / 1910.212 / 1910.215 / 1910.217

Moving machine parts have the potential to cause severe workplace injuries, such as crushed fingers or hands, amputations, burns, or blindness. Safeguards are essential for protecting workers from these injuries. Any part of machine that may cause injuries, must

be safeguarded. If you care to have more knowledge on the above topic, go to [www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov) and search for the noted regulations.

Source – July OSHA safety report

## New e-Commerce System at The Universal Group, LLC



The Universal Group, LLC is pleased to announce the upcoming launch of its new website and greatly enhanced e-commerce system. Customers who participated in the trial and testing period and have taken the new system "for a spin" noted that the new site is "extremely fast, and easy to use."

There are a number of new features specifically designed to make ordering easier for busy customers. For example, the "order grid" feature groups dimensional families together to make it easy and quick when ordering threaded rods, repair plates, and deep nuts. The new system now also features active "schematic diagrams" of complete suspensions that allow the user to hover over an individual component for a larger view and then order with a click. The "quick order pad" is a convenient way for a customer to place an order for common or repeat items. Customers are also able to select which Universal Group warehouse they would prefer to be shipped from.

In addition, Universal Group wanted the new site to function as a research tool for identifying part numbers. Customers are now able to use alternate part numbers in addition to the Universal Group part numbers. The new system also has the ability to filter by attribute so customers can plug in whatever attribute information they may have on a part, to narrow their search parameters and find the correct part.

Convenient and fast ways for customers to look up their own account information was also a goal. Customers can now view when their orders were shipped and can access tracking numbers as well as download technical publications and the bi-monthly specials, and stay current with company announcements and new product offerings. Customers can also easily look up their own order history, for convenient re-ordering of common items.

Annik Smith, President of The Universal Group, LLC, said, "We are very excited to be introducing our new state of the art website which will significantly enhance the customer shopping experience. I'm especially proud of the close collaboration exhibited by our internal team in developing this product in-house, it's not just an improvement on the old system, it really takes Universal Group to an entirely different level."



## PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

## OSHA SAFETY TIP



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1-800-328-4460

**Be sure to check out all our supplier member booths at the SSA convention in Newport RI in October!**

*Already signed up are... APM Auto Components USA, ATR0 Engineered Systems, Automann USA, Dayton Parts, Frontier Truck Parts, Fullbay.com, Hendrickson, Interstate Billing Service, L&H Threaded Rods Corp, Meritor, Power Heavy Duty, Stempf Automotive Industries, The Universal Group*



### **OSHA LOCKOUT/ TAGOUT (LO/TO) STANDARDS**

The U.S. Department of Labor and Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) is once again taking a hard look at how their regulations work for their LO/TO in many applications. Basically, employers are to use control circuit devices to eliminate all sources of energy during any service or maintenance of machines, equipment or, in our case, any vehicle that is in our shops for repair. OSHA considers the fact that a vehicle can be energized by engaging the ignition switch. It is not suggested that this is the answer, as it's not. However, a lot of major trucking companies in their maintenance shops use some type of steering wheel guard. Usually this is a bright colored bag type device that covers the steering wheel which notifies others in the service area that this vehicle is under a service situation, and the mechanic working on that vehicle is the only person to have the keys. I know this is hard to accomplish, but an accident is something neither you nor OSHA want.

*Information source OSHA trade release - May 2019*



**HEAVY DUTY AFTERMARKET WEEK '20**  
**JANUARY 27-30, 2020 | GRAPEVINE, TX**