



To Our SSA Family Members:

We recognize how the COVID19 pandemic has necessitated changes in the ways we all live and do business. With that said, this quarter's LEAF newsletter will be provided solely in a digital format. We appreciate your understanding and look forward to resuming printed versions of the LEAF in the near future.

Stay safe!

President's Letter

Greeting from Wisconsin,

As another HDAW Convention in Grapevine, Texas comes to an end, I am reminded of all the wonderful people I had a chance to converse with about issues concerning business conditions to life in general.

HDAW is a great venue to find new suppliers, reconnect with current suppliers and to learn best practices to help any business heading into 2020 and beyond. Mark your calendars for January 25-28 in Grapevine again, you will not want to miss it!

HDAW is also another great opportunity to find a new product that you did not know about, but all in all it is a tremendous event to connect with individuals who share the same passion for the trucking industry.

SSA recently conducted 3 separate clinics on Air Disc Brake and Wheel End of which I had the opportunity to attend the very first one. This one day 3 hour clinic, was the best information filled three hours that I had ever been a part of and we can thank Don Jones for finding these top notch presenters. We are planning to hold more of these 1 day



Mark Broehm
President

clinics, so watch your emails for times and locations to be announced.

Start planning now to attend our SSA convention in Savannah Georgia on October 6-8 at the Marriott Savannah Riverfront.

That's all from Wisconsin....May you all stay Warm, stay Busy and stay Prosperous!

Thank you,

Mark Broehm
President/CEO

SAVE THE DATE! Marriot Savannah Riverfront



CONVENTION 2020

October 6th - 8th

Savanna, GA



SHOP PROFILE - MADISON SPRING

PRODUCT SPOTLIGHT

Madison Spring was established in 1967, and their mission is to provide quality sales and service of vehicle suspension and related areas. Madison Spring is very proud of their attention to details in presenting their customers with the best service possible.

One area that Madison Spring differs from most SSA members is that a good portion of their sales and service comes from vehicle hitch systems. Not only do they install hitches, they do many different forms of vehicle suspension systems based on whether the vehicle has towing ability.

Another unique aspect of Madison Spring's business is their relationship with Fondy Auto Electric, as they are an authorized distributor for Fondy. This means they have an inventory of quality new and remanufactured alternators, starters, and generators, fitting all different types of vehicles; autos, light trucks, heavy duty

trucks, farm equipment and much more. Madison Spring sells between 25-40 units a month!

Madison Spring also holds the distinction that 85% of their facility's electricity comes from 80 Solar panels.

Recently, Madison Spring served as gracious hosts for the recent SSA training sessions on February 4th, 2020, where the focus was Air Disc Brakes (Bendix) and Wheel Ends (Con/Met). A big thanks for helping to make the session a success!



Fellow SSA Members,

KSI* is pleased to be a member of the SSA and we look forward to a successful and mutually profitable relationship for years to come.

Norgren is a high-quality manufacturer of many specialized patented products that are being used by the OEMs.

You will find Norgren products on Freightliner, Peterbilt, Kenworth, Volvo/Mack, Navistar and our state of the art lift axle control valve throughout the OEM market on both truck and trailer applications.

KSI is offering our associate members special pricing on Norgren's new patented Intelligent Lift Axle Control Module. This iLACM® is a game changer in our industry and will set the new standard for safety, efficiency and cost reduction for the lift axle industry.

We hope you will consider this special opportunity to become a customer/service center for all Norgren products with special pricing we will be offering on all Norgren products in the next couple weeks.

Our new price sheet exclusively for SSA members will be emailed the week of February 24th. Experience the quality world of Norgren commercial vehicle products at www.imi-precision.com/commercialvehicle

Learn more about the new Norgren iLACM® at www.imi-precision.com/ilacm

Jim Keegan
President

**KSI is a contracted Authorized Factory Volume Distributor for Norgren*



HIGHLIGHTS OF SSA/TARA TRAINING COLLABORATION

Starting with Tuesday February 4th at Madison Spring in Madison, Wisconsin, SSA/TARA held a FREE training session with Kevin Pfost from Bendix, who presented an in-depth presentation on Air Disc Brakes. He was followed by Roger Maye from Con/Met, presenting an in-depth presentation on the different wheel end systems.

On Wednesday February 5th the same presentations were done at Frame Service in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Sessions for the first quarter of this year were also offered at Allied Spring in Rochester, N.Y. on Thursday February 6th.

The sessions were lively with the attendees were encouraged to ask questions, and they did. Training sessions can be very effective, and many trainers around the country have done an excellent job presenting their areas of expertise. SSA/TARA were very fortunate to have both Kevin and Roger, who are national



service training managers for their prospective companies, who travel the U.S. weekly doing product service presentations. Due to their vast experience (Kevin and Roger have been in the industry for multiple years), all the questions asked by the “there to learn” crowd were answered completely and quickly. It would be almost impossible to break down the sessions in detail, but what I can offer is that Air Disc Brakes only represent 18% of all trucks out there today. 35% of all new trucks built, are being installed with Air Disc Brakes, and as each day passes, that 18% grows. OEM continues to make Air Disc Brakes standard. What does that mean to you? If you do brake work, you will be seeing more and more Air Disc Brakes in your shops; be prepared.

After viewing the wheel end presentation, I think that we are naïve to the accurate way of doing wheel end bearing adjust-

ments. Here is a scary statistic:

Roger oversees the wheel end station at the TMC Super Tech contest, where over 100 of the top technicians in the country are competing for the honor of top tech in the country. Try to guess what percent of the countries top techs score on the wheel end test? 10 years ago, test accuracy was 30%. Fast forward to 2019, and despite more drilling down on training of wheel ends, these top techs are only at 35% accurate.

Here’s a scarier statistic:

The most valuable commodity we have is our children. The school bus industry scores in the lower 20% range. Is this a criticism of these techs? Probably sounds that way, but is meant to illustrate the need for more training.

Wheel end play shall range from 0.001 to 0.005 (Per TMC RP618), with the lower number of wheel end play being better. What happens when a wheel end is not correctly adjusted? It is all bad news, with one of the worst situations possible, a thermo event, which usually causes a costly fire. Quite coincidentally, on my way home from the Rochester session, I was held up for 90 minutes on interstate 90 west of Buffalo, N.Y. with a trailer on fire. What caused it was likely either an overheated brake system, or a wheel end prob-

lem, likely due to the interstate being a flat highway, where I’m guessing there would not be using a lot of braking, much like going down a mountain. I’m leaning toward wheel end issues. Perhaps problems like this have not shown up with your customers; I hear this a lot. Point is, please don’t push this important function aside. Understand and identify the system you are working on for a successful repair.

Many thanks to Larry Schmitz and the Madison Spring facility, the crew at Barry Ernst’s Frame Service, and Jodie Cresswell and her crew at Allied Spring. All of these owners were very gracious in hosting these events. Be sure to follow SSA on Facebook and visit the SSA and TARA websites, for information regarding the next session of training, expected to take place in mid to late second quarter of 2020.



HEAVY DUTY AFTERMARKET WEEK (HDAW) 2020 HIGHLIGHTS

Following is bits and pieces from several of the sessions during HDAW conference that might be of interest to you. In no particular order of importance... From the Service Opportunity Learning Days (SOLD) sessions.

1) New Technologies – Virtual Reality (VR) training

Games now played in your basements will soon be how you train employees. Design Interactive Company illustrated how soon component identification and assembly of that component will be done by VR. The content of these systems have not yet reached the level of being affordable yet, but in last two years the software has dropped some and the cost of the goggles has dropped significantly. The idea Design Interactive Company has is to develop the software then sell that to a large OEM who will develop the content.

2) Recruiting insight and suggestions on what you may want to try

Two industry leading organizations, American Diesel Training Centers and TechForce Foundation suggested how to recruit young HD Truck mechanics. Both speakers, Jennifer Maher from TechForce and Tim Spurlock from American Diesel Centers, emphasize how developing and growing techs is the key formula. As an employer, get involved at the local levels with trade and vocational schools. Don't wait to recruit young talent at the 11th or 12th grade level but start in junior high. Speak to Cub and Boy Scout troops. It was noted that you may not always be able to hire someone at the top of their class, but look for that person that has good attendance and the right work attitude. You can educate most people while it is much harder to change personalities.

It's not always about trying to find a young potential employee for our industry, but trying to convince the parents that a career in truck repair can be more lucrative, with much less debt, than going to college.

3) OSHA session

As has been mentioned in recent editions of The Leaf, OSHA is currently putting a lot of emphasis on walking surfaces that may create fall hazards. Also pits and ladders have regulations in place that must be met. Those regs are outlined in the new 2020 edition of OSHA book 1910 of general industry guidelines. A fact that probably most of us are not educated on is that if an employee is working more than four feet above the surface there must be a fall protection, harness, in place.

The most important comment was that all companies must establish a safety culture that all employees buy into.

4) Future Truck

No Trucking meeting would be complete without a discussion of future echnology, especially given all the technology changes currently in the works. Electric vehicles are coming faster than we may anticipate. We will start seeing more in the shorter local routes, 100-150 miles or less. Based on the reports from this discussion, the shorter routes were two-thirds of all freight moved in the year 2018.

5) The Economy

As the economy continues and grows leaders are concern when the cliff will appear. We are in a 126-month and counting period of growth. Which will inevitably come to an end as cycles do. The feds and other economists just don't see any headwinds on the horizon to suggest a downturn any time soon though. Until this pandemic hit... Which will change everything.

