Committed to Veterans: SelecTrucks of Atlanta

by Gary Conleay

It’s not every day that we have a potential owner-operator come to our store who has served our country as a military veteran. But that’s exactly what recently happened. And we at SelecTrucks of Atlanta were more than thrilled to help this veteran out, and get him on the road in his own business.

His name is Kerry Williams of Roanoke, AL. Kerry served in the National Guard where he spent 12 months in Iraq driving in our nation’s military convoy. After his one-year stint in Iraq, Terry left the National Guard and returned to Iraq as a civilian contractor. Once again, he hauled freight in military convoys. After he left Iraq, Kerry went to North Africa to drive for another military contractor. Kerry has always had his heart in trucking.

Recently, Kerry returned to the United States with the ambition of driving a tractor trailer, and becoming the proud owner of his own vehicle. That’s when we met with Kerry at our facility. Lyn Owens, our SelecTrucks of Atlanta sales representative, helped Kerry through the process of purchasing a tractor from us. Kerry and Lyn evaluated many trucks in our inventory while trying to find the right one for him. Lyn informed Kerry that SelecTrucks now has a special program for military veterans called Proud to Serve, which provides a special discount for veterans.

In support of “Hiring our Heroes,” veterans of the United States and Canadian military are eligible to receive a discount of $3,500 on qualifying vehicle purchases. This is available at SelecTrucks Centers across North America. The Proud to Serve veterans discount will be available through December 31, 2017. In further support of our military, SelecTrucks is pledging to do volunteer work for military charities across North America this year.

Kerry ended up finding what was the perfect truck for him—a 2012 Freightliner Cascadia. Kerry Williams now has a much safer environment to enjoy his passion of being an owner-operator back home here in the USA. As for all of our people at SelecTrucks of Atlanta, we are proud that we could help make this delivery of his Freightliner Cascadia tractor, which he has dreamed about for so long. All of our employees here in Atlanta went home that night, told their families about this experience, and were as proud as we could possibly be. God bless our military and America.

For more information about Proud to Serve, visit SelecTrucks.com.

Gary Conleay, Center Manager
SelecTrucks of Atlanta
atlanta.selectrucks.com

Pictured from the left is Kerry Williams with Lyn Owens, Sales Representative at SelecTrucks of Atlanta.
Greetings to fellow UTA members or should I say Bonjour mes Amis! We’re looking forward to a fantastic convention this year, and I have the pleasure and privilege of serving on the Convention Committee. If you haven’t heard yet, our convention will be at the Paris Las Vegas Hotel & Casino.

This is a unique hotel with a great location, right on The Strip. We recently had a Board meeting at the hotel, and I was very impressed with the facility and the excitement of Las Vegas. The city just doesn’t stop. Walk down the sidewalk on Las Vegas Blvd. at any time of day, and Las Vegas is still motoring. There is so much to see and do in the area you may want to stay longer than the short span of our convention.

The Convention Committee is working on providing you, the UTA membership, a fabulous event with interesting and valuable meetings combined with a grand Vendor Expo.

The convention will begin Wednesday evening with a Welcome reception that will be held around the hotel outdoor pool at the base of the Eiffel tower. What a great place to reconnect with old friends and make new ones. Later, you may want to go to the top of the Eiffel Tower and see the Las Vegas landscape.

Thursday morning will be jam-packed with updates from UTA committees, and a Keynote presentation that will be interesting and informative. At a recent Board meeting we considered several speakers, and we’re pleased to announce that Lou Ferrigno will keynote this year’s Convention. You may remember Lou as the Incredible Hulk from the TV series. Lou has overcome a lot of challenges in his life that have led to a very successful career. We know you’ll appreciate his comments.

There will be more information on Lou forthcoming as this is just a preview!

Thursday afternoon will focus on Networking as we recognize how important this is to the UTA membership. We’re working on the afternoon format to make it the best it can be, and if you have ideas that you believe will improve the Networking session please contact Misty Reis.

Thursday evening will be the Vendor Expo, and it will be hard to top last year’s Expo in Savannah where we had record Vendor participation and UTA attendance. This year’s setting for the Vendor Expo is an amazing exhibit hall where you’ll have the opportunity to connect with important suppliers and discover new offerings and services for the used truck industry. As we’re in Las Vegas we’re planning on making the evening another way to make you a “winner” by participating in the Vendor Expo.

On Friday there will be a brief information session and then it’s off to the Tours. We’ll have more information shortly on the tour options. But I do know that a tour of the Hoover Dam will be one of the options, as will very important Casino lessons. The evening Awards dinner will end with a dance party to get you ready to hit the town!

Registration for the 2017 Convention will be on the UTA website soon, so please get registered and book your hotel room to guarantee the UTA convention rate. This will be a terrific convention in one of the most exciting cities in the world, and remember It’s Vegas Baby!

Hal Dickson
Convention Committee Co-Chair
hal@uta.org

Lou Ferrigno, aka The Incredible Hulk—this year’s Keynote Speaker

“Quips & Quotes”

You must expect great things of yourself before you can do them
~Michael Jordan
Recently UTA sadly lost one of our founding members. Jerry Nerman passed away on Tuesday, February 28th as a result of pneumonia. He was an elder statesman in our organization; a mentor to some, a role model to many, and a friend to all. His was a life of service, to his country, his family, his profession, and his community.

Jerry joined his friend Melvin Spitcaufsky in founding Arrow Truck Sales in 1950. The partners built Arrow into a thriving used-truck business with 22 locations in the US and Canada. But, even before this success, Jerry had served his country valiantly during World War II.

Although just 21 and newly married to his beloved wife and life-long partner, Margaret, Jerry joined the Army just after the attack on Pearl Harbor. In 1942 he was sent to the European theater where he served through the duration of the war. Jerry’s management and executive skills were proven as he served first in the quartermaster’s office in England and later as supply sergeant in France and Germany. During his time away, he sent a letter home to Margaret every single day.

It was during his time in Europe that Jerry began to build his art collection, a passionate devotion he not only enjoyed throughout his life, but also one that he cultivated within his family and community. Jerry and Margaret became avid collectors of modern art, and shared that devotion with their only child, son Lewis. Lewis and his wife, Sue, and their son, Greg and his wife, Ashley, are all part of the legacy Jerry leaves behind. The family has shared their art collection and their passion for art with their community, Kansas City, MO. They founded the Nerman Museum of Contemporary Art, which opened at Johnson County Community College in 2007, and they dedicated the Nerman Gallery within the Nelson-Atkins Museum in 2008.

Within the UTA it would be difficult to find someone who hasn’t been touched by the kindness and devotion of Jerry and the Nerman family. Annually, the Jerome Nerman Scholarship Fund awards college scholarships to deserving students recommended by UTA members. Jerry was a former president of the UTA and a recipient of the UTA Lifetime Achievement Award. He offered our association a lifelong example of integrity, devotion, and friendship. “They just made your heart smile,” said Eddie Walker in talking about Jerry and Margaret. “I never heard a negative word come from his mouth,” he recalled. “He was the type of person that held his many friends with a personal bond that made you feel special when you were together.” As Eddie closed his thoughts he spoke to his friend one last time. “Thanks, Jerry for allowing me to share a very small part of your life. You were an awesome teacher. The UTA is what it is, because you cared.”

In nearly any way a person can live a successful life, Jerome Nerman lived his. He was a devoted husband to his wife of 75 years. He was a successful businessman who leaves his family to carry on his life’s work. He left his community immeasurably better because of his devotion, generosity, and vast understanding of the art world. And, he leaves our association to treasure the memory of this founding father, and use his example of a life well lived to each make our own special mark in our own life. An honored associate and a beloved friend can never grow old enough to suit those who loved him. He had a fascinating life of 97 years, but his legacy will live far longer, not only among his beloved family, but also in the hearts and memories of UTA members, both current and future, for a very long time to come.
Michael is the General Sales Manager for SelecTrucks of America in Ft. Mills, SC. He is also a long-standing member of the UTA, having begun his career in truck sales in 1992. That's when Michael took a job selling new and used trucks for Midlands International in Omaha, NE. “I was mentored there by John Neary and Jim Fowler,” he recalled. “John was retired at the time, but he had been a long-time International dealer.” In those early days, Michael also connected with other UTA founders including Larry Spitcakovsky, Marvin Gordon, and Jerry Nerman.

Throughout the years since he started his career in truck sales, Michael has worked with other companies, and he’s also ventured out on his own. He worked for Lee Seemann at Nebraska Used Truck Sales, a position he called “immensely valuable.” “I learned the ins-and-outs of buying wholesale, reconditioning, and selling outside of an OEM environment,” he explained. He then ventured into his own business when he founded Asset Appraisal Services (AAS) in 1999. Michael sold this business in 2013, and accepted a position with Daimler Trucks North America.

As the General Sales Manager of SelecTrucks, Michael is responsible for the sales operations at the wholly owned SelecTruck Centers. DTNA is not only the industry leader in new trucks, it’s long established itself as a standard within the used truck industry, Michael observed. “We work hard to make sure we constantly introduce cutting-edge programs and processes to our centers,” he explained. “Daimler Trucks North America treats its employees quite well,” Michael noted. “I feel like we have the tools to compete for any opportunity that comes along.” He then explained that this type of support is vital to creating the foundation most people need to achieve long-term success. Michael also went on to describe some other characteristics that seem common to successful truck sales including a natural curiosity, a big desire to learn, and a high drive to get things done.

Michael also explained why he still enjoys his job even after all this time. “I have always enjoyed solving problems,” he explained. “Big puzzles with lots of moving parts excite me. Our business needs to be really customer focused, and our center managers are my direct reports. It really makes my day when they and their salespeople are successful.” Not only does Michael thrive on the success of those he leads, he has some proud moments of his own to look back on, starting with his earliest days at Navistar. “I am proud to have been educated by Navistar,” he recalled. “Back in the early nineties when I started, they had a terrific training program that I was lucky to take part in. That base of knowledge has never gotten stale.” He also takes great pride in creating Asset Appraisal Services from the ground up.

“It was certainly a grind at the time, but I remember the experience fondly,” he said. “We created the online auction UsedTruckInventory.com in a little over two months. We launched a (mostly) fully working product at the Freightliner dealer meeting 75 days after getting the approval to build the application.” Michael noted that launching an enterprise level application in such a short period of time is unheard of.

Michael’s advice to younger people starting out in truck sales is straightforward. “Learn as much as you can about the product,” he said. “It is paramount that you know trucks, but our business is more than just trucks. Used truck salespeople need to be experts on finance options, warranty, and service issues. Customers depend on it.” At the same time, Michael encourages younger staff members to be patient. “When we are young, we are always pushing,” he noted. “Sometimes opportunities are pushed away in haste.” Mentoring younger people is also part of what Michael sees as a challenge going forward in the industry.

“Just like we recruit and develop mechanics, we need to develop sales people,” he explained. “Good sales people become good managers and good dealer principals. That means we probably need to assess how we compensate sales people.” Michael went on to observe that the millennial generation isn’t likely to be excited about starting in a job that pays almost completely through commissions. In addition to this observation, he also noted that technology and money are always going to be challenges. Technology is a matter of adaptation, and only those willing to adapt to changing technologies will remain successful. Finding reliable financing for used trucks has always been a concern, he noted.

In his spare time, Michael enjoys his family and community. “My awesome wife, Penny, and I have two beautiful daughters,” he said. Their older daughter, Elizabeth, is finishing her master’s degree in molecular biology, and their younger daughter, Catherine, will graduate high school next year. Both young women are planning to become doctors. “I hope that bodes well for our health care in the future,” he noted. The family lives in Omaha, NE, which Michael considers to be a great community. “In our spare time we like to travel,” he said.
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Julie’s first job in the business (back in 1998) was as a Truck Tire Casing Broker. Her job was to buy and sell truck tire casings from trucking companies at fair market value. “I would then sell the truck tire casing to retread companies anywhere in North America,” she explained.

As a new UTA member Julie’s looking forward to being part of our “large group of professionals” working in every part of the used truck business. She’d like to learn all she can about the used truck industry.

You’ll notice that Julie lists three companies that she works for. It turns out that “being in control” of three companies is her favorite part of her job. Specifically she cited having responsibility for the sales department, and being able to really make an impact in the trucking community, “by maintaining 100% customer satisfaction.” She added she enjoys “providing quality service in all three major fields of the trucking industry: truck sales, diesel fuel sales and truck tire sales. We are a one-stop, complete shop!”

Julie’s self-confidence showed when she said if not for trucks, she’d consider exploring the aviation industry to sell airplanes. “I love a challenge,” she said.

In her free time Julie likes to create and build things around her house. “I am a self-taught handywoman,” she said. “I guess you could call me a Jack (Jill) of all trades,” Julie says. Some of the accomplishments she’s proud of include installing fencing around her property, and installing pools and building skating rinks for her children in her backyard. “I thoroughly enjoy accomplishing tasks that people tell me I can’t do,” she added. (Deb and I were lamenting that she didn’t live closer to us because we sure could use her skills around our place.)

Julie would love to network and meet new people. She hopes to build relationships with all different types of workers from truck drivers, shop foremen, recruiters, fleet managers and company owners. “I look forward to seeing familiar faces but even more so, meeting new ones, she said.

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Eric tells us that his first job in the business began in 2006, when he worked for a small wholesale dealership in Texas focusing on exporting trucks. “Having never worked at an OEM, my path into truck sales is fairly unconventional,” he said.

Eric had a lot to say when asked about his reasons for joining the UTA. “I hope that membership in the UTA allows for Express Fleet Sales to further develop trust and reputation within the wholesale industry, and that being a member leads to the development of more quality business relationships with those who share similar values. Our values align well with the values expressed by the UTA,” he noted.

This is a people business and new members often mention that, when asked what they most like about their work. Eric especially likes that so many of the people he’s done business with have become friends. “I didn’t expect that earlier in my career,” he said. Eric also likes when customers call his company back again looking to buy trucks. “It’s confirmation we’re helping create value and doing our job well.”

One of the things Eric enjoys doing outside of work is mentoring college kids. He lives in San Marcos, TX, home of Texas State University. In particular Eric enjoys “helping students transition their lives from being students to becoming young professionals. Among other things this involves coaching them during their job search, and providing encouragement and support during a challenging phase in life.”

He’s also passionate about “being a good Dad and husband.”

Asked for other thoughts he’d like to share with members, Eric said Express Fleet Sales LLC is committed to conducting business that exhibits dependability, “so others can lean on us as reliable wholesale professionals.”

Adding; “ultimately we want people to walk away after doing business with us knowing we valued their interests, and not only our own. This is how we plan to grow.”

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Shawn has been in the truck business for 13 years or so. Up until three weeks ago he was Bayshore’s wholesale buyer and seller. As you can see he’s now specializing in heavy duty trucks.

Shawn’s quite familiar with the UTA and has been to several conventions and works with long-time board member Amy Shahan. His UTA membership was part of the package for signing up to attend a managerial seminar with George Papp.

Outside of work Shawn coaches soccer, plays golf, and enjoys spending time with his wife and kids.

New Members continued on page 5
Bill Knupp, Sales Representative
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billknupp@centrestate.com

“Driving a 6x4 International R190 with a two-stick 5+3 hauling for the family farm,” Bill said when asked about his first job in trucking. By the way, that first job was more than 40 years ago, in 1972.

Bill’s joined the UTA to further develop his industry network. It just goes to show that whether you’re a new member or an industry veteran, the UTA provides great networking opportunities.

Bill enjoys dealing with people, which is what he likes best about his work. “You get to meet all kinds in this industry,” Bill said. “Through this business, I have made some life-long friends.”

Aside from trucking Bill’s also worked in the Ag equipment business. He really enjoyed that as well, he said. “Must be something about working with big boy toys and the people who use them,” he said.

Outside of work, Bill’s very involved in local government. He’s the vice-chairman of his county board and the chairman of his county Republican Central Committee. He also really enjoys flying, and wishes he had more time to do that.

Closing thoughts? “The most rewarding part of this business is placing customers with the right equipment to best serve them, and to make them profitable,” he noted.

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Mike started out in trucking in 1998. “I sold a business I owned and my partner suggested I look for work at the dealership I used to buy trucks from. I did and was hired as a new and used truck sales person. That was General Truck Sales in Indiana.”

Before he owned his own business, Mike was in the Marines. When discharged he went to work as a supervisor for a warehousing firm—his first experience with trucks. “They had an in-house trucking company, and this is where I learned to drive a truck,” Mike said.

“First would be the people,” Mike said when asked what most liked about his work. “I have worked for two families in this business. The Bassett’s and the Young’s. Both are great families to work for. Both very honest and fair.”

Mike says he’s been in trucking so long now he can’t think of doing anything else. But like all of us he has dreams. “Is being a beach house tester a business,” he asked. Mike “first passion” is traveling with his wife, Karen. “We love the Caribbean and try to go two or three times a year. Our goal is to visit as many islands as we can.” Another passion is his dog, Max, his 50th birthday present from his wife and family. “He is a Samoyed—pure white sled dog. I’ve never come across a dog with more personality than this breed. Terrible watch dog but a great friend.”

Mike feels very lucky to have worked for two great companies in this business. “I am looking forward to continue to support the UTA in any way I can. I’m always looking for inventory so look me up if you have anything to sell,” he added.

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Ten years ago Daniel started out in trucking as a salesperson. He sees UTA membership as offering “new contacts, news in the industry, and sales increase strategies.”

It’s gratifying to help others achieve their goals, which is what Daniel likes best about what he does. “The whole process of finding the right truck at the right price until reassigning the title under the customer’s name excites me,” he explained.

Some of the things Daniel enjoys after the day’s work is done are snowboarding, and generally spending quality time outdoors with his family. If he wasn’t in trucking Daniel could see himself in the IT field since he has a Master’s degree in IT.

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## Angelique Pierce to Keynote Top Women in Logistics Conference

Our own Angelique Pierce (former member of the UTA Board of Directors) will be the keynote speaker at the upcoming Top Women in Logistics conference. The event will take place on May 5th from 3:00 to 6:00 pm at the Cobb Galeria Centre in Atlanta, GA.

Angelique Pierce is well known for her passionate and intentional approach to inspiring leaders and driving diversity. She has over 16 years of experience in business strategy, management, marketing, marketing communications, sales, pricing, and is continually improving. She spent the last 13 years devoted to the automotive and trucking industries.

Today, Angelique works for Daimler Trucks North America providing onsite consulting to the management teams of Freightliner, and Western Star dealers, aimed at driving measurable and continuous improvements to the service/repair experience for commercial truck customers.

## Industry Events Calendar

### MARCH

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<tr>
<td>14-17</td>
<td>The Work Truck Show</td>
<td>Indiana Convention Center • Indianapolis, IN</td>
<td><a href="http://www.worktruckshow.com/">http://www.worktruckshow.com/</a></td>
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<td>23-25</td>
<td>Mid-America Trucking Show</td>
<td>Louisville, KY</td>
<td><a href="https://www.truckingshow.com/">Kentucky Expo Center</a></td>
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<td>1-4</td>
<td>Advanced Clean Transportation Expo</td>
<td>Long Beach Convention Center</td>
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<td>25-27</td>
<td>ATHS National Convention and Truck Show</td>
<td>Iowa State Fairgrounds Des Moines, IA</td>
<td><a href="http://www.UTA.org">www.ATHS.org</a></td>
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### JUNE

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<td>11-13</td>
<td>UTA Sponsored Training Selling for Success</td>
<td>Courtyard Rancho Cucamonga Rancho Cucamonga, CA</td>
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<td>UTA Sponsored Training: Selling for Success 2017</td>
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<td>25-29</td>
<td>North American Commercial Vehicle Show</td>
<td>Georgia World Congress Center Atlanta, GA</td>
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### NOVEMBER

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How to Do Walking Meetings Right

Part Two: Success Tips

by Russell Clayton, Christopher Thomas, and Jack Smothers

From The HBR Guide to Making Every Meeting Matter

Editor’s Note: Have you ever had impromptu discussions with your boss or a subordinate while walking down a hallway, or on your way to your cars in the parking lot, and so on? Of course you have. Well, like everything else there’s a way to maximize the effectiveness of these “walking meetings.”

If you are inspired to give walking meetings a try, here are a few tips that can help your walking meeting go well:

Consider including an “extracurricular” destination on your route.

Eytan, whose office is located in Washington, D.C., often mentions the nearby Washington Coliseum as a place to stroll by and notes it’s where the Beatles played their first U.S. concert. Naming a point of interest, he says, provides more rationale and incentive for others to go for a walk.

Avoid making the destination a source of unneeded calories.

One of the arguments in favor of walking meetings is the health benefit. However, this is easily negated if the walking meeting leads to a 425-calorie white-chocolate mocha that wouldn’t otherwise be consumed.

Don’t surprise colleagues or clients with walking meetings.

It’s fine to suggest a walk if it seems appropriate in the moment, as long as it’s clear that you’ll be fine with a “maybe next time.” But if you’re planning ahead to spend your time with someone in a walking meeting, have the courtesy to notify them in advance. Doing so allows them to arrive dressed for comfort, perhaps having changed shoes. You might also keep water bottles on hand to offer on warm days.

Stick to small groups.

Haimes recommends a maximum of three people for a walking meeting.

Have fun.

Enjoy the experience of combining work with a bit of exercise and fresh air. Our data shows that those who participate in walking meetings are more satisfied in their jobs than their colleagues who don’t.

Based on our survey and the clear case to be made for walking in general as a key to good health, it’s smart to make walking meetings a habit—or at least to give them a try.

Russell Clayton is an assistant professor of management at Saint Leo University’s Donald R. Tapia School of Business. Follow him on Twitter @ProfessorRWC. Christopher Thomas is an assistant professor of management at Saint Louis University’s John Cook School of Business. Jack Smothers is an assistant professor of management at the University of Southern Indiana’s Romain College of Business.

Are You a Salesperson or a “Consultant”?

by George Papp

If you have attended one of my training seminars you may recall that my goal during our session is to change how you perceive yourself, and how you position yourself against your competition. I want to change your mindset from being a salesperson to being a consultant. And I want you to understand how important it is to position yourself ahead of your competition. Changing these two thought processes is vital to your success. I often refer to Einstein’s definition of insanity: Doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results. If you subscribe to this you will never reach your goals.

A wise man once told me that anybody can sell someone one time but a sales consultant isn’t limiting himself to this sale—he’s thinking about the repeat business opportunity. After hearing that and thinking about it I knew I needed to change my mindset. I needed to become more engaged in all aspects of my prospect’s or customer’s business. Here’s my new mindset—I’m an industry professional who brings knowledge and value to the buying and selling process. I know this works, it’s why I subscribe to the method.

Changing Your Mindset

Here’s where you have to learn to ask yourself, your prospect, and/or your customer tough questions. These include:

- What will I have to do to earn his or her loyalty and trust?

- What additional product value and industry knowledge can I bring to the table? (This is where you’re positioning yourself ahead of the herd.)

- What thought-provoking questions (learning by listening) should I ask about his business? (Ask questions like: What problems have you had in buying pre-owned equipment in the past? Are you having trouble hiring qualified drivers? What is the biggest problem plaguing your business today? These types of questions no matter what stage you’re in in the selling process will set you apart from your competitors.)

Now you’re gathering business knowledge about your account, and you can start addressing those needs by sending your prospect industry articles related to those topics. You are now investing time to improve his overall business—versus just trying to sell him a truck. He sees you in a different light—you are not always trying to sell him something. You’re actually trying to help him improve his business model by addressing issues he told you were problematic.

In the 1990s we overused the term business partner, but it’s relevant today. This is a mindset change, and it takes time and effort on your part. You may not see immediate sales success. This is the new you and your current prospects are used to talking to the old you. Give it some time, design a plan to reach out to prospects where the “juice is worth the squeeze.” Forget trying to sell them something and engage them in a business discussion.

If you would like to learn more about my selling process please join me in one of my upcoming seminars centrally located for ease of travel. Venues in 2017 include Atlanta, GA; Chicago IL; and Fontana, CA. Please check UTA’s website for more information.

George Papp has more than 30 years of successful selling and management experience within our industry, where he built his career around the implementation of effective sales strategies and sound customer relationship management. George’s goal is to “Improve Sales Performance” by providing quality-training programs designed specifically for the new and used truck industry. You can contact him at: gpapptraining@gmail.com or (913) 538-5508.
You Can Influence the Regulations that Affect You!

by Ellen Voie

If you listen to professional drivers in a truck stop or on a social media site, it won’t be long before they start complaining about one or more of the regulations affecting them daily. From electronic logging devices to hours of service and drug testing clearinghouses, drivers are impacted by the rules that the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) mandates.

The most common tirade by drivers is the inequality in the enforcement on commercial motor vehicles as opposed to their fellow “four-wheeler” drivers. “Why don’t they prohibit car drivers from talking on a cell phone?” or “Why don’t car drivers have to take drug tests?” are frequent questions from these drivers.

The response is pretty simple. The FMCSA doesn’t regulate automobiles, it was established to regulate commercial motor vehicles involved in interstate commerce. The administration was established in 2000 specifically to “reduce crashes, injuries and fatalities involving large trucks and buses.” They do not have any authority to pass laws involving automobiles. These rules are left to the individual states.

So, it doesn’t benefit anyone to keep pointing out the inequity in regulations focusing solely on our industry. However, instead of just complaining to a Facebook group or some colleagues in a truck stop, there are ways to be a part of the process.

First, if you see a safety violation, report it. You can call the DOT at 888-DOT-SAFT (888-368-7238) or via the FMCSA website. You can report anything regarding truck safety, from a termination for refusing to commit a violation, or deceptive business practices. They want to hear from you, but have your facts ready, with any photos to support your allegations.

Become a more informed driver. If you are thinking of switching to a new carrier check out their safety rating and crash history. If you want to be more informed about regulations that are currently being proposed, you will need to look at the Federal Register notices for proposed rulemaking. This site shows all of the documents being considered and the dates they were filed. You can click on the ruling and find the docket number and the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) identifier.

It would be beneficial to any professional driver to review these pages often, as the rumors related to many of these rules are inaccurate. You can find out the actual wording of a ruling that might affect you or your company. For example, you can find notices concerning waivers for drivers who have vision or hearing impairments or might suffer from epilepsy and seizure disorders.

You’ll also find requests from carriers for the exemption of pre-employment drug testing using hair testing in place of the currently mandated urine testing.

If you care to make a comment about any of the published rulemakings, you can submit your comments (written and signed, no anonymous submissions will be considered) to the U. S. Department of Transportation via the U.S. Postal Service (Docket Clerk, U.S. DOT Dockets, 1200 New Jersey Ave. SE, Washington DC, 20590) or file your comment electronically at www.regulations.gov.

You must include the docket identification number specific to the rulemaking. Users may locate any rulemakings published by the DOT by using the last four digits of the rulemaking docket ID number. Federal Highway Administration docket ID numbers are formatted as FMCSA-yy-XXXX. Use only the last four digits of the docket ID number when searching. For example, if the docket ID number is FMCSA-96-1234, search on 1234.

You can also find the rulemaking documents by those that are recently posted or those in which the comment period is ending soon.

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The Salesman
by Doug Shields

He was always early, not one to watch the clock.
He would often work late, never mind what it got.
He’d call on his customers, whether rain or shine,
Always with a smile and a persuasive line.
This man was a salesman or so it was said.

Not much left now as he lay in his bed.
His life is near over. Some say it ne’er began.
He could have been a doctor or lawyer, not some silly salesman.
Yet his work gave others a chance at the dream,
To grow a fine company, to build a great team.
That piece of America for which we all strive,
For which our own forefathers gave their lives.

He sold to good people all across this great land.
He sold from his heart and a firm shake of his hand.
He never complained when the money got low,
He knew the Lord would bless the seeds he would sow.
Not silver nor gold nor a fine mansion he sought,
But a place with the others that had valiantly fought.
In his battles with Self he’d found his greatest prize,
The one in the mirror looking back from his eyes.
The face of a man who had worked out his days
In the service of others, in so many ways.

The old man gave a whisper as his last breath was shot,
“The secret to life Son, is giving more than you got.”

Doug Shields is the National Director of Used Truck Operations for Rush Enterprises, Inc.
J.D. Power Valuation Services Update

Chris Visser, Senior Analyst and Product Manager, Commercial Vehicles

Conditions Begin to Improve Going into Spring

The new and used truck markets are showing anecdotal and concrete signs of improvement as spring arrives. Dealers and end users are starting to report somewhat better conditions. New truck orders have been moving in the right direction since November. Used truck sales volume has been moving incrementally upwards. Depreciation in the retail and wholesale markets generally relaxed in the fourth quarter of 2016 and early 2017, and pricing and volume at auctions in February suggested a stabilizing market.

Sleeper Tractors – Auction/Wholesale

February auction performance of our benchmark model was as follows:

- MY2013: $34,091 average; $7,844 (or 23.1 percent) lower than January
- MY2012: $23,605 average; $4,290 (or 15.4 percent) lower than January
- MY2011: $26,234 average; $1,366 (or 5.5 percent) lower than January

Our benchmark model saw lower volume in February, which explains the monthly fluctuations. Trucks of model year 2013 saw a notably lower volume compared to January, and pricing increased as a result. Discounting this factor, figures do support word of mouth that price declines are leveling out and demand is picking up. Price improvements will be limited due to the substantial potential returning supply of trucks over the next 2-3 years, but we remain cautiously optimistic.

Depreciation in the retail and wholesale environment (auction, dealer-to-dealer, and dealer-to-wholesaler combined) continued to trend negative through January. The average sleeper tractor sold wholesale in January was 78 months old, had 502,879 miles, and brought $26,909. Compared to December, trucks sold in January were 3 months newer, had 99,948 (or 16.6 percent) more miles, and brought $1,510 (or 5.3 percent) less money. Compared to January 2016, the average sleeper sold this month was 8 months newer, had 135,536 (or 21.2 percent) fewer miles, and brought $2,474 (or 8.4 percent) less money.

Pricing for the more instructive 3-5 year-old group started out the year higher than 3-5 year-old trucks did last January. Average wholesale pricing for this cohort was $52,034 - $2,735 (or 5.5 percent) higher than January 2016. Average mileage for this group was 521,293 – $81,905 (or 16.6 percent) higher than last January. A newer mix of trucks combined with a lower number of low-priced models sold this January are responsible for the favorable year-over-year comparison.

Average pricing by age was as follows (note this is a January 2017 vs. January 2016 comparison):

- 3-year-old trucks: $72,643 - $2,794 (or 4.0 percent) higher than January 2016
- 4-year-old trucks: $51,398 – $6,461 (or 14.4 percent) higher than January 2016
- 5-year-old trucks: $32,062 - $1,055 (or 3.2 percent) lower than January 2016

See the “Average Sleeper Tractor Pricing by Model Year (All Wholesale)” graph for detail.

Pricing for the future will be more model-specific, as opposed to across-the-board.

３ 期以内のシーバスタクターは、2017年1月の平均価格が2016年1月の平均価格よりも2,794ドル（4.0%）高くなりました。平均車齢は、521,293マイル（16.6%）高くなりました。2016年1月よりも新しいコンポーネントと低価格モデルが減少したため、この1月は有利な年間比較でした。

価格は次のように化粧しました（2017年1月と2016年1月の比較）。

- 3年車：$72,643 - $2,794 (or 4.0 percent) higher than January 2016
- 4年車：$51,398 – $6,461 (or 14.4 percent) higher than January 2016
- 5年車：$32,062 - $1,055 (or 3.2 percent) lower than January 2016

See the “Average Sleeper Tractor Pricing by Model Year (All Wholesale)” graph for detail.

Sleeper Tractors – Retail

The average sleeper tractor retailed in January was 76 months old, had 451,828 miles, and brought $47,316. Compared to December 2016, the average sleeper was 4 months newer, had 12,437 (or 2.7 percent) fewer miles, and brought $1,515 (or 3.1 percent) less money. Compared to January 2016, this average tractor was 6 months older, had 24,869 (or 5.2 percent) more miles, and brought $1,515 (or 3.1 percent) less money. Compared to December 2016, the average sleeper was 7 months newer, had 102,054 (or 26.2 percent) more miles, and brought $1,515 (or 3.1 percent) less money.

Our three to five year-old group started out the year lower than it did in 2016. Average pricing for this cohort in January 2017 was $65,910 - $7,412 (or 10.1 percent) lower than January 2016. Average mileage was 402,138 – 9,051 (or 2.2 percent) lower than January 2016.

February data was not yet available at the time of this writing. Since retail pricing trends generally lag auction pricing trends by a few months, we expect trucks to lose less of their value each month going forward.Incoming used truck supply will continue to counter any increase in demand, but dealers who have weathered the storm of the past year and a half should see somewhat brighter days ahead.

See the “Average Retail Selling Price: 3-5 Year-Old Sleeper Tractors” graph for detail.
Looking at the number of retail sales per rooftop, volume was back down in January after rising unexpectedly in December. January’s result of 5.0 trucks is right at our rule of thumb for “moderately healthy” in the current environment. Volume has been trending slowly upward since the doldrums of the second half of 2016, and there should be more upward pressure than downward this year.

See “Number of Trucks Retailed per Dealership Rooftop” graph for detail.

Medium Duty Trucks
Starting with Class 3-4 cabovers, our benchmark group of 4-7 year-old trucks started 2017 notably lower than the beginning of 2016. In January, this cohort averaged $13,322, $4,808 (or 26.5 percent) lower than January 2016. Extremely low volume of trucks sold in January prompted us to take this month’s average figures with a grain of salt. February’s data should prove more instructive. Market conditions in this segment should be similar to slightly better than 2016, which we expect an increase in 2018 and 2019. However, demand should improve this year, which should make 2017 a better year than 2016.

Specifically, Class 4’s averaged $20,243 in January. This figure is $360 (or 1.8 percent) higher than January 2016. Class 6’s averaged $21,929 in January. This figure is $3,952 (or 15.2 percent) lower than January 2016.

Class 4 volume was similar to December, while Class 6 volume was notably higher. We continue to view the Class 6 market as lukewarm, as buyers continue to show interest in lighter-GVW trucks. However, the potential for improvements in all GVW ranges is greater this year than last.

See the “Average Wholesale Selling Price: 4-7 Year Old Conventionals by GVW Class” graph for detail.

Forecast
Overall sentiment about the trucking economy is improving, due mainly to expectations of tax reductions, regulatory rollback, and increased infrastructure spending. Even though the Trump Administration has not yet released any concrete plans, end users are somewhat more optimistic about their business outlook. As for headwinds, a renegotiation of international trade deals and a potential “border tax” are longer-term issues that will increase the cost of doing business if enacted.

Regarding used truck values, the potential returning supply of 3-5 year-old trucks is an unavoidable factor that will limit the magnitude of pricing improvements until at least 2019. Volume of trucks returned to the market this year should be similar to last, and then we can expect an increase in 2018 and 2019. However, demand should improve this year, which should make 2017 a better year than 2016. ■
January’s HD/MD Orders at 13-Month High: ACT

MD stays Strong; Backlogs Jump

It’s true that 2016 was a disappointing year for truck sales in many ways, but 2017 is off to a great start.

January’s HD orders hit a thirteen-month high at 22,188 units, “lending further support to the notion that Q2-Q3 2016 marked the bottom of the current cycle,” ACT noted in a media release.

“A driver of renewed market strength has been an uptick in demand for vocational equipment,” said Kenny Vieth ACT President. “Orders for vocational equipment rose to a two-year high 8,500 units, or 38.5% of the month’s intake,” he added.

MD orders popped too. Net orders hit a six-month high at 22,744 units—up 31% year-over-year.

“The improvement was broad-based, with truck, bus, and RV orders all posting y/y and m/m gains. Seasonal adjustment lifts MD orders in January, boosting the total to 24,100 units,” Vieth noted. “On that basis, January was the best month for MD orders since February 2008,” he concluded.

Class 8 Orders Firm in January: FTR

FTR also found Class 8 sales better than they’ve been for at least a year at 21,600 units ordered. This continued a “remarkably consistent trend that began in October,” FTR said. Taking just the last three months, Class 8 orders would now annualize at 248,000 units, with “backlogs expected to rise for the third straight month.”

Don Ake, FTR’s Commercial Vehicles’ VP said the “order increase will help to boost Q1 build rates and is more good news for the Class 8 market.” He added that it’s “unusual for January orders to be higher than any of the preceding Q4 months. This indicates fleets are more confident in market conditions than they were four months ago. OEMs should begin to fill in their production schedules and now February builds look to be much better than previous months.”

Fleets Now on Solid Ground: Survey

The most recent Fleet Sentiment Survey from CK Commercial Vehicle Research (CKCVR), was conducted in early January. It covered October-December 2016. The conclusion: Truck fleets are on solid ground entering 2017. Most of the measures the survey covered showed either “positive Q/Q or Y/Y comparisons.”

Key results from the survey:

• Orders rose 14% over the same time last year.
• New specs for Class 8 trucks being ordered are heavily influenced by safety and aerodynamic technologies.
• Most fleets still have a driver shortage problem.
• Freight/work demand and fleet capacity are in equilibrium for most companies reporting.
• CKCVR’s “How’s Business” measure is on an upward trajectory after more than a year of declining ratings.
• A very small percentage of fleets reporting are making plans to pre-buy or delay purchases based new GHG-2 rules.
• Overall, shop tools and equipment expenditures in 2017 are expected to be similar to 2016.

For more information about the Fleet Sentiment Report, visit www.ckcvr.com

2017’s Truck Dealer of the Year

This is just about our favorite time of the year to write about the truck industry. That’s because it’s when associations and OEMs present their major awards for the year.

Let’s start with the 2017 Truck Dealer of the Year award. The winner was Robert Nuss, president of Nuss Truck Group in Rochester, MN. (Truck Dealer of the Year is an annual award that the American Truck Dealers (ATD), Heavy Duty Trucking and Procede Software present.)

Katie Hopkins, executive vice president of Truck Centers, Inc., in Troy, IL, was runner up.

Other nominees:
• James Carello, president of Regional International Corp. in Henrietta, NY
• Gary Nicholas, president/CEO of Nicholas-Wyoming Valley Truck Sales, Inc., Luzerne, PA
• Zach Wagner, CEO of Gateway Truck & Refrigeration in Collinsville, IL
Volvo Trucks Names North American Dealer of the Year

Volvo named its 2016 North American Dealer of the Year recently. The award went to General Truck Sales of Muncie, IN. Volvo also honored its top dealers in Canada and Mexico. The 2016 Canada Dealer of the Year is Mid-Ontario Truck Centre of Barrie, Ontario, and the 2016 Mexico Dealer of the Year is Tractremolques del Noroeste, SA de CV of Culiacán, Sinaloa.

General Truck Sales and its employees were cited for their outstanding performance in new truck sales, market share, parts sales, customer satisfaction, dealer operating standards, franchise investment and support for other dealers.

“General Truck Sales performed very well in a difficult market in 2016, going above and beyond their organizational goals and consistently delivering outstanding service and support to Volvo Trucks customers,” said Jeff Lester, VP of sales for VTNA. “We appreciate owner Steve Bassett and the whole General Truck Sales team for their continuous customer focus and commitment to success.”

Volvo said Bassett’s dealership greatly “exceeded its sales objectives, and actively served a diverse group of customers.” The company added that all technicians at General Truck Sales maintain Volvo Master Technician certification. General Truck Sales has been operating since 1958, and was previously named Volvo Trucks’ North American Dealer of the Year in 2006 and 2010.

Here's the complete list of Volvo's 2016 Dealer of the Year award winners.

North America — General Truck Sales – Muncie, IN
U.S., Central Region — General Truck Sales – Muncie, IN
U.S., Northeast Region — S&S Volvo – Lima, OH
U.S., Southeast Region — Tri-State Truck Center – Little Rock, AR
U.S., Southwest Region — Grande Truck Center – San Antonio, TX
U.S., Western Region — TEC Equipment – Portland, OR
Canada — Mid-Ontario Truck Centre – Barrie, Ontario
Mexico — Tractormolques del Noroeste, SA de CV - Culiacán, Sinaloa

Robert (Bob) W. Nuss of Nuss Truck Group, one of Mack Trucks’ largest dealers in the Midwest, was named the 2017 American Truck Dealers (ATD) Truck Dealer of the Year. The award was presented during the 2017 ATD Convention & Expo in New Orleans.

“The ATD Dealer of the Year award recognizes Nuss Truck Group’s commitment to helping customers achieve increased uptime and gain a higher return on investment from their Mack trucks,” said Jonathan Randall, senior vice president of sales for Mack Trucks North America. “On behalf of everyone at Mack, we congratulate Bob and his entire staff at their locations across Minnesota and Wisconsin.”

Nuss was selected from five finalists nominated by local, state and national trucking association leaders. A panel of professors from Indiana University’s Kelley School of Business selected Nuss as the winner based on several criteria, including dealership performance, industry leadership and civic contributions.

Founded in 1959, Nuss Truck Group offers truck sales and service, along with leasing, rentals, financing and full-service body shops. The dealership also maintains a collection of antique Mack trucks, including a recently renovated 1926 Mack AP bus. The dealership is based in Rochester, with seven locations in Minnesota and one in Eau Claire, WI.

Nuss Truck Group’s Burnsville, MN location recently completed a $5 million expansion and renovation. Upgrades in the service and repair shop include 14 new service bays, waste oil recovery stations and new tools including a bridge crane and a high-pressure screw air compressor. Two loading docks were also added and the location doubled the size of its storage area for parts inventory.

Industry News Briefs continued on page 16
2017’s Best Fleets to Drive For

Now onto drivers. Truckload Carriers Association (TCA) and CarriersEdge recently named its annual list of the best fleets to drive for. It recognized these 20 for-hire trucking companies for “providing exemplary work environments for their professional truck drivers and employees.”

“These companies represent the best of the best in truckload. As industry innovators, they bring fresh ideas that not only create a desirable workplace for employees, but also propel trucking to exciting new terrains,” said TCA President John Lyboldt.

To be considered for the Best Fleets program, companies operating ten or more trucks had to be nominated by at least one of its company drivers or owner-operators. CarriersEdge then interviewed human resources representatives and executives from those fleets on corporate direction, policies, and programs. It evaluated the fleets against a scoring matrix covering several categories, such as total compensation package, health benefits, pension plans, professional development opportunities, and career path/advancement opportunities, among other criteria.

Driver feedback from each fleet was then compared with management’s and incorporated into the final score, resulting in this year’s winners and honorable mentions. “Fleets raised the bar for driver programs more dramatically this year than for any previous year,” TCA said.

2017’s Top 20 Best Fleets to Drive For:

Bison Transport
Boyle Transportation
Central Oregon Trucking Company, Inc.
Challenger Motor Freight Inc.
Fremont Contract Carriers, Inc.
FTC Transportation, Inc.
Garner Trucking, Inc.
Grand Island Express, Inc.
Halvor Lines, Inc.
Interstate Distributor Co.
Kriska Holdings Ltd.
Landstar System, Inc.
Maverick Transportation, LLC
Motor Carrier Service, LLC
Nussbaum Transportation
ONE For Freight
Prime Inc.
Smokey Point Distributing
TLD Logistics Services, Inc.
TransPro Freight Systems Ltd.

Winnipeg, MB
Billerica, MA
Redmond, OR
Cambridge, ON
Fremont, NE
Oklahoma City, OK
Findlay, OH
Grand Island, NE
Superior, WI
Tacoma, WA
Prescott, ON
Jacksonville, FL
North Little Rock, AR
Northwood, OH
Hudson, IL
Milton, ON
Springfield, MO
Arlington, WA
Knoxville, TN
Milton, ON

Save the Date!

It's Vegas Baby

18th Annual Convention
November 1-4, 2017
Anyway, back to the worst of times. Arriving at the hospital about eight hours after leaving for the airport, the sight was about as grim as it gets. He was still not "out of the woods," and he remained in the ICU for nearly a full week. Terms like, gastric rupture, aspiration-based pneumonia, and the constant thumping of the life support equipment filled our rattled brains as we stood vigil. In the next few days, we added MRSA bacteria, and enough other horrors to make a nightmare by any description. So, where do we find the best of times?

Our family came together with multiple daily phone calls to keep each branch informed. We never had a single disagreement about treatment options or what should happen next when he recovered. We all kept our focus on that reality of his recovering even when none of us could say for certain that he would. And, in the meantime, we took care of each other. Our sister-in-law and Deb set to taking care of all the mechanical details, such as staying fed and keeping the pets going. We cried as needed and hugged often. We hugged each other, the hospital chaplains of all religions, and even strangers when those hugs were offered. There is great peace to be found in random hugging, and there is comfort in tending to the day-to-day details of keeping body and soul together long enough to face whatever comes.

Now for the best part of the best of times! Our brother has recovered and is hale and hearty once again. Deb was able to stay long enough to see him not only up and about, but walking without the walker his weakened body needed for a few days. Don't ever believe it when people tell you hope is lost. Mama was right when she taught us that where there's life there is always hope. Once the best of times return, they bring sweeter days than those stuck in the worst of times can even dream of. At least that's the way it looks from where we sit.