

Ken Kosic Biography for 2018 LTA Award

I would like to start my biography by saying that I am totally honored to be nominated for the Used Truck Association's 2018 Life Time Achievement Award. A number of years ago I was an officer on the UTA Board of Directors. I remember it was always difficult to vote for the LTA Award Winner for the year. I had plenty of reservations being named a nominee for this prestigious award.

In 1971, I was managing a Charcoal Steak House restaurant in Columbia, South Carolina when one of my regular customers, Ron Corley (2006 LTA award winner), came in and told me that if I ever thought of changing my career, he had something that he thought would be rewarding to me and my family. I remember as if it was yesterday my first days on new job in truck sales. The learning curve was more difficult than Ron had told me. I was just trying to figure out the engine, transmission nomenclature, and all those truck model numbers. It was never ending!

I sure did think about going back to the restaurant business. The biggest game changer was having Jim Sundy (2001 LTA award winner) as my Used Truck Manager. Jim gave me all the short-cut hints that would help me sell my first truck, such as engine colors, when engines were colored to the truck manufacturer, and to remember that "All Used Truck Were Good." As time went by I struggled, but always recognized that if I could succeed it would be a rewarding career.

Back in those days, I also played the saxophone in a Rock & Roll band in bars and bowling alleys to make extra money and ends meet. One night in a smoke-filled lounge I was playing on stage thinking to myself, I am away from my family, and I have a day time job that I am struggling with. I need to become more dedicated and disciplined in my truck sales efforts. I thought to myself, 'If I could just sell one more truck I could be successful.' I knew that I made the right decision and I became disciplined, a student of the industry, and definitely sold my share of Used Trucks.

Being from New Jersey, selling trucks in South Carolina was not the easiest thing to do. I had to make my mark by becoming a trusted source. My niche was logging customers. They needed day cabs that would go into swamp and low areas and pull pine logs out of the woods on dirt roads in the middle of nowhere. They were cutting wood everywhere. I would make it a point to be there in my "ready to go" Used Truck, asking them if I could show it to them or offering to let them pull a load of logs with the truck. It finally paid off big time, and I started to get a reputation as someone you could count on for good trucks. That is when I became known as the Captain, and that name was definitely better than "The Round Man with the Square Deal." As the years passed, I was asked to go into management and held positions in used truck management for Nalley Motor Trucks in Charlotte, NC. I became involved with the infamous Ryder Trade Package meetings in Miami FL, where I would put numbers on potential trades for new Peterbilts that Ryder would purchase for their locations.

In 1989 I received a call from Ron Corley who was at that time the General Manager of Sales for Arrow Truck Sales. He invited me to come to Kansas City to interview for a position of Kansas City Branch Manager. I remember saying to my friends in Carolina that I did not think that I

would ever move away. In Kansas City, I met with Jerry (2000 LTA award winner) and Lewis Nerman, Larry Spitcaufski, Ron Corley, and a host of others. At the end of the day, I was working for Arrow and moving to Kansas City. While at Arrow I worked with management to help develop new branches. I had a break in service from Arrow in 1997, going into the land development business. In 1999 I went to work for the MHC Group as Assistant Corporate Used Truck Manager. In 2003 I returned to Arrow Truck Sales as Western Regional Sales Manager, responsible for sales and personnel for the eight Western branches. In 2013 I became Arrow's Director of Operations, and worked in that position until I retired from Arrow Truck Sales in 2016.

Retirement was great, but my wife, Cathy, (who I married on April 1, 1967--April Fools' Day!) had enough of me. And I missed the excitement, camaraderie, and the day-to-day interactions with my friends in the truck industry. In 2017, I jumped back into the business going to work with my best friend for 30 years, Al Hess (2009 LTA award winner) at his company which was Wholesale Trucks of America. We had fun, did a lot of laughing and sold a lot of trucks, just like it is supposed to be. Al passed in 2018, a sad day for our industry as he was a legend, larger than life, and a counted on friend.

Today I am a Used Truck Salesman at Rush Truck Center in Olathe, KS. My son, Ken Jr., has joined me in the business and works as Corporate Buyer for Rush Enterprises (My daughters Jennifer and Anne Marie chose other paths, (as) did my dog Zoe. I still love what I do—just selling trucks. I'm grateful to all who made a difference in my career by their example and mentorship.

Captain

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