

## Lee Chapin: A Life of Achievement

Lee Chapin's used truck career started in 1985. That's when, as a real estate agent he failed to sell Tom and Rhonda Peed a new home in Lincoln, Nebraska. Tom and Rhonda were in the process of moving their printing business from Webster City, IA. So, Lee turned a real estate setback into career victory! Instead of buying a home, Tom and Rhonda Peed hired Lee to be the South Central sales manager for Truck Paper. Thirty-four years later Lee is now working for Tom and Rhonda's oldest son, Shawn, as the national sales manager of Truck Paper and truckpaper.com.

In 1985, Truck Paper was a five-region weekly newspaper of just over 150 pages. Today, Truck Paper has nine weekly magazine editions with over 1,500 pages and 135,000 trucks and trailers for sale on truckpaper.com. When Lee started, he worked for the company for one week before hitting the road to represent Truck Paper at the 1985 Southwest Truck Show in San Antonio, TX. He followed this up with another week on the road calling on truck and trailer dealers in Houston. After two weeks going door to door Lee had one lone ad and a bruised ego to show for his efforts.

In 1996, Lee helped emcee the first Truck Paper dealer forum in Atlanta, GA. From memory here are a few names from that first dealer forum: Wayne King, Peach State Ford; Jim Sundy, Nalley Motors; G. L. Barrow, Atlanta Freightliner; Ron Corley, Americtruck; Keith Bogh, Eagle Truck Sales; Gary Conleay, Freightliner of Knoxville; Ron Creager, Music City; David Horton, Crook Motor; Steve and Terry Crouse, Pete of Central Florida; and Joe Nacarato, Nacarato Volvo and GMC.

Later, in the 1990s, Lee joined the National Used Truck Association (NUTA), the organization from which the UTA was formed. Lee served on the UTA Board of Directors from 2001 to 2003, chaired the education committee, served on the convention committee, was the emcee for the UTA conventions, and was the UTA Vendor of the Year in 2012. Lee wrote one of the first UTA white papers: *Importing and Exporting with Confidence* and helped the UTA grow by including a UTA membership recruitment table at every Truck Paper dealer forum.

Lee says the UTA and UTA Conventions have both changed over his long career. When asked about the convention he first noted the size of today's gatherings. "The main thing is the size of the organization," he said. "There are a lot more

vendors.” He also noted that the education committee he once chaired is now the Training Committee. “Most independent businesses didn’t have training programs,” he explained. “This way, we can help them.”

"A funny thing happened on the way to making the UTA the organization what it is today," Lee said, in closing. "We all became older, friends!"