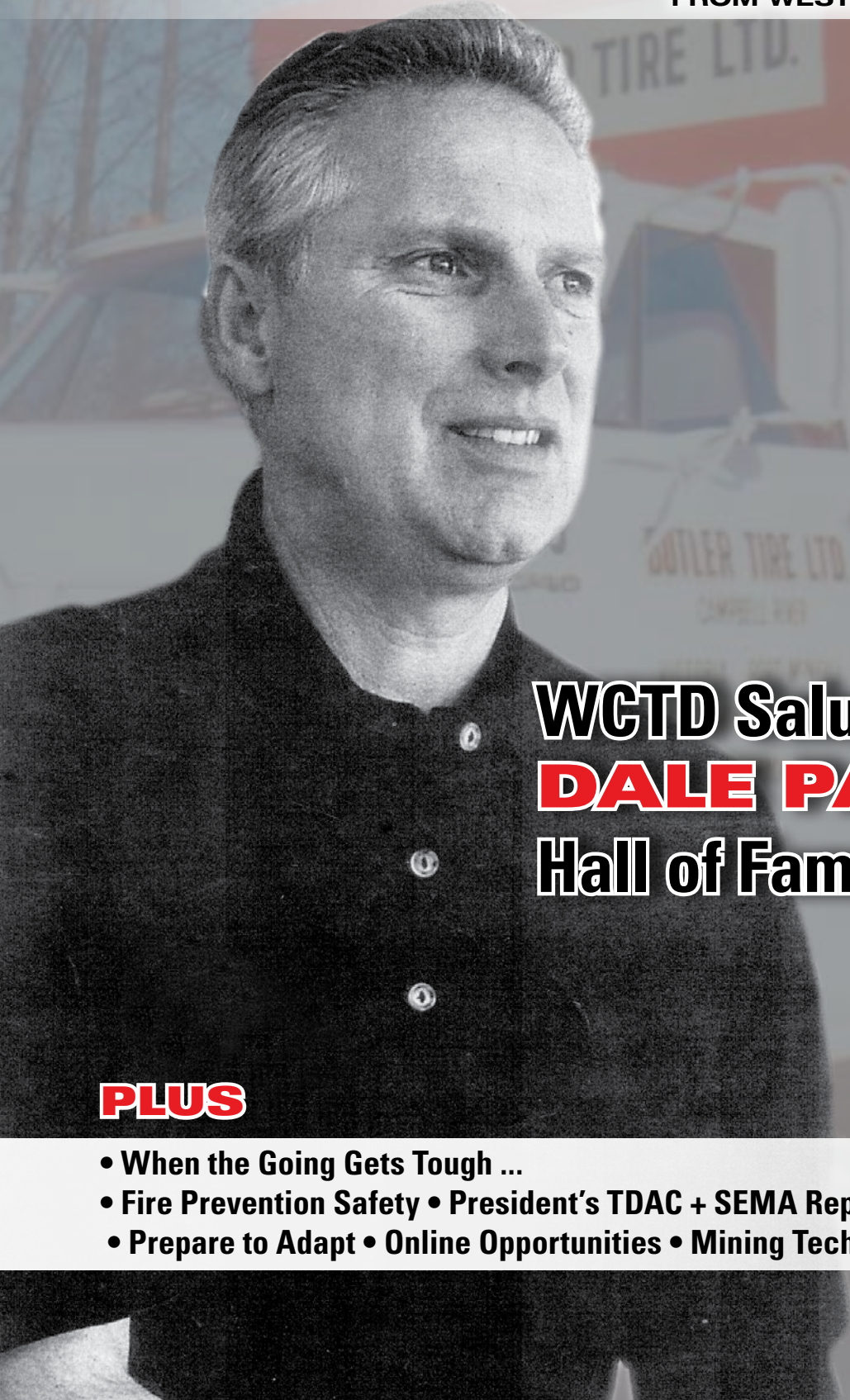


THE TRACKER

THE PUBLICATION FOR TIRE PROFESSIONALS
FROM WESTERN CANADA TIRE DEALERS



WCTD Salutes **DALE PARSONS** Hall of Fame 2018 PAGE 12

PLUS

- When the Going Gets Tough ...
- Fire Prevention Safety • President's TDAC + SEMA Reports
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MY BUSINESS IS MADE UP PRIMARILY OF THE SALE OF TIRES AND TIRE RELATED SERVICES	YES NO (CIRCLE ONE)
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We hope you find this issue of The Tracker informative, educational and entertaining. We welcome your feedback and invite you to submit any ideas you have for upcoming issues. Feel free to drop us a line (or two)...

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Looking back towards the future

Paul McAlduff
President, WCTD



When I look back at the issues affecting the Western Canada Tire Dealers (WCTD) this year, I believe we have accomplished a lot. Although the Annual General Meeting in Victoria (April) was poorly attended by dealer members, your directors were able to solve issues pertaining to Association Business.

We have three new directors representing B.C., Alberta, and the Integra/Tirecraft Group. We are still waiting to see if OK Tire has an interest in putting forward a name to represent the over 50 paid members from that group. Fountain Tire has not shown interest in re-joining WCTD at this time and has no representation on our board.

What has happened on my travels

One of the pleasures I get from being President of WCTD includes the many opportunities to meet with not only Tire Dealers from across Canada, but also from across North America.

SEPTEMBER Tire Dealers Association of Canada (TDAC) AGM and Convention in Toronto

In September, I had the privilege to travel with our Directors to the Tire Dealers Association of Canada Convention in Toronto. We discussed at their Annual General Meeting some of the challenges we all face in order to maintain common practices across the country. Two of those are outlined below.

- 1) The use of winter rated tires when temperatures drop below 7 degrees Celsius is well known among tire dealers, but some Provincial legislations still need some education on the safety aspects surrounding their use. As I have stated MANY times before, if tire manufacturers would take the lead and either remove the M&S (mud and snow) designation off some of their products or at least change it to M/S (Most/Seasons), our ability to sell the correct product for the consumers' needs would be enhanced.
- 2) I also found that we (Canadian tire dealers) share another common problem: that is the lack of Federal legislation on the maintenance of Tire Pressure Monitoring Systems (TPMS). This is not a provincial or territorial issue unique to one part of the country. It should not be considered an 'optional' safety feature that a customer can choose or reject. The TDAC has agreed to spearhead action to seek Federal support on this issue.

The WCTD (YOUR Association) is fully supportive of these and other measures to ensure we all can maintain profitability and reduce liability.

OCTOBER Global Tire Expo / SEMA in Las Vegas

Executive Director Ray Geleta and I were able to attend the Global Tire Expo, as part of the SEMA show in Las Vegas. Our meetings with Tire Industry Association (TIA) members went very well and Canada was well represented. Similar to the Canadian convention, the representatives from across the United States share the same obstacles in their tire industry. These include concerns about what 'businesses can qualify as a 'Tire Dealer' to join an Association and the struggle to attract participants to Conventions. Common practices and liability issues need to be consistent not only from province to province, but also from country to country.

Something to think about

Think about this! A high level of participation will result in improved response from a legislative standpoint.

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When the Going Gets Tough The Tough Get Safety

Ray Geleta
Executive Director, WCTD

Yes, indeed, the busy season is upon us. And when that first snowfall hits, we all know how crazy it can get. Just ask anyone in Calgary!

But it's also crucial to not lose sight of safety just for the sake of speed. As true tire professionals and the only specialized tire retailers in the market it's even more important that our technicians don't miss a single step. Let's make sure that our people really are following all the required safety procedures — even if it does take a few minutes longer to get that vehicle out.

Regrettable, but it's a fact: workplace injuries and fatalities are on the increase in a couple of provinces. This means, as employers, workers and professional organizations, it's crucial for us to take action. We must work together to reverse this trend.

Get with the program!

All organizations, no matter what their size should be investing in a safety program. Whether you're a single store or a multi branch corporation, it's vital to make safety a part of your day to day workplace culture.

It's not only about statistics. It's about people. Not only do we have a moral obligation to help our employees stay safe. In doing so they will be healthier and happier and in general make your shop a better place in which to work.

Equally as important, don't forget that enabling a safe workplace is legally required. Canada's Bill C-45 places the OHS responsibilities squarely on the shoulders of not just organizations and decision-makers but on individual owners. Workplace negligence is a criminal offence. As an owner or manager, it's your responsibility to put in place all reasonable measures to protect both your employees and the public from bodily harm. In short, in the event of injury or fatality, failing to do so can result in fines of up to \$100,000 or jail time—and has done.

Our friends at Federated Insurance have some good suggestions on how to create and maintain that crucial culture of safety. Here's part of what they have to say...

According to OHS statistics:

“Companies that have implemented Comprehensive Safety & Health programs experience one-fifth to one-third of the number of lost workdays as similar type firms without programs.”



- A successful safety culture is supported by senior management, followed by everyone on the job site, covers all aspects of what the employees do, and is regularly talked about.
- Safety should not be discussed only once a year, only at monthly safety meetings, or just after accidents. It should be included in all discussions, whether starting work at a new jobsite, preparing for a customer visit, discussing the steps needed to do a job, reviewing the training needs of the employees, etc. This gets the management and employees thinking about safety in their daily activities and develops a strong culture of safety.
- It is key that senior management fully and actively support the safety initiatives. Safety initiatives can involve relearning a process, using safety equipment, and / or taking more time to complete the task.
- Safety cannot only be enforced only when it is convenient. To scrap safety protocol, when the company is busy or “the boss needs something done” does not reinforce the importance of safety or develop the culture.

I wish you and your families the very best for a happy — and safe — upcoming Holiday Season. See you in the New Year!

2019 WCTD / TIA Training Courses

Of course, proper and current training is paramount to maintaining a safe workplace. At Western Canada Tire Dealers we are extremely committed to training and encourage our membership to actively participate in the programs we offer.

WCTD will be holding a number of TIA training sessions this coming March and April. Please check these dates now and plan to book your technicians according to their needs.

DATES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

March 4 - 7, 2019 | Advanced OTR Installer Training - Vernon, BC

March 11- 15, 2019 | Advanced ATS / TPMS (Train The Trainer), Vancouver, BC (two sessions)

April 9 - 11, 2019 | Advanced CTS (Train the Trainer) Training - Edmonton, AB

Please contact Ray Geleta to book any of these sessions. Phone: 780-554-9259 or e-mail rayg@wctd.ca



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2018 WCTD

Scholarship Awards

Appreciative recipients stress a common theme



WCTD is proud to announce the recipients of the 2018 Academic Scholarships. This year's program attracted a number of high quality applicants. The association is pleased to be able to assist these dedicated students in pursuing their goals. The scholarship program is one of many meaningful benefits the association offers. We encourage you to check out its details at WCTD.ca—and consider somebody deserving within your company or family who might apply in 2019.

Congratulations to our winners!



KARLEE Ross (via Kal Tire)

"I am attending MacEwan University for a Bachelor of Arts majoring in English. It's a four year degree, and while my focus is on how the English language is structured, I find myself learning more about who I am as a person, than just what a comma-splice is. I wouldn't have the freedom to learn this way if the WCTD Scholarship didn't take some of the financial pressure off my back. I have been able to worry more about my studies then

about how I'm going to pay for my tuition. With WCTD's help, I will be able to finish my first year of post secondary education without any debt."



TIFFANY Tantakoun (via West End Tire)

"I feel that I was very fortunate to receive the Western Canadian Tire Dealers scholarship. I am a first year university student attending the University of Manitoba. I am currently enrolled in the faculty of science, pursuing a Biology degree.

"I plan on continuing my studies in sciences and hope to graduate in four years time. Ever since I was a child, I have been passionate about science. Growing up, I realized how much I loved working

with kids. That is why my goal in life is to one day become a paediatrician. With this scholarship, I would be able to focus less on working to pay off student debt and loans and more on my studies. This way, I'll be able to do my best in my education, without having to worry too much about my tuition. Thank you very much: I am very grateful for this award!"



ALEXANDRA McAllister (via Kal Tire)

"Thank you for awarding me a WCTD Scholarship. Being a second-year university student, I was ineligible for many scholarships since most are exclusively for recent high school graduates. This money will help me pay for the expenses of studying away from home such as rent, groceries, flights, and phone bills. I chose to leave the friendly mountains and warmer weather of British Columbia because of the program and opportunities at the

University of Ottawa. Most of the jobs for International Development are in the government, so it made sense to go to the capital of Canada. I do not have a specific career in mind, but I want to travel the world, speak many languages, and help people. Thank you again!"



BAILEY Demeester (via Tirecraft, Manning)

"I am honoured to have been selected as the recipient of a Western Canadian Tire Dealers Association Scholarship.

"I am currently taking the Combined Lab X-ray Program at NAIT in Edmonton. The financial assistance you provided will be of great help to me in paying for educational expenses; and allow me to concentrate more of my time on studying. Completing this program will offer me a career to

work in rural community hospitals.

"Thank you again for your generosity. I will continue to work hard toward achieving my goals."

Inaugural Tire Stewardship BC Don Blythe Scholarship

TSBC has generously added another scholarship to our existing four scholarships. This scholarship is for \$2000.00 and is in the memory of Don Blythe for his contribution to Tire Stewardship BC, and to the tire industry in general. It is awarded each year to a new qualifying candidate for a total of five years.

Congratulations to this year's recipient...



RISHAB Luthra

(via Jonkers Honda, awarded by TSBC)

"It's been a great honour being chosen for the Tire Stewardship BC Don Blythe Scholarship. The scholarship will help me fund my university education of Computer Science at the University of Toronto. It will alleviate a lot of financial stress; help me focus on my studies and help me to succeed. Thank you very much."

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Harper's tire centralizes operations to offer improved customer service

Calgary's tire guru urges drivers to pick the right tire, not the cheapest.



Harper's Tire, which has been operating in Calgary for 87 years, is consolidating its operations at its 4th Street SE location in order to create a more personalized customer experience.

With 13 bays and a staff of 17 people, Harper's continues to be Calgary's premier tire service company, with a depth of industry knowledge that spans decades.

Two locations, one in the Northwest and the other in Douglasdale, have been sold, allowing the owners and staff to concentrate efforts at the main location. The tire storage service will be moved here and all mechanical repairs will be done on site.

"We heard from our clients and they want to deal with us, personally, because they know and trust us. It's hard to be in three places at once, and we were spreading ourselves too thin," says owner Dan Harper.

As online purchasing of tires grows and installers pop up around the city, Harper says it's more important than ever to provide one-to-one counseling to help customers find the best and safest tires for their vehicles. He encourages consumers to be wary of online reviews and promotions and encourages them to question the source of the information online. As an independent tire service company, Harper's provides objective advice and informed recommendations.

"The typical shopper doesn't really understand the difference between all the different brands and types of tires, so they tend to make their decision based on price. They can end up choosing the wrong tire for the wrong application and that can lead to problems with drivability and performance of their vehicle," says Harper.

Started by his grandfather, John, in 1931, Harper says the family is committed to continuing the legacy of quality products and outstanding customer service. Some employees have been on staff for over 25 years. Customers have also spanned generations.

"Our customers tend to be people who are a little fussier about how their vehicles are treated. They want to know their car is going get looked after and we're not in a rush to get them in and out in a hurry," says Harper. "We offer same day service, but it's more important to be thorough than it is to be fast."

The tire business is changing rapidly with more sophisticated cars and tire technology, but one thing remains constant: people need help selecting and installing the correct tires for their vehicle.



Harper's also provides auto repair service and will continue to operate its self-serve Carwash at Douglasdale.

You can follow Harper's Tire on Facebook and Twitter for updates and visit their website for more info.



www.harperstire.com

A highlight of this fall's TDAC Convention & Trade Show was the induction of Dale Parsons into the Hall of Fame, sponsored by Bridgestone. As it turned out, Dale was the only inductee, with no other associations putting individuals forward. We are honoured to welcome Dale into the august group and present his story...

DALE PARSONS: Independent Pioneer's Career Spanned 50 Years



Dale & Jennifer Parsons



Dale with WCTD Board of Directors

A born and bred West Coaster, Dale was born at Vancouver's St. Paul's Hospital on July 10th, 1946. The oldest of five boys, he grew up in Coquitlam and spent his youth in the country (at the time) with his family. His Mom—a loving, hard-working stay at home Mom—and his Dad—a longshore worker—instilled hard work and integrity in all of their children.

In 1964 Dale graduated from Como Lake High school, where he met his lovely future wife, Jennifer. They were married in 1966. Says Dale, "I would not be where I am today without her. She is an amazing mother and spouse and has kept our family together for over 50 years. We have been blessed."

After he graduated, Dale almost immediately entered the business of selling tires. In 1965 he was hired by Butler Tire—at that time the largest independent tire dealer in Canada. Working for Butler in New Westminster,

he started out as what in those days was known as a "tire buster," now more correctly referred to as a "tire technician."

Dale was a hard worker from the outset and a highly motivated employee. After a long day's work on the shop floor he would head to the (now closed) Sales Training Institute of Vancouver.

Art Butler and his brothers soon realized Dale's capabilities and potential — and quickly moved him into management. Upon completion of his training, in 1968, aged just 21, he was offered the position of store manager of Butler Tire in Campbell River, BC. The town was at the height of its logging and fishing boom and Butler Tire was involved in all aspects of the industry, from passenger to truck and heavy industrial applications.

At the time of the move, Jennifer was pregnant with their daughter, Joelle, who was born a few months after they arrived. Moving to a town where they knew absolutely no one was challenging, especially with a

Dale met Gordon Storey at a WCTDRA local meeting in Nanaimo... Gord convinced him to get involved with the Association. It was the beginning of a long and fruitful involvement with the Association. "Meeting all the movers and shakers of the time meant so much," says Dale, "And forged many relationships that still exist to this day."



Dale with Butler Tire Truck



Dale with giant logging truck



Dale with Carl Watson, longtime team member



Dale with Grasons group

young child. Yet it wasn't long before they both became involved in the community and things went much easier. In 1970, along came a second bundle of joy, daughter Jillian. And life got even busier.

"Working long hours and six or seven days a week was the norm at that time and Jennifer was responsible for our two daughters growing up with our values," says Dale. "She worked outside the home once the girls were in middle school. Up until then she was there for them every day when they returned home from school."

It was during this time that Dale met Gordon Storey at a WCTDRA local meeting in Nanaimo. Gord convinced him to get involved with the Association. It was the beginning of a long and fruitful involvement with the Association. "Meeting all the movers and shakers of the time meant so much," says Dale, "And forged many relationships that still exist to this day."

Butler Tire was growing more locations and felt it was time for Dale to get more business education. In 1971 the company enrolled Dale into the business management course at the Banff School of Fine Arts in Banff, Alberta.

It wasn't long before Dale and Jennifer were on the move again, this time back to Vancouver. On completion of the Banff program, Dale was

offered the position, of operations manager for all the Butler Tire stores, which then numbered ten, spanning the Lower Mainland, Interior and Vancouver Island. "We accepted this position without hesitation — a chance to move back closer to family plus a wonderful opportunity to move up in the company," says Dale.

Now 26, Dale continued to work long hours and traveled BC relentlessly. It was a great time. And it also planted the seed for Dale and Jennifer to one day own their own business. In 1976 that opportunity arose: Butler was reorganizing and was about to put three locations on the market or close them. This gave Dale the opportunity to make an offer to the Butlers for the Vancouver location. In the following year, Dale formed a partnership with Doug Graham, to purchase the principal Butler Tire store, on Vancouver's Main Street. Doug was a Butler Tire manager at the time.

The new company, Grasons Tire was well located to take advantage of Vancouver's growing urban population. It was also situated on the edge of what at the time was still a fairly industrialized neighbourhood that was home to a wide variety of businesses and fleets. The store was one of the first in Vancouver to be identified under the Michelin store ID program, which was a new idea at the time.

In 1977 Dale became a director of Western Canadian Tire Dealers &

KUDOS

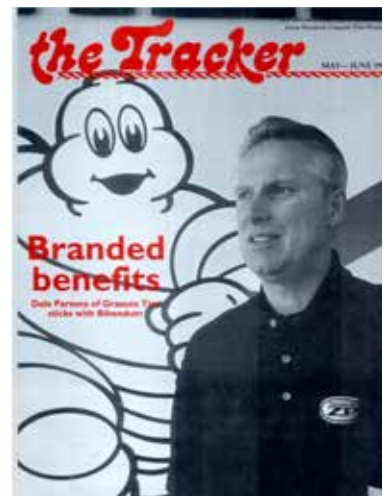
ARCHIE STROH | retired Kal Tire General Manager and senior vice-president

Over the half century I spent in the Tire Business I was fortunate to meet many interesting, delightful, capable and enthusiastic people. Dale Parsons is one who sits on the top rung. His career expanded a full range of activities and, at each stage, he was careful to conduct himself in the best interests of those he worked with and the industry overall. Subsequently he ended up with a reputation to be envied—and emulated by all.

I first meet him in the late 60s, when he was with Butler Tire (one of the preeminent dealers in the west) on the Island. He then came to Vancouver with them in various roles. He started his own business on Main Street and ran it in the model fashion one came to expect from one of the industry's best. After many successful years he chose to sell the business to Kal Tire, with the intention of working in 3rd world countries to help those less fortunate in the world. That did not evolve as he had hoped; and Kal Tire was lucky enough to have him come to work for them to run their associate program. Besides helping the organization in his specific role, he was a mentor to many team members; just as he was an unpaid advisor to countless other independent dealers, always an advocate for the betterment of the industry. I was always impressed with how well liked and respected Dale was wherever he went. That is the mark of a leader and a good human being who deserves this recognition. And he managed to—along with his assistant—have a great family. Congratulations and Well Done my friend.

GREG SIMS | retired OK Tire Stores CEO, and Michelin Canada

I have had the pleasure of knowing Dale for almost 40 years. During that time our relationship has seen us as supplier and customer, competitors and mutual promoters of our industry. Most importantly, it has seen us become very good friends, especially now that we are both retired. What I have most appreciated and respected about Dale is his approach to business and to life. Dale has always believed in having relationships rather than having transactions. He has always shown that success only happens when both parties walk away winners. And he has always tried to lead by example, in other words 'walk the talk.' This has not always been easy but along with a sense of humour (sometimes a little bent) Dale has moved himself, his family, his friends, his business dealings and his industry forward in a positive way. I congratulate Dale on his induction and I wish my friend nothing but health and happiness.



Dale with a fishing buddy



Dale and Jennifer



Dale and Jennifer with daughters Joelle Weidner and Jillian Lombardo

Retreaders (now WCTD). He was enlisted as Convention Chairman for the 1978 Vancouver Convention; and lined up some dynamic speakers, as well as attractive prize draw packages and more. Dale's idea to tag an optional trip to Hawaii onto the Convention package proved very popular. Subsequently he served on the WCTD board as Director on and off from 1970 to 2000 and as the Kal Tire appointed director from 2001 to 2015—and is still happy to offer advice to those who care to ask.

The Grasons partnership flourished until 1985, when Doug decided to pursue other interests—and Dale and Jennifer purchased his shares.

Shortly afterwards, Dale and some other like-minded independents realized that, in order to maintain their competitive edge, they needed to find a more advantageous way of purchasing from manufacturers. The discussions led to the formation of T.B.G. Tires, which ultimately became Excel Tire Centres. As one of the key people behind the group's genesis Dale was instrumental in its growth and success.

Dale grew Grasons into a force to be reckoned with, placing increased emphasis on the growing passenger and light truck market, as the heavier truck and industrial opportunities shifted more to the suburbs and Fraser Valley.

In 2000, Archie Stroh from Kal Tire approached Dale and Jennifer to sell the business to be operated as a Kal Tire location. They happily accepted and now looked forward to retirement. In fact, it marked the start of another long and fruitful relationship. Dale was particularly impressed by Kal Tire's acquisition style. He saw it to be an open and fair process that showed respect for the seller.

Dale and Jennifer pursued other projects and enjoyed their new found freedom even more, especially knowing that the company remained in good hands. And knowing also that their loyal staff of many years was still cared for.

Retirement proved to be short lived, as Archie approached Dale after ten months to come back to work part-time and assist Lloyd Higginson with the Kal Tire Associate program. That idea lasted about three months and full-time suddenly happened. Dale was responsible for BC and later, on Lloyd's passing, took on the other western provinces. Dale worked closely with numerous Kal associates over the years.

A good listener and intuitive problem solver, Dale made many friends and earned broad respect as a mentor to several within the Kal Tire organization. When Dale retired from Kal in October 2015, Archie Stroh hailed Dale for his success as an independent in what was for many years a tough market.

“That is one of the reasons,” said Archie, “That Dale was so well received by all the Kal Tire Folks, other dealers and the industry overall.



A good listener and intuitive problem solver, Dale made many friends and earned broad respect as a mentor to several within the Kal Tire organization. When Dale retired from Kal in October 2015, Archie Stroh hailed Dale for his success as an independent in what was for many years a tough market. “That is one of the reasons,” said Archie, “That Dale was so well received by all the Kal Tire Folks, other dealers and the industry overall.

Today, though now, truly, fully retired, Dale still maintains a keen interest in the industry and is always ready to offer advice when called upon. Jennifer also retired from her position as Human Resources Benefits Manager for 7/11 Canada. Dale & Jennifer remain highly active in their community and divide their time between their family, gym, Food Bank volunteering and spending six months in Vancouver and six months in Palm Springs.

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PROTECTING YOUR BUSINESS AND EMPLOYEES FROM A FIRE



by Reza Kamrani,
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You want to take every step possible to avoid a fire, but it's also good sense to have a plan in place in case one occurs. Here are some tips to help you prepare for a fire-related emergency.



It's important to make sure you and your business aren't caught off guard when disaster strikes. One emergency every business should be prepared for is a fire – because the effects can be devastating. Whether you're a restaurateur, a contractor, or a manufacturer, you should be prepared.

Being ready for a fire involves more than just having fire extinguishers around (although, that's a good start). Managing this risk typically consists of two main objectives: prevention and preparedness. You want to take every step possible to avoid a fire, but it's also good sense to have a plan in place in case one occurs. Here are some tips to help you prepare for a fire-related emergency.

Know who to contact

The first contact to include when creating a fire evacuation plan is your local fire department. Chances are they already have some sort of plan or guidelines in place which you can build on.

Choose evacuation points and routes carefully

Evacuation points and routes vary based on building size, number of employees, and your building's location. That said, these general guidelines are a good starting point:

- Make sure there are multiple routes to relieve congestion.
- Assembly points shouldn't be in high-traffic areas (like busy intersections).
- Make sure assembly points are far enough from the building (this will also vary depending on the building's height).

Put up signs

Every exit should have a sign showing the evacuation route for that particular area.

Keep employees up-to-date

Whenever you update your fire evacuation routes or before you host a mock fire drill, make sure employees are informed.

Assign fire wardens

Train some employees on building protocol and evacuation procedures. Your local fire department can recommend how many fire wardens you should have. Most importantly, make sure they know they're meant to be knowledgeable helpers, not people who risk their lives in the event of an actual fire.

Make a list

Having a list of employees can be helpful to account for everyone if your building is evacuated. Make a note of all employees who are pregnant, who have recently been operated on, or who have disabilities. Update it at least every six months and provide a copy to the fire department.

Special events

If there are special events going on in your business' area which close streets or increase foot traffic, be sure to re-evaluate assembly points and evacuation procedures.



On top of having a plan in place for when a fire starts, there are also some steps your business can take to mitigate the risk of a fire in the first place. Below are some general fire prevention tips:

- Don't plug several power cords into one outlet, and never break off the third prong on a plug. If it does break off, make sure it's replaced and the third prong is properly grounded.
- Never use extension cords as a permanent solution. They're designed to be used to temporarily supply power to an area that doesn't have an outlet.
- Store your power cords away from heat, water, and oil, as they can be damaged. Never let vehicles pass over unprotected power cords.
- Prior to use, inspect your tools, power cords, and electrical fittings for damage or wear. If you discover an issue during the inspection, repair or replace the damaged equipment before operating it again.
- Clean your equipment well and clean it often. Regular cleaning is one of the best ways to keep air flowing and heat dissipating.
- Make sure any heating equipment (e.g. wood stoves, ovens, deep fryers, etc.) is installed and maintained by a qualified technician.
- Don't store wood or other combustibles next to a wood stove or a portable heater.
- Don't use nails or staples to secure power cords to walls and floors, as they can damage the cord and cause fire or shock hazards. Use tape when securing cords when necessary.
- When operating any electrical equipment, always double-check that it's rated for the level of amperage or wattage that you're using.
- Always use the correct fuse size. Don't replace a fuse with a larger one, because this can cause excessive currents in the wiring, which could start a fire.
- Unusually warm or hot outlets could be caused by unsafe wiring conditions. If you discover one, unplug any cords and don't use it again until a qualified electrician has done an inspection of the wiring.
- Fire suppression systems and portable fire extinguishers are the most important tools for combating a fire when one breaks out. Make sure you and your employees understand how your fire suppression system works, and how to operate fire extinguishers. Regular maintenance is also important to ensure that your suppression systems and extinguishers will operate in the event of a fire.
- Staircases and fire brigade access routes should always be clear and never used for storage or parking. Do not prop or wedge-open fire doors. These doors are designed to prevent the spread of fire between building areas.
- "No smoking" rules must be enforced in areas exposed to fire and near hazardous operations.

Nobody wants to see their business suffer after a fire. But the best way to protect your business and employees from unforeseen emergencies is by preparing for them in advance. These tips, along with guidance from your local fire department and newly-appointed fire wardens, will help you do just that.

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Point S Canada Adds 8 Stores in the Atlantic Provinces

—TIRE BUSINESS

Point S Canada has grown its presence in the nation's Atlantic Provinces with the addition of eight independent tire and auto service businesses in New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island to the Point S network.

The new Point S affiliates, which expand the group's presence in the Atlantic Provinces to a dozen locations, are:

- *F.J. Lafrance Ltd., Saint-André, New Brunswick;*
- *Tulk Tire & Towing Services, Mount Pearl, Newfoundland and Labrador;*
- *Brudenell Tire Centre, Montague, Prince Edward Island;*
- *Bengers Automotive, Grand Falls, Newfoundland and Labrador;*
- *Spaniard's Bay Thruway, Spaniard's Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador;*
- *Wrench 'n' Rubber Auto, Amherst, Nova Scotia;*



"Folks in the Atlantic provinces can now look forward to a stress-free experience when they bring their cars in for a tune-up," Bruno Leclair, president and CEO of Point S Canada, said.

- *Double D Maintenance, Windsor, Nova Scotia; and*
- *O'Leary Tire Centre, Unionvale, Prince Edward Island.*

Each of the new stores will benefit from a transactional site, a strong advertising presence, and a vast selection of tire programs, mechanic services, and specialized products, among other Point S advantages.

Offering both regular and commercial tire and mechanic services, all eight stores will undergo their transformation in the coming year, Point S said.

Martins Industries Releases New Heavy-Duty Tire Inflation Cages

—TIRE REVIEW

Martins Industries, a tire equipment manufacturer, is introducing a series of heavy-duty Tire Inflation Cages (MIC-6HD) that will virtually eliminate the possibility of injury during the tire inflation process, the company says.

The new inflation cages offer several safety features including six heavy-duty reinforcement bars, a pneumatic safety valve on the cage door, an air hose with lock-on chuck and an air deflection system for maximum containment. They ensure all compliance with local safety regulations in North America and Europe, Martins Industries says.

MIC-6HD tire inflation cages offer workers a one-stop station for safely seating and inflating truck and bus tires. With three models in the MIC-6HD series, users can choose from the inflation cage 6 bars HD, the inflation cage kit which includes an automatic inflator kit, or the Inflation Pit Stop 6 Bars HD.

The company developed the MIC-6HD series to respond to the specific needs of the Netherlands market, but quickly realized that the safety features of this particular series would be beneficial to companies around the world, a company press release said. "We've been sharing ideas with tire professionals from all over the world in our different locations, and then creating efficient and safe products that respond directly to those needs. This new safety inflation cage MIC-6HD is the result of that collaboration. Sharing ideas brings exceptional results," says Martins Industries founder and president, Martin Depelteau.

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Tire industry should prepare to adapt to automotive trends

—TIRE BUSINESS

The tire industry needs to continue to adapt as autonomous and electric vehicles become more popular, according to Jim Popio, vice president of operations in North America for Smithers Rapra.

Mr. Popio focused on developments driven in the automotive industry by ACES, or autonomous, connected, electric and shared vehicles in his presentation, “3 Key Automotive Trends and What it Means for Tires,” at the International Tire Exhibition & Conference in Akron Sept. 11-13.

New vehicle types, as a key trend, are introducing new challenges for tire manufacturers, including dealing with additional weight in particular, he said.

“A Tesla is 700 pounds heavier than a Honda Accord,” he said. “These cars, they weigh a lot. That means that tires are going to have to carry more load.”

Electric vehicles also are quicker off the line, with the additional torque “ripping some rubber off of those tires,” he said. Tires for electric vehicles will need to be even more efficient, providing longer range and less rolling resistance. Electric vehicles also mean additional cabin noise, which tires will need to play a part in solving.

“How does all of this affect vehicle handling?” Mr. Popio asked. “I’m guessing if there’s more weight in the back, . . . what’s it mean for cargo loads and entire performance?”

With additional load capacity and other challenges, tire manufacturers will have to look at things like the car’s contact patch. An EV might need a larger one, Popio said. Going to thin, narrow tires might mean they spin more, which would run counter to the high efficiency goals of the EV.

Autonomous challenges

Autonomous vehicles present additional questions, as they have to run on public roads and avoid collisions while following traffic rules, he said.

According to market research, 70 million Level 3 (vehicles requiring a human driver but with some safety functions shifted to the car) vehicles will be on the road by 2030. By the same time frame, about 30 million Level 4 vehicles will be in use, which are fully autonomous in most driving scenarios. About 5 million Level 5, or fully autonomous vehicles, are expected. There are no current federal regulations governing autonomous vehicles.

Tires for autonomous vehicles would need to be more durable and also have more load-carrying capacity as well, as they’re likely to also be electric vehicles, Mr. Popio said. Occupants might miss sensory cues of impending tire problems, removed

“What do customers really want? Car companies don’t always tell. Some folks think about the tires, but many don’t,” he said. “But without a tire, you’re not going anywhere.”



Mr. Popio focused on developments driven in the automotive industry by ACES, or autonomous, connected, electric and shared vehicles in his presentation.

from the actual act of driving, and the vehicle would need the capability to sense it. The tires also would need to sense environment feedback and manage a comfortable ride by mitigating “turbulence” on a bumpy road.

Autonomous vehicles will need tires with sensor properties in addition to being able to check pressure and temperature, Popio said. Those tires also will need to be able to be compatible with multiple vehicle interfaces from different manufacturers, as consumers replace original equipment manufacturer tires during the vehicle’s lifetime.

“Is the interface going to be the same? Are you going to be able to plug any tire in there?” he asked. “How is the vehicle going to know what to do? How are we going to handle compatibility issues?”

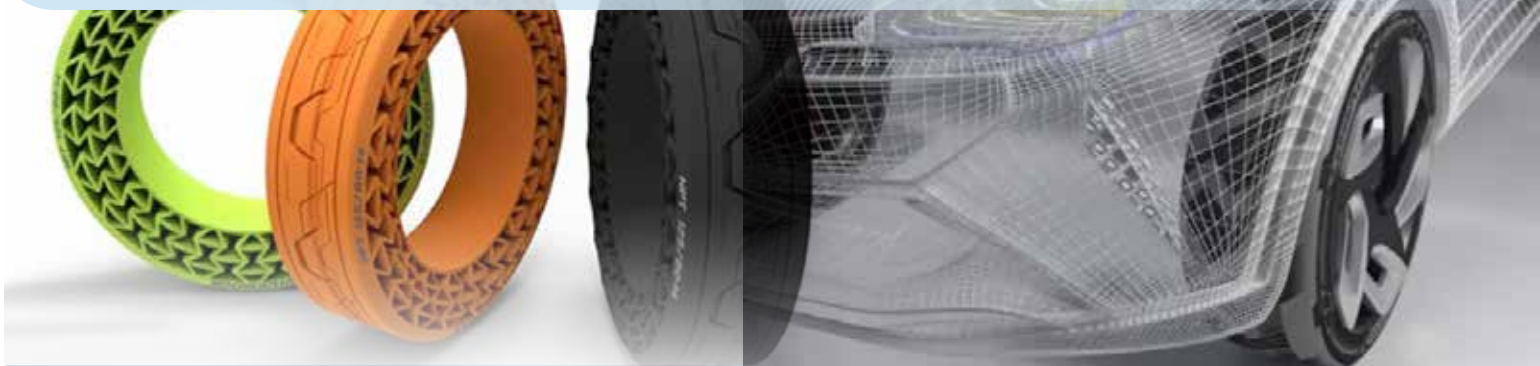
New business models, another key trend, will shape the tire industry going forward, Mr. Popio said. Ride-hailing services such as Uber or Lyft, remain popular, with double-digit growth year over year. Ride sharing services — where a customer can rent a vehicle, use it and return it — are less popular but are still being used. Another new approach is a subscription model, where a customer subscribes to a class of vehicle, and trades individual vehicles for use according to the day’s needs.

In all three cases, the tire industry will see change, as dealer networks become less useful and direct relationships with automotive companies become more common, Popio said. As car ownership is less common, a fleet mentality might be a regular approach, where the individual brand of the tire might not matter.

One of the top charges the tire industry will see with this trend is a push for durability, similar to the trucking industry, Mr. Popio said. Additionally, automotive companies look for tires with increased tread wear, fuel efficiency and low cost, as brand awareness becomes less important.



New vehicle types, as a key trend, are introducing new challenges for tire manufacturers.



“At the end of the day, the emergence of electric vehicles, these new automotive technologies ... these new business models, we’re going to need to adapt to them.”

Continued change

Sustainable material development makes up a third key trend, especially as global markets and social dynamics continue to change, Mr. Popio told the ITEC audience.

“With urbanization, people are moving back to the cities,” he said. “The future’s not clear, and we must consider all of the possible scenarios. Tires, are they going to continue to get more and more commoditized, or, as I said a number of years ago, are we going to make them sexy?”

With a push for cleaner emissions and vehicles with smaller carbon footprints, the electric vehicle market and the hybrid electric vehicle market is poised to continue growth, Popio said. Countries like Germany are committed to eliminating the internal combustion engine by 2030, and companies like Volkswagen are “moving away from the dirty air problem they had a few years ago” with new electric offerings.

The tire industry is additionally being affected by trade issues, such as tariffs on steel and other materials, Popio said. Oil and raw materials prices also are moving.

But instead of waiting for automotive manufacturers to react to movements in the industry, tire manufacturers should already be making changes, Mr. Popio said.

“Maybe we can get ahead of this curve and be a bit more proactive with these tires,” he said. “Maybe we need to tell the vehicle industry, ‘This is what we’re going to do,’ rather than have them say, ‘We need this.’ Because I think the tires are always taken for granted.

“At the end of the day, the emergence of electric vehicles, these new automotive technologies ... these new business models, we’re going to need to adapt to them.”

Tire companies shouldn’t wait for vehicle manufacturers to look at ways to incorporate new technologies effectively, regardless of what type of vehicle is coming to future consumers, he said.

“What do customers really want? Car companies don’t always tell. Some folks think about the tires, but many don’t,” he said. “But without a tire, you’re not going anywhere.”

Michelin investing in Nova Scotia plant ahead of winter tire launch

— RUBBER & PLASTICS NEWS



The launch of the new, as-yet unnamed winter tire line will create 150 jobs at the Granton plant and make permanent 200 temporary positions that previously were slated to end in 2020, Michelin said.



Michelin North America's Scott Clark (right) cuts a cake with a Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil to celebrate the expansion of a tire plant in Granton.

Michelin North America (Canada) Inc. is budgeting \$16 million in investments at its Granton, NS plant to support the 2020 launch of a winter tire designed specifically for the North American market.

The launch of the new, as-yet unnamed winter tire line will create 150 jobs at the Granton plant and make permanent 200 temporary positions that previously were slated to end in 2020, Michelin said.

This project will expand Michelin's employment in Nova Scotia to more than 3,600, the highest levels the firm's almost 50-year history, according to Jeff MacLean, president of Michelin Canada.

"This is a testament to the dedication of our employees, the support of our community and government partners, and our continued ability to deliver top-quality products for the North American marketplace."

The investment at the plant is tied to the introduction of an innovative process for semi-finished materials, Michelin said.

The new tire will build on the success of the Latitude X-Ice Xi2 winter tires built at the Granton plant for Canadian and U.S. markets.

The addition of the new semi-finished materials process will allow Michelin to remain competitive in the marketplace, Mr. Maclean said, while also helping it build its manufacturing base in Nova Scotia."

The project—budgeted at \$9.2 million—includes state-of-the-art equipment, building renovations and new storage facilities at the site. This project will span 2019–20 and create 20 jobs. These semi-finished products will be used in several North American Michelin sites.

This decision is a reversal of fortune for the Granton plant. In 2014 Michelin announced it intended to phase out nearly all production at the then-46-year-old plant in Pictou County.

Two years later, it extended the factory's tire manufacturing life for two years, opting to continue production of winter tires there in response to increased consumer demand for winter products.

Nova Scotia is contributing \$3.56 million to the project through the Nova Scotia Business Inc. Innovation Rebate Program, and the province's Department of Labor and Advanced Education will train some of the new employees for these projects.

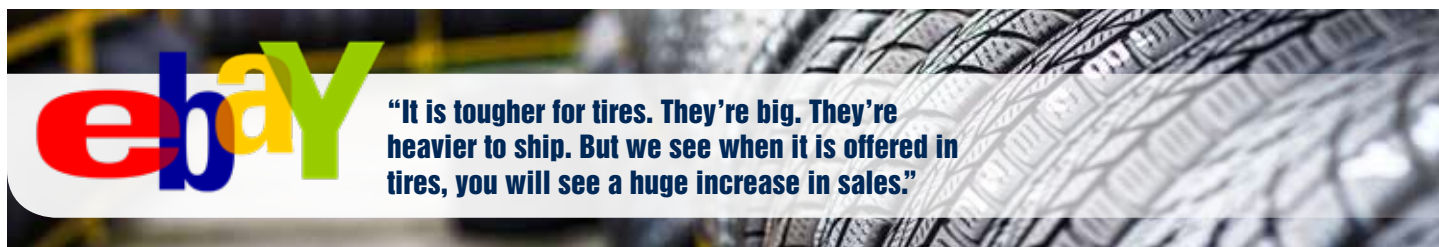
Michelin budgeted \$6.9 million to support the launch of the new winter tire. Production of the Latitude X-ice will continue at Granton until 2020, when resources will be redirected to the new tire, Michelin said.

"This project reinforces the strength and technical capability of the Michelin Nova Scotia team," Nova Scotia Premier Stephen McNeil said.

"We are also pleased that a Nova Scotia location has been chosen to be the first in North America for this innovative work with semi-finished materials. Michelin has been a very important part of our economy for several decades, and it's wonderful to see this commitment to future growth and success in our province."

eBay: Online tire sales, services provide growth opportunity

— Kathy McCarron, TIRE BUSINESS



With about 80 percent of consumers researching tire purchases online — and a growing percentage of consumers buying tires on the web — it is important for tire dealerships to sell tires and installation services on the internet, according to eBay Motor's director of parts and accessories, Marie Niewiroski.

In a webinar — **"5 Tips to Growing Your Online Tire Sales"** — broadcast Sept. 25 as part of the *Tire Business Educates Live Online Conference*, Ms. Niewiroski said it is important for independent dealers to have an online presence in order to grow their businesses.

"With all the technology out there, consumers have all this information at their fingertips, different brands, different prices. And so they do a lot of research, not only in tires but in any industry. So having a presence online is very important for your business that can really help it grow," she said.

"More than 80 percent of consumers search for tires online. That is a staggering number. Eighty percent of consumers do some kind of research online. It doesn't necessarily mean they purchased online, ... they do a lot of their research."

She noted about 43 percent of these consumers are looking at prices and brands; more than half of consumers are migrating to different brands because of price or tread life; and eventually 12 percent of these consumers end up buying tires online.

"We're seeing huge growth in this as well, the shift from offline to online sales. We're seeing growth rates of 20 percent year over year. It's definitely starting to explode," she said.

"Although tires is one of the last industries to join the trend of online sales, ... we are seeing that the trend is growing quite a bit."

Ms. Niewiroski claimed about 96 percent of consumers who buy tires online are apt to buy again online. She said the youngest generation of consumers are more likely to shop online due to the convenience and self-serve options.

Her advice for dealers to boost online sales are:

1. Move from good-better-best to a spectrum of value

"We find that these online consumers are very savvy. They do a lot of this research (and are) more savvy than your offline consumers. ... They want to compare the value and the price and really what's out there at the end of the day.

"In order for you to grow your online sales, you want to make sure that you're not just carrying Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 tires, but that you're carrying Tier 4 as well, at least for your online business in some way, shape or form," she said.

She noted Tier 4 brands are growing in popularity and since online shoppers are comparing prices on different sites, dealers should at least offer some value-priced tires to attract online shoppers initially.

"You want to make sure that you're in that mix, so even if they don't necessarily buy a Tier 3 or Tier 4 brand, they can still come to your website and see what you have to offer. We find people sometimes come in looking for a Tier 1 or Tier 2 brand and they shift over to a Tier 3 or Tier 4 brand and vice versa," she said.

"They just want to do a search for cheap tires and as they start doing the research, they will land on a Tier 1 or Tier 2 brand. So it really all depends on the consumer preferences, the research they do."

2. Seize the retail moment

She encouraged dealers to do promotions during the spring and fall selling seasons and stock enough inventory for those seasons.

She also advised online retailers to promote any manufacturer rebates that are available and create their own coupons, noting these are really popular with consumers.

3. Optimize your listings

She stressed the need to offer fast, and free, shipping — a perk most online shoppers have come to expect.

"I know that's tough in the tire industry because free shipping can come at a cost. But we see that sales increase by 50-plus percent when offering free shipping. This is really what consumers are used to at the end of the day. It's kind of a retail standard," she said.

"It is tougher for tires. They're big. They're heavier to ship. But we see when it is offered in tires, you will see a huge increase in sales."

She also noted that two- to three-day delivery time frames create a better user experience, which leads to buyer retention.

"Once you offer this fast and free shipping options and you have a good variety of tires to offer and you have great customer service, you will definitely gain that buyer back in five to seven years when they go to replace their tires again," Ms. Niewiroski said.

Continued on page 27

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Auto makers, suppliers taking tiny steps toward big sustainability goals

— Audrey LaForest, RUBBER & PLASTICS NEWS

Sustainability is a hot-button issue for a lot of auto makers and suppliers today, but for Ford Motor Co.'s Debbie Mielewski, it's a topic that is deeply rooted in her livelihood and entrenched in her everyday habits.

As the senior technical leader of materials sustainability for the Dearborn, Mich.-based auto maker, Mielewski continues to pioneer the development of sustainable plastics and composites for automotive applications, boosting Ford's use of soy-based polyurethane foam and other unconventional filler materials such as coffee chaff and rice hulls.

But it was during the Society of Plastics Engineers' 18th annual Automotive Composites Conference and Exhibition that she expressed to attendees just how deeply affected she is by sustainability goals, or the lack thereof, set not only by the automotive industry but also by government leaders around the world.

"Our group had a giant party the day the Paris climate agreement was signed, and I felt like that was a giant step forward," Mielewski said during a Sept. 7 panel discussion. "When (the U.S.) pulled out of the Paris agreement, I could barely get out of bed to go to work."

For Mielewski, as an employee of a global auto maker and a human being trying to survive another day on planet Earth, it was a reminder for her that corporations—both on their own and together as part of an influential industry—need to focus on sustainability efforts without necessarily relying on government regulation for a nudge in the right direction.

"Some days, it's hard to get out of bed and look 'that green thing' in the face because people are so distracted with other things, but let me tell you, investing 20 years in this, it is going to be a big part of our future," she said. "Big corporations have to take some responsibility."

Mielewski, who has grown tired of the "if it's cheaper and it's environmental, we'll do it" triple-bottom-line response, asked bluntly, "What's your corporate commitment to sustainability?"

Walking the walk

Jay Olson, global manager of materials engineering and technology at agricultural, construction and forestry equipment maker Deere & Co., said this year the company has committed to pursuing product sustainability metrics.

In 2007, the company partnered with Ford on putting the soy-based polyurethane foams to use in the seatbacks, seat cushions, armrests and headrests of John Deere equipment.

"Our customers are linked to the land, linked to the soil," Olson said. "They're stewards of the land, and so our company has naturally been sustainable in that way for many years."

At General Motors Co., Lauren Smith, a panelist for the discussion and



"Our customers are linked to the land, linked to the soil," ... "They're stewards of the land, and so our company has naturally been sustainable in that way for many years."

the automaker's project manager of global sustainability initiatives, said waste is viewed as "simply a resource out of place."

"We're conscious of our impact that we have on the environment and we also recognize that our output streams have potential for reuse," she said. "This is why we're looking at an aggressive goal to be a leading auto manufacturer in reducing our waste and having zero waste come from our sites and not going into landfills."

It's part of GM's commitment to a "zero, zero, zero vision" of zero crashes, zero emissions and zero congestion, Smith explained.

"We're looking to reduce crashes through autonomous vehicles, address climate change through electrification and also alleviate congestion through connectivity," she said.

In addition, the Detroit auto maker is taking plastic water bottles from several of its facilities to manufacture engine manifold covers and air filters, for example, as a way to adopt a more closed-loop process.

Closing the loop refers to waste and byproducts that are being transformed into resources that can either be reused in the same process or modified to contribute to different processes, said Mark Minnichelli, director of technical development for BASF Corp.'s performance materials business.

For years, the German chemical giant has applied what it calls "the Verbund model" at six of its larger plant sites—two of which are in the U.S.: one in Geismar, La., and the other in Freeport, Texas.

The system, in part, involves taking byproducts from one facility and using them as raw materials at another facility, resulting in lower energy costs, less waste and fewer natural resources being consumed, Minnichelli explained.

Continued on page 26

Auto makers, suppliers taking tiny steps toward big sustainability goals

Continued from page 25

Material matters

But going green still has to make good business sense, according to Michael Saltzberg, DuPont's global business director of biomaterials.

New materials, he said, must fulfill these three requirements if they are going to work in the marketplace: They have to have better technical performance, be economical when brought to scale, and have a strong environmental story that includes renewable sourcing.

"We've got to come up with solutions that aren't what I call 'solutions for rich people.' We're trying to come up with ... a material that is at a price point that it can be broadly applicable," he said. "That's kind of our job as a materials supplier [since] we work in the beginning of these value chains: Try to bring options to all the other folks—the converters, the Tier 1 suppliers, the OEMs."

Recycling, especially in automotive, is another challenge, with auto makers like GM increasing the number of plastic components used in their vehicles for lightweighting and other benefits.

"This is a great opportunity for us to increase the recycled content in our vehicles, too," Smith said.

At Ford, the auto maker said it recycles 5 million pounds of aluminum scrap each week—enough to make more than 37,000 new F-Series truck bodies a month. In addition, its vehicles contain a minimum of 25

percent post-industrial PET content as well as recycled post-consumer carpeting.

Don Wingard, director of research and technology at thermoplastic resins supplier and compounder Wellman Advanced Materials L.L.C., said carpet recycling is growing, but the rate is still low.

"Most of the carpet goes to a landfill. We only get a small percentage of carpet to recycle back into compounded resins that go into the automotive industry," he said. "We need to increase that rate, the rate of recycling, and put that carpet to better use in the automotive industry."

Deere's Olson said when it comes to increasing recycling and the availability of reusable materials, it has to be a "total systems approach" involving government, academia, OEMs and the value and supply chains to come up with solutions and create defined pathways to sustainability.

"We all have to work together. We have to be aligned," he said. "It will require all of our resources to sustain this journey toward sustainability, which will be by one component and material at a time."

Ford's Mielewski, too, knows that getting to a circular economy in automotive requires a little-by-little, step-by-step approach.

"Let's do the next thing that makes the most sense, that makes an impact, and just keep building," she said. "So, I'm with Jay (Olson). Little, tiny baby steps moving in the right direction."



Pirelli Tops Dow Jones Sustainability Index



Pirelli has been named the world leader in Sustainability in the Auto Components sector on the Dow Jones World and Europe indices. This is the result that emerged from the annual review of the indices conducted by RobecoSam and S&P Dow Jones and which will take effect from September 24. Pirelli recorded a total score of 81 points compared with the sector average of 32. Launched in 1999, the Dow Jones sustainability indices are among the most important market indices regarding sustainability at the world level. Involving over 2,000 companies from 60 industrial sectors, the analysis is based on the integrated evaluation of economic, environmental and social factors, that are the three aspects which define the concept of sustainability in terms of enduring value creation for all stakeholders.

eBay: Online tire sales, services provide growth opportunity

Continued from page 23

She also suggested that dealers advertise prices for sets of two or four tires, rather than individual prices, because consumers don't like doing the math when buying multiple tires.

She suggested dealers offer discounts on sets of tires.

4. Expand your reach by being multi-channel

Ms. Niewiroski suggested dealers not only invest in their own online store but also expand into other online marketplaces, such as eBay, Amazon and Walmart.

"This really helps you build your brand," she said. "And by investing in SEO and catalog, that will drive traffic to your store. So whether it's your own online store and you're investing in SEO directly in Google, etc., but also investing in marketplaces, you get to leverage all the traffic through eBay, Amazon, Walmart, etc."

Within the online marketplaces there is a trust system, where consumers provide and read reviews and ratings on tires and retailers.

"Research has shown that from shifting offline to adding online, you can increase your sales alone by 10 percent. So this again is your own online presence. But when you add on one marketplace, you will increase online sales by 38 percent; in two marketplaces, up to a 120-percent increase in sales," she said.

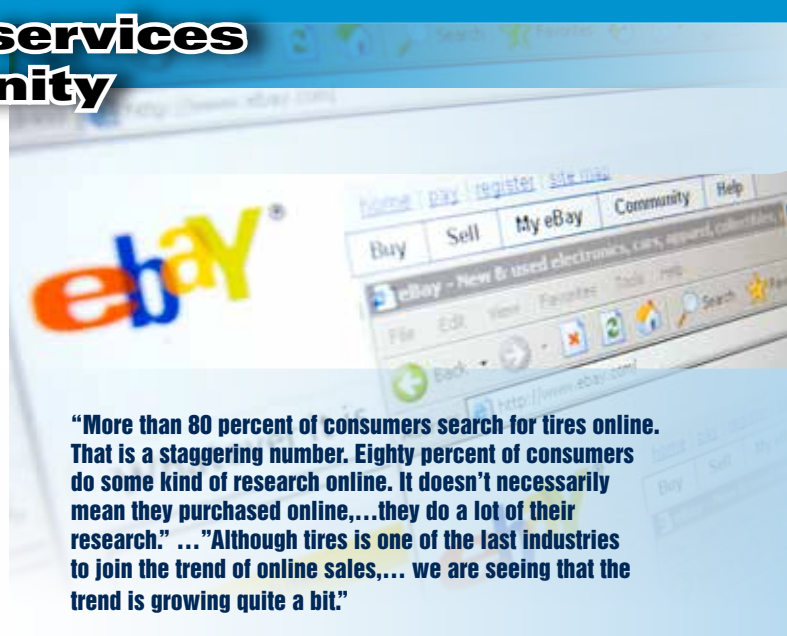
"That's the advantage of leveraging marketplaces with all their traffic and sales and marketing and loyalty in general — to truly take online sales to the next level," she said.

5. Provide convenience by offering installation

"This is about offering that end-to-end experience for your consumer," Ms. Niewiroski said.

"They're doing their research online, and right then and there they want to purchase the tires. But on top of that they want to purchase installation and kind of do it all upfront so when they bring in their car, they can literally just hand it over and say, 'Here you go. I'm ready to get my tires installed.'"

She said between 40 percent and 60 percent of online shoppers add



on installation services when they're offered for the tires they purchase. Often, online shoppers want to know upfront the full price of the tire purchase/installation package.

"Consumers make a decision from not only the tires but the installation as well. They want to know what the full job is going to be. So when you offer installation online, you do get that price transparency and what it includes from start to finish. So they can make that purchase more confidently online," she said.

She noted that once the online customers arrive at the dealership, the dealer has an opportunity to upsell them on any other services they may need.

Ms. Niewiroski encouraged tire dealers to become recommended installers for large online tire retail networks, such as Tire Rack or Tire Buyer.

"You may not get that tire sale, but you can get that installation and still get that customer through offering installation at your shop. This is something you definitely want to do," she said.

"You want to make sure your shop is part of an installation network as this industry grows and offers tire installation online."

Technologies disrupt mining industry

— Peggy Fisher, TIRE BUSINESS

Have you ever been to a working mine? If you are an OTR tire dealer, I'm sure you have, but most of you commercial truck tire dealers probably have not.

Several years ago I visited a very large copper mine for a few days outside of Phoenix and an iron ore/taconite mine north of Duluth, Minn., while I was doing some consulting work for a tire company.

Just a couple of years ago I visited a lead-zinc refinery in Mexico. Mines and their processing plants are fascinating places.

While I like trucks, mine haul trucks are something else. The BELAZ 75710, produced by the Belarusian company BELAZ, has a payload capacity of 496 tons (992,000 lbs.) and is the biggest mining dump truck in the world.

The truck is more than 67 feet long, almost 27 feet high and over 32 feet wide. The empty weight of the vehicle is 360 tons (720,000 lbs.).

It has a conventional two-axle setup but the wheels are dued, four to an axle. For this reason it needs eight 59/80R63 tires that can each carry 102 tons (204,000 lbs.).

This truck also has four-wheel drive and four-wheel hydraulic steering, which is unusual, and it can travel at speeds up to 64 mph. Its cost is just a little more than a mere \$6 million.

The Caterpillar 797F made here in the U.S. is the second largest mining truck in the world. It weighs 293 tons (586,000 lbs.), can carry a little less than the BELAZ at 400 tons (800,000 lbs.) and measures slightly smaller, a little more than 49-foot long, 21-foot high and 31-foot wide.

It is also equipped with six 59/80R63 tires. However, the maximum speed of this truck is a little faster than the BELAZ at 68 mph. It costs \$5 million, and options are extra.

But if you love trucks, you gotta love these babies.

The mining industry is a global industry. Many large mining companies operate mines all around the world.



Because mining is a big consumer of energy, it isn't the most environmentally friendly industry. Therefore electric vehicles are becoming more and more popular and are replacing diesel powered equipment to reduce emissions and address climate change.

In the U.S., the mining industry plays a role in all 50 states with an estimated 1,400 mines in operations extracting coal, iron, copper, zinc, potash, limestone and other crushed rocks.

The U.S. is the world's leading producer of beryllium, soda ash and sulphur, the second leading producer of coal and the third largest producer of gold and copper.

These metals and other minerals it extracts are essential raw materials for the building and chemical industries and are also a critical part of the production of everyday electronics and consumer products.

I'll bet you didn't know that more than 65 different minerals are required to produce a modern computer.

Energy-intensive industry

The reason mining is so energy-intensive is because of the recovery ratio of various materials being mined. For example, coal has an average recovery ratio of 82 percent, so 1.2 tons of material is needed to actually get 1 ton of coal.

Industrial minerals have an average ratio of 90 percent, while metals have an average recovery ratio of 4.5 percent. So to recover 1 ton of gold, 22 tons of material have to be mined.

I know this is probably more than you want to know about mining, but understanding these facts and processes is essential to understanding how

MINING 101

Minerals are mined underground or through surface methods such as open-pit mining. Both mining methods use a three-stage process.

The first stage is extraction, which includes blasting and drilling to loosen and remove material from the mine.

The second stage is materials handling, which involves transporting the ore and waste from the mine to the mill or disposal area.

The third stage, beneficiation and processing, occurs at the processing plant. This stage recovers the valuable portion of the mined material and produces the final marketable product.

Beneficiation operations primarily consist of crushing, grinding and separations, while processing operations involve smelting and / or refining. Each of these stages operates in a hazardous environment employing huge equipment and perhaps explosives and also require large amounts of energy, primarily electricity and diesel fuel.

The mining industry was hit hard by the Great Recession. Since then, it has been forced into using more cost-saving and efficiency measures.

The up side of these struggles is the breeding of innovation and the development of several technologies that are disrupting the mining industry today.



The BELAZ 75710 is the biggest mining dump truck in the world.

technology is being used to change this industry.

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The first of these technologies is autonomous vehicles. This topic is hot in every sector of industry at the moment, and mining can be one of the greatest beneficiaries of it.

Autonomous trucks and drills already have been operating in mines around the world for the last five years and have safely moved more than 661 tons (1,322,000 lbs.) of ore.

Mines using these vehicles have reported a 20-percent increase in overall productivity and zero lost time injuries since the first trucks started operating.

As a result, they are adding more autonomous trucks to their current operations and introducing autonomy to additional mine sites. This is part of mining companies' strategies to improve safety, build capacity and remain globally competitive.

Since these huge haul trucks cost millions, Caterpillar initiated a project to adapt hardware and software for retrofitting older haul trucks with autonomous mining-truck technology so mines would not have to scrap these expensive vehicles to get autonomous functionality.

Caterpillar not only is retrofitting its own vehicles with this technology, but also Komatsu 930E mining trucks as well since many mining companies operate mixed fleets of trucks, and this enables Caterpillar to offer a total solution to these customers.

Caterpillar also offers its Cat Command for dozing, drilling and underground mining. This semi-autonomous system enables one operator to control up to three machines at one time from a remote location.

Trucks equipped with Command respond to calls to the shovel, move into position, haul to dump points and report for maintenance without an operator on board.

They interact safely with other manned and light vehicles due to Command's multiple, redundant sensing systems and maintain optimal operating speeds and safe following distances at all times.

Operators experience less physical fatigue as a result of working in a comfortable office environment and work more efficiently, and fewer people are exposed to on-site hazards. One mine reported a 50-percent reduction in the frequency of safety incidents, and the severity of the few incidents they did have was reduced as well.

Productivity also is improved since mines are able to optimize production with tight truck exchanges and eliminating shift changes. There's also less damage to machines and less downtime due to misuse and overloading.

Accurate drilling and blasting helps make every other aspect of a mining operation smoother, safer and more productive. Minor deviations from the blasting pattern can result in unevenly blasted material that is harder and more costly to handle and can also put people in danger.

Embracing autonomy

Autonomous drills that operate with more precision and more accurate depth tracking can work far more accurately, which means the material is optimally blasted, requires less time to remove the unwanted material and higher productivity. Further, operators are kept in a remote station safely away from blasting areas and the dust, vibration and other hazardous conditions that surround a working drill.

Autonomous equipment provides consistency that comes from near continuous operation and the elimination of human error. Mines now are able to operate with fewer people in potentially hazardous areas with incredible increases in productivity.



Caterpillar offers Cat Command which enables one operator to control up three semi-autonomous machines.

As you can imagine, safety is a top concern in underground mines that are drilling into hard rock, as is productivity. Because the hard rock is difficult to break mechanically, using the traditional drill and blast method is a slow start-and-stop process.

The mine has to be evacuated before a blast, as the explosion creates various gases. However, Atlas Copco has introduced its new line of Underground Mobile Miners that are automated and remotely controlled.

These machines eliminate the more dangerous drill-and-blast method and the need to evacuate mines during blasting hard rock. They provide a continuous hard-rock mining system that enables faster advance/excavation rates, easier scheduling and a safer work environment than traditional methods.

In addition, Mobile Miner does less damage to the surrounding rock and reduces the risk of roof falls, which improves both safety and the long-time performance of a mine.

Because mining is a big consumer of energy, it isn't the most environmentally friendly industry. Therefore electric vehicles are becoming more and more popular and are replacing diesel powered equipment to reduce emissions and address climate change.

One Slovenian company, ETF Mining Equipment d.o.o., produces all-electric, battery-powered haul trucks that change how repairs, maintenance and environmental conditions are met since they are based on an innovative Modular Technical Platform.

This company's trucks are fully powered by a heavy-duty rechargeable lithium-ion D5 battery. Additional driverless haul unit platforms can be hooked up in a train configuration via a heavy-duty steel connection that connects the vehicles physically as well as via a data cable so that the trailing haul units' throttles, brakes and steering are controlled by the single driver at the front of the train.

The battery system creates no emissions, has very low noise levels and requires far less maintenance than a conventional diesel-powered truck.

The really cool thing about these modular-designed vehicles is that they feature components that can be removed from the vehicle for maintenance and repairs without bringing the entire truck to the shop.

Wheels, batteries and the cabin can be switched out in 15 minutes, and entire axle groups can be changed in about 25 minutes. This means that the ETF haul trucks can stay in operations while the component repairs are completed in the work shop without the truck itself. This dramatically increases the vehicle's uptime.

In addition, the major modular parts are the same for every size truck the

company makes, so axles and wheels used on large trucks are the same components as smaller vehicles — there are just more of them.

All the trucks are the same width (24.93 ft.) and the same height (20.66 ft.), so replacement components fit the smaller 180-ton truck all the way up to the 774-ton truck. This enables mines to keep fewer parts on hand.

Not only is hardware changing the industry, but mining software is making the process smarter all the time too.

One innovative example of this is called X-ray Diffraction (XRD). This machine and its software quickly identify particulate materials, clays and other minerals.

The software provides detailed information about the crystalline structure of the material being mined and the amount of useful material the sample contains. High speed detectors enable data to be collected rapidly on a large number of samples. XRD analysis is performed on a pulverized sample and it is an easy and quick way to obtain mineralogical data for chemical analysis.

Mining processing technology also is being vastly improved and sped up with sensor-based sorting. Sensor-based sorting is designed to split commercially valuable minerals from ores as efficiently and cheaply as possible, which increases productivity.

Dual Energy X-ray transmission (XRT) can penetrate bricks down to 100 mm (4 inch) particle size, which enable it to detect metals even if they are not on the surface. Depending upon the configuration of the machine, a user can choose the desired minimum content of ore he wants and adjust it for that amount. This enables mines to react quickly to market conditions or changes in the input material.

Another sorting technology is X-ray fluorescence (XRF) which can be used to determine and sort individual chemical elements very precisely. Optical sorting and lasers are well suited to detect different colored ores such as copper oxide or crystalline structures in quartz.

Limestone chunks as large as 8 inches (200 mm) can be analyzed and sorted by white level. Only the purest white material passes this sorting process, while pieces with even the slightest deviation from the set values are rejected by precisely actuated compressed air valves.

Magnetic separators with double magnetic pole drums utilize a very thin belt to move the industrial minerals, such as limestone or kaolin, across them and subject the material to the highest possible magnetic field that enables it to be further upgraded.

Salts can also be upgraded or cleaned using this method, which separates out clay containing contaminants. Suspension magnets also are used to separate tramp iron (metal objects such as drill bits, anvils, hardware, etc.) on high-speed belts from coal and gold ores.



Autonomous drills can operate with precision and accurate depth tracking with high productivity.

Tire solutions

When it comes to tires, mines are terminally brutal places in which to operate while carrying incredible amounts of weight. One of the biggest limitations of current haul trucks are their tires.

Besides their high cost (one 59/80R63 OTR tire costs on average \$42,500), the downtime due to flat tires considerably decreases productivity of current trucks, which, as you already know, cost in the millions of dollars. Changing a tire almost 14 feet tall and weighing 5 tons (10,000 lbs.) often requires more than eight hours of work. There are several companies that are addressing this problem.

ETF Equipment provides its Central Tyre Inflation System that actively monitors and adjusts the height of each wheel to counteract bumps in the road. If a tire suddenly deflates, the system automatically alerts the driver and raises the wheel to allow the driver to continue.

Bridgestone Corp. offers the Pressure Stat tire-pressure-monitoring system (TPMS) for OTR tires. This system provides instant access to tire pressure and temperature data.

It features external valve-stem sensors, onboard alerts for drivers, Bluetooth connectivity that provides real-time pressure updates to mobile devices, instant inspection reports on desktop and mobile devices for the entire fleet and forecasting and analysis when combined with Bridgestone's TreadStat tire and management software.

Miners also can ensure the weight of their vehicles is evenly distributed with this system, which prevents uneven tire wear.

Goodyear's Proactive Solutions TPMS Heavy Duty features advanced telematics and patented predictive analytics technology. It is able to monitor tire pressure and temperature to notify operators of potential issues before they become serious.

TPMS sensors are mounted inside the tires and transmit pressure and temperature data via onboard telematics to a Goodyear server. The data are analyzed there, and alerts are sent to the mine fleet manager via e-mail or by an app using a graphic showing which tire is affected and how serious the problem is.

This data also are used to predict tire life and plan maintenance. The onboard router also has a built-in GPS function that can pinpoint the exact location of the machine on a site.

Group Michelin was the first company to introduce TPMS to the mining industry with its Michelin Earthmover Management System (MEMS) technology about 10 years ago. MEMS uses sensors inside each tire along with an onboard receiver.

Originally the vehicle communicated directly to the mine operations control center transmitting pressure and temperature data every 10 minutes. Today MEMS Evolution 4 offers a choice of two sensor models: conventional sensors and sensors for water-ballasted tires with additives that are isolated in a capsule filled with an inert liquid.

With the advancement of communication technology, Evolution 4 uses a new transceiver and antenna, which includes a GPS that enables it to provide mapping and vehicle tracking, geofencing and accelerometers continuously to the mine control center.

It has a user-friendly software platform, a hand-held reader that can take pressure and temperature measurements directly from the tire sensors and an app that can access tire and vehicle data on standard mobile devices.

SST Wireless partnered with Kal Tire Mining Group to produce an OTR system known as True Tire Technology (TTT). This system's sensors are installed inside the tire and have a unique shape that improve durability and resistance to tire additives such as Tire Life.

The shape of the sensor also increases signal strength. These sensors continuously monitor tire pressure and temperature and relay it via radio signal to the vehicle's electronic control unit (ECU). When an alert is generated, a warning light on the instrument panel alerts the driver about the problem as well as the control center.

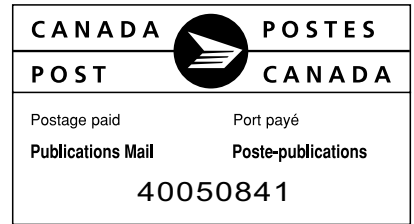
All of these systems enable mine operators to increase safety, life of their tires, and productivity as well as reduce costs.

As you can see, technology is revolutionizing every stage of the mining process in addition to tire operation and maintenance. All of these innovations will improve safety, reduce costs, build capacity and enable mining companies to remain viable and globally competitive.

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