



In recognition of their outstanding
Leadership & Contributions
to the Tire & Service Industry in New England

2016 Hall of Fame Inductees April 9, 2016

2016 Hall of Fame Inductee - Bruce Jergensen



Bruce Jergensen was born in 1947 in Hanover, NH., where his father was a post WW II student at Dartmouth College and his mother was a dietician at Mary Hitchcock Hospital. The

following year the family moved to Springfield, MA. and except for a short period of time at Babson Institute of Business Administration, followed by overseas duty in the US Navy Reserve, Bruce has resided in Springfield ever since.

In 1969, upon being released from active duty, Bruce married his high school sweetheart Nancy and returned to school at Western New England College while working full time for Friendly Ice Cream Corporation as a clerk, cook and eventually an assistant manager. This career path led to Bruce becoming a store manager.

The first of Bruce and Nancy's sons was born in 1975 and motivated Bruce to get out of the restaurant business. Selling was what was in his future and it started with a job selling typesetting while managing an art and office supply store for the owners of the typesetting company, Trade Composition. These experiences led to Bruce opening his own business, Office Supply Associates, and led to a very fortunate long term liaison with Bruce's brother, Lee.

After illness took Nancy away, now having two young boys, Bruce struggled to deal with business and raising the boys. Additionally, the future of the "mom-and-pop" office supply business was not looking rosy with the growth of Staples, Office Max and other big box stores.

In 1984 I had the great fortune to meet Helen Perez who, after considerable effort on my part, became my second wife and the mother to my two young boys.

It wasn't long after the marriage that a great friend, the late Mike Willency, introduced me to Frank Bernstein, Linda Bernstein and Ad Coppens, the owners of Import Tire Company. During my early period in this industry, Helen and I added two more boys to the family.

Anne Evans, Frank, Ad and Linda all assisted me in getting adjusted to this different line of work - they gave me a Tire Guide and said "go sell tires"! Fortunately it was not long before I was in the office answering phones and learning as I went. I have had some great teachers and have met the hardest working, most sincere people that you could ever meet and work with. In 1986 I dragged Lee into the company and we have been working together ever since (poor Lee!).

It has been 31 years since I was thrust into this industry and there have been many changes in the industry, but the people are still the best. Import Tire, thanks to Frank Bernstein's foresight, has now evolved into the Nokian Tyres Distribution Center in Connecticut, servicing Southern New England and some of Southern New York State. Our team always strived to give the best service possible and, with the great people that I have worked with, it has been a pleasure. I am not sure why I am being inducted into this esteemed NETSA Hall of Fame, but I am very grateful for the honor. As they always say in sports, it is the team that I am representing. Thank you all: the great customers that I have had the pleasure of servicing over the years, the NETSA Board that elected me as their President from 1994 - 1996, Frank and Linda Bernstein as well as Ad Coppens, for giving me the ability to grow in this industry and, a very special thank you to all of my fellow team members at Nokian Tyres.

Lastly, thank you to Helen, my wife of 32 years, and my children for putting up with my hours and, heck, just for putting up with me. We now have a full house again with my son Rob and three of my six grandchildren living with us. Helen is a marvel dealing with the children but now you know why I am still working! Thank you and bless you all.

2016 Hall of Fame Inductee - Rene A. Therrien



How I got into the tire business; Central Tire Company began in 1939 by my father Arthur Therrien.

During that period, World War II broke out and new tires were hard

to get. Central Tire started out as a retreader and flourished during the war. Due to the demand for retread tires, my father took in a partner, his brother Ernest and also solicited the help of his father, Joseph. After the war, retread rubber was getting expensive. A friend of my father's asked if he would be interested in looking at a rubber factory that was for sale in Stamford, Connecticut along with Louis Voit (Pete & Voit), Gabe Baradino (United Tire) and Joe Abel (Abel Tire). All four men were members of the N. E. Tire Dealers Association. The company was called Atlas Rubber Mill. They all agreed to buy it with a down payment of \$100 each. By the time they closed on the purchase of Atlas Rubber, there were 21 investors who were all retreaders. Shortly after, it was decided to have tires made with the name "Atlas" until Exxon told them they could no longer use the name for their tires. At that time, Cooper Tire was making tires for the group. Cooper had been making tires for Sears under the name "Hercules Allstate". Sears was no longer using the name. Cooper owned the name "Hercules" and allowed Atlas Rubber Company to change their name to Hercules Tire & Rubber Company.

As a teenager I worked for Central Tire. After college, I joined the company full time until in August of 1965 when I got the dreaded letter that I

was being drafted. I joined the U.S. Navy and saw the world. While in the Navy I proposed to my wife Jeanne. We were married one month after I left the Navy. We have two sons and they are now running Central Tire. My dad had retired in 1973 and his brother retired in 1974. I was left running the business with my cousin Bob who was on the Board of the N.E. Tire Dealers. My dad was also a past president of NETSA in 1966-67, and I was a NETSA Board Member from 2004-2011 as well as being a past President of the Maine Tire Dealers. I purchased my cousin's share of the business in 1994.

After joining the company full time, one of my dreams was to build a new store. I achieved my dream and broke ground in 1975, and moved in 1976. My next dream was to build a new retread plant and that was accomplished in 2007. As like myself, my sons came into the business as teenagers, doing every dirty job that there was. I even shoveled rubber dust every Saturday morning as a teenager. Now that my sons have taken over, they are making changes as I did from the way my father ran the business. Changes are good and worth making. It helps to make a business grow and prosper. I am very proud of my sons.

Doug is married and they have 3 children along with a grandchild. Jeff is married and they have 4 children. My wife worked for the company over 30 years. After I retired in February of 2014, we purchased a house in Naples, Florida and live there 6 months and live in Maine for 6 months. Life has been good!

2016 Hall of Fame Inductee - Jeremiah Massaro Sr.



Jeremiah “Jerry” Massaro Sr. was born in Hartford, CT on April 24, 1919, the same year his father, Anthony, founded and started Reliable Auto Tire. After graduating

from Bulkeley High School and attending Trinity College, he served as a 1st Lt in the 624th Ordinance Base Automotive Battalion, stationed in England during WW II.

Once he returned from service, he met and married the love of his life, Eleanor, and took over the business in 1945. After working out of a storefront, Jerry built a State of the Art garage on Hudson Street. When redevelopment was completed, Reliable Auto Tire moved to Maple Avenue, which is our present location.

Jerry was the consummate businessman. He invited customers into his office to discuss current events while their cars were being serviced. He developed very close personal and business ties with the salespeople and officers of Michelin, BF Goodrich, and Armstrong. He was the President of NETSA in 1959-1960, and served on the boards of the Connecticut Tire Dealers and National Tire Dealers Associations.

Jerry and Eleanor traveled the world on trips sponsored by major tire companies and attended every NETSA Trade Show & Convention throughout New England.

Jerry felt that an Independent Tire Dealer’s strongest asset is personal service. He gave that personal service every day of his life to customers, family, and employees. In our 97th year, we still maintain the phrase he coined, “Reliable since 1919.”

My father would be deeply honored to be recognized by his peers, and my family thanks you.

NETSA 2015/2016 Officers

President: **Mark Rochefort** - Vermont Tire, Montpelier, VT
Vice President: **Rich Tuttle**, Nokian Tyres, Colchester, VT
Treasurer: **Matt Lewis**, Max Finkelstein, Inc., Windsor, CT
Secretary: **Blaise Pascale**, City Tire, Co., Springfield, MA
Executive Director: **Dick Cole**, NETSA, Yarmouth, ME

New England Tire & Service Association’s purpose shall be to benefit the public by supporting independently owned tire dealerships and automotive service centers.

We’ve been a vibrant Association for over 60 years, starting in 1952. We have over 500 members of independently owned businesses.

We provide these tire businesses with information, training, tire industry-related events and other benefits.

Congratulations!

*to this year’s inductees for your years of dedicated service & commitment
to our industry from your Friends at*

SULLIVAN TIRE