



Alabama Tire Dealers Association

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SPARE TIRE

MAY 2007

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News Update**

Alabama Tire Dealers Association
6096 County Road 434
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Road-Mart, Inc.

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American Tire Distributors

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Cheryl Lentz
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Dear Members,

The Limestone Springs Golf Tournament was a huge success. Thanks to Barry McGirt for coordinating the event, and a very special thanks to AutoZone for providing door prizes and gift certificates. Don't forget our fall tournament October 18, 2007, at Dothan National Golf Club.



Register now for our 2007 annual convention. We are expecting a great turnout and lots of fun this year. The deadline for registration is June 1st. Call the Sheraton Read House to make your room reservations at 866-837-4193. Mention the ATDA for the special room rates.

Also, the membership will be voting on proposed By-Laws changes at this year's convention. The voting will take place on Saturday morning at the business meeting. Be sure and attend and make your voice heard.

For all of our supplier members don't forget we have a trade show event, *March Mania*, coming up in March 2008. Contact Frank Harcrow to reserve your booth space.

Please be sure to read the article concerning the Wal-Mart lawsuit in this edition of the newsletter. All tire dealers should be aware of the requirements to register tires they sell. If you have any questions about what your responsibilities are as a tire dealer, contact the ATDA office and someone will be glad to assist you.

Thank you for letting me serve as your President for the past two years. The time has flown by and I've really enjoyed it. The Board and Executive Committee have been great to work with and I want to thank each of them. I know our Association is going to continue to grow and be a valuable part of our industry.

As always, if your Association can be of any help, please let us know. See you in Chattanooga.

Eddie Hardwick
President

2007 Annual ATDA Convention

Chattanooga, Tennessee – June 22-24, 2007
Sheraton Read House Hotel



Make your hotel reservations today!
Deadline is June 1, 2007

Convention Agenda,
Convention Registration forms
and Golf Registration forms are
available on-line at
www.alatiredealers.com

Hotel Reservations: 866-837-4193

www.readhousehotel.com

Room Rates:

King Traditional Non-Smoking \$119
Double Queen Non-Smoking \$119
King Suite Non-Smoking \$139

**Friday Golf Tournament
Moccasin Bend Golf Club
Shotgun start 12:00 p.m.**



Important Notice:

The general membership will be voting on a proposed change to the Association's By-Laws at the Business Meeting during the 2007 Convention. To review the proposed changes, visit the ATDA website at www.alatiredealers.com and follow the links to the **“Proposed By-Laws Changes.”**

Scholarship Foundation Fundraiser

*Take
Your
Choice*



350 ATV



Electric Golf Cart



Diamond Ring

Your ATDA Board of Directors is selling tickets to benefit the ATDA Scholarship Foundation. The cost of the tickets are \$100 each and there are only 140 available. Contact a Board member today for your opportunity to win your choice of one of these great prizes, to be given away June 22, 2007, at the Annual Convention in Chattanooga, Tennessee. Ticket purchases are a tax-deductible donation.

Every year, the ATDA Scholarship Foundation helps deserving ATDA college and/or college-bound students obtain a higher education. This year, the Scholarship Foundation will be giving away 3 - \$1500 scholarships. Visit the ATDA website, www.alatiredealers.com for more details. An updated scholarship application will be available January 1, 2007.

Pictures do not depict actual prizes.

How Much is a Good Name Worth?

Ten years ago, we occasionally heard about fraud committed through impersonation, but we didn't worry about it affecting us. Today however, our names, addresses, birthdates and Social Security numbers are often worth more to thieves than merchandise, and they are easier to steal.

Old fashioned methods – stealing purses or wallets and breaking into homes or businesses – are common practices for identity thieves. More recently, theft of data from corporations, small businesses and even government agencies has increased the risk for more people and business. Other methods and preventive measures businesses need to be aware of include:

- “Dumpster diving” (stealing mail and recycled paper documents from the trash) – Make sure all protected information is properly shredded and disks and hard drives are broken in pieces or “wiped” electronically. If you hire an outside business to destroy these records, do a thorough background check of the company first.
- “Skimming” (dishonest employees use small scanning devices to secretly scan debit/credit cards at checkouts) – Investigate prospective employees before hiring. Monitor sales activity and question suspicious behavior by employees such as swiping customers’ cards twice. Also watch for unfamiliar devices near a register. Review your credit sales reports and check for multiple charge-backs.
- Online fraud – Beware when doing business online, both as a buyer and a seller, especially in foreign markets. The schemes are too numerous to list and range from spreading e-mail viruses that capture information to setting up fraudulent Web sites that mimic legitimate sites. Protect your own and your customers’ information. Don’t open or reply to unsolicited e-mail or click on Web site addresses you don’t know. They in addresses to known sites and bookmark them instead of clicking on links. Always look for the closed padlock icon on a Web page before entering information. Change passwords frequently on sites that store financial or personal information.

Learn as much as you can about this issue. The Federal Trade Commission’s web site (www.ftc.gov) and the Department of Justice site (www.doj.gov) offer a wealth of information on identity theft.

A good name is worth everything . . . keep yours safe.

Distracted Driving – At What Cost?

Most of us “multi-task” every day while driving, both on and off the job. In fact, according to one survey of drivers, 94 percent of respondents said they regularly do something that distracts them while driving. Distracted driving has become a major public safety issue. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), driver distraction is a factor in up to 50 percent of all vehicle crashes, accounting for between 4,000-8,000 vehicle accidents each day. NHTSA further estimates that between 20-30 percent of fatal auto accidents are caused by driver distraction.

As a business owner, you pay a heavy price when employees are involved in traffic accidents. Injuries related to motor vehicle crashes on and off the job cost employers nearly \$60 billion annually between 1998-2000. The hidden costs of lost time, retraining or rehiring, decreased employee morale, loss of a vehicle and possible litigation can have a devastating affect on a business.

The greater cost, however, comes from the suffering of the injured and the impact of a loved one’s death on families, co-workers and society in general. Oftentimes, the grief is magnified by anger when a driver’s inattention or disregard for safety causes the accident. And, the distracted drivers who cause these accidents bear a lifetime burden, knowing that their actions caused a loss of life.

To help reduce the number of accidents caused by distracted driving, Federated’s initiative is aimed at increasing awareness of driver distractions. Federated’s marketing representatives have introduced a new program to their clients that emphasizes the many ways business owners and their drivers can avoid the pitfalls of distracted. The program includes a packet of materials and a video, *Distracted Driving—At What cost?*, which is sure to make an impression. We encourage you to share it with your employees and your family.

These articles are an excerpt from The SHIELDsm a periodic newsletter published by Federated Insurance Companies with the mission to inform readers on important risk management issues. ©Copyright 2005, Federated Mutual Insurance Company. All rights reserved.

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"ASA's software products manage our growing business. It simplifies our life and saves us time!"

Shane & Craig Wilks,
Wilks Tire and
Battery Service, Inc.
2005 Alabama Retailer of the Year
Silver Award

TreadX



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Regional Golf Tournament Results

March 27, 2007

Limestone Springs Golf Club

Winners:

1st Place Team: MayPops - John Harvilla, Doug Schram, Ken Miller, Tim Ryberg

2nd Place Team: Top Line Tires - Steve Breland, Scott Weaver, Mike Cassell, Bob Labbe

3rd Place Team: Carroll Tire - Cecil Bowden, Jason Shirley, Pat Shirley, Steve Anderson

Closest to the Pin: Steve Anderson

Longest Drive: Tim Ryberg



A special thank-you to AutoZone for providing door prizes and gift certificates!

Scrap Tire Update

Wonder where the \$1 Environmental Fee collected on each tire sold in Alabama is being spent? The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) has released the following numbers:

- At the Attalla site (thru February) 20,900 TONS or the equivalent of 2,093,000 tires have been cleaned up.
- Elsewhere, state-wide, 675,000 tires have been cleaned up at 48 sites by the landowners.
- There have been over 1,500 inspections of the state's 2,026 registered Class 1 and Class 2 Receivers.
- 96% of the tires are being used for fuel or substitute raw materials.

Wal-Mart to pay \$4M in tire suit

**By Cosby Woodruff
Montgomery Advertiser
April 24, 2007**

Montgomery – Wal-Mart will pay a \$4 million judgment to Carolyn Thorne in a lawsuit stemming from a tire failure three years ago that caused a wreck and left the local woman paralyzed from her injuries.

A Montgomery County jury awarded Thorne the damages late Thursday.

Thorne was paralyzed in a one-vehicle accident on April 24, 2004, when the tread on the left rear tire of her Ford Expedition separated, causing the SUV to flip into the median on I-85.

The jury awarded Thorne \$2 million in compensatory damages and \$2 million in punitive damages after Wal-Mart failed to settle the case, according to Greg Allen, who helped represent Thorne for the Beasley Allen law firm.

Wal-Mart will not appeal the verdict but will pay the judgment, according to spokesman John Simley.

"We disagree with the decision, but we will respect it," he said.

Thorne settled with tire manufacturer Continental Tire, Sonic Automotive/Friendly Ford and with Ford Motor Co. prior to trial. Allen said those settlements are confidential, but the jury heard the amounts prior to reaching its verdict.

Allen said he did not request any particular amount in the lawsuit, but he told jurors that a \$20 million verdict would not be unreasonable in this case. The jury decided on a much smaller verdict, but Allen said it sent a message to Wal-Mart.

Wal-Mart's counsel tried to argue that the company was not responsible for Thorne's tire failure since it did not sell or install the tires. Thorne argued that since she regularly had her SUV serviced at Wal-Mart, which included tire checks, that the retailer had some responsibility in the case.

Thorne had taken her Expedition to Wal-Mart for service just days before her accident. According to Allen, Wal-Mart's service included tread and pressure checks and rotating her tires.

The tread check, Allen said, should have revealed a bulge where the tire's tread was separating.

"It is hoped that this jury award will encourage Wal-Mart to change its policy of not notifying their customers of recalled tires," Allen said through a media release issued Friday morning. "It is also hoped that Wal-Mart will re-evaluate its policy on tire inspections. Wal-Mart has misled their customers into thinking that they were receiving tire safety service."

Simley said Wal-Mart is going to examine its tire practices, but he questioned how much responsibility the company had for Thorne's accident.

"We did not sell the tire," he said. "We don't even carry that tire."

As for changes in business practices, Simley said Wal-Mart executives are still examining what steps the company will take as a result of the verdict. Possible changes are more detailed tire inspections, or telling customers that their tires have not been inspected.

Thorne had the tires of her SUV replaced following an earlier tread separation, but the original spare remained on the vehicle. It was that tire that eventually failed, causing the accident, Allen said.

Allen said Wal-Mart serviced Thorne's Ford nine times prior to the accident. Wal-Mart was aware of the tire recall during those service visits, he said, but did not warn Thorne of the danger.

Simley refused to speculate on whether the verdict would make the company more likely to settle in the future.

"It is hard to say because every case is unique," he said.

Tire Registration – It's the Law!

Just a friendly reminder!

- The National Highway and Motor Vehicle Safety Act of 1966 (15 U.S.C.1381) requires that any tire dealer who sells replacement tires directly to the consumer must provide the consumer with a tire registration form at the time of the sale. Providing the consumer with a registration form is not voluntary!
- If you complete and mail the registration form(s) for the consumer, then you must fill out the form's shaded areas with the dealer's name, address, quantity sold, and the complete DOT tire identification code of the tire(s) sold. You must also complete the customer's name and address section, apply postage, and mail.
- If you do not complete and mail the registration form for the customer, then you **must** supply the customer with a registration form that includes your dealer name and address, the tire brand, the number of tires sold and the complete DOT tire identification code of each tire(s) sold. Then the consumer enters his or her name and address on the form, applies postage, and mails it.
- **Remember, the dealer that sells directly to the consumer is required to provide a tire registration form to the consumer at the time of sale.**



Penalty up to \$1,100 for each offense, up to a maximum of \$880,000.

The Mayonnaise Jar and 2 Cups of Coffee

When things in your loves seem almost too much to handle, when 24 hours in a day are not enough, remember the mayonnaise jar and the 2 cups of coffee.

A professor stood before his philosophy class and had some items in front of him. When the class began, he wordlessly picked up a very large and empty mayonnaise jar and proceeded to fill it with golf balls. He then asked the students if the jar was full. They agreed that it was.

The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar.

He shook the jar lightly. The pebbles rolled into the open areas between the golf balls. He then asked the students again if the jar was full. They agreed it was.

The professor next picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He asked once more if the jar was full. The students responded with an unanimous "yes."

The professor then produced two cups of coffee from under the table and poured the entire contents into the jar effectively filling the empty space between the sand. The students laughed.

"Now," said the professor as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The golf balls are the important things – God, your family, your children, your health, your friends and your favorite passions – and if everything else was lost and only they remained, your life would still be full. The pebbles are the other things that matter like your job, your house and your car."

The sand is everything else – the small stuff. "If you put the sand into the jar first," he continued, "there is no room for the pebbles or the golf balls. The same goes for life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff you will never have room for the things that are important to you."

"Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your children. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your spouse out to dinner. Play another 18. There will always be time to clean the house and fix the disposal. Take care of the golf balls first – the things that really matter. Set your priorities. The rest is just sand."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the coffee represented. The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of cups of coffee with a friend."



Who will be the 15th annual Tire Dealer of the Year?

**Modern Tire Dealer magazine is accepting nomination for their
Tire Dealer of the Year award.**

They have worked hard all year, building business and community success. It's Tire Dealer of the Year nomination time and it's time their efforts were recognized.

Nominate a deserving dealer today. They'll definitely thank you for it! The Tire Dealer of the Year award has been the most prestigious award a dealer can win for the past 15 years. The winning dealer will receive a \$1,000 donation to their favorite charity, directly from MTD, plus an additional 10% of all congratulatory ad revenue.

For more information contact Bob Ulrich at bob.ulrich@bobit.com.

Deadline for entries is June 1, 2007.

Service Recovery - The Art of Damage Control

By Nancy Friedman, the Telephone Doctor

We all know about customer service. Those of us who are in this industry normally are the ones who genuinely want to help the customer. It's sort of a "HIGH" for us when things go right. But what happens when it all goes wrong. Downhill? Beyond the normal give good customer service? How do you recover?

Service recovery is simply the art of damage control. And every industry has damage control. Think about Hollywood. Poor Tom Cruise. He said something bad about Brittany Spears and everyone was out to get him. The PR team went into damage control big time.

And what about when things happen in government? Big time damage control shifts into gear.

And so it must when customer service goes wrong. Think 'damage control.' What can we do over and above in order to gain this customer back? To have them swearing by us and not at us?

Empowerment. That's the number one step of service recovery. Each and every employee needs some form of empowerment. They need to know how far they can go to help the customer. Remember our Telephone Doctor rule: It should never take 2 people to give good customer service.

Anytime you escalate a call to a supervisor you are losing ground. The more employees a customer speaks with to get a problem resolved is a step behind the 8 ball.

Humor: This will only work when you have a rational customer. And normally when it gets to service recovery, the rationale is lost. However, what we do know is most customers respond in kind to gentle humor.

One of the worse things you can say to a customer is, "I know how you feel." There is simply no way in this world anyone can know how someone else feels. That particular statement will get you in a lot of hot water. Lose it fast. (And sometimes they even say, "I know EXACTLY how you feel." That's so bad, I won't even get into it.) You can say, "I can only imagine how you feel." But best you don't ever walk in the customer's shoes. It won't be a good fit, I promise you.

Service recovery is when you've helped the customer and you can really tell that they're satisfied; that they're back in the groove with your company again. That's true service recovery. When they go from screaming to loving you. And it can be done.

You need a whole lot of empathy or sympathy. You need to listen. You need to care. These are the tools for service recovery. You need to go that 'one step beyond.' You need to do something they're totally not expecting. Something that bowls them over. Each industry has their own bowl over. And sometimes it means taking a loss. But if you're really looking to SAVE that customer, you're willing to take that loss. Because in the long run, they'll be so happy and so smitten with your company, they'll be singing your praises to all their friends.

Service recovery is SPECIAL. You see, good customer service is expected. That's nothing new or special. You're supposed to give good customer service. What's the big deal? But often times it all hits the fan and that one customer is just really fired up. Mad, bad, screaming, totally out of it. That's when your service recovery needs to kick into gear.

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205-647-6736

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Scott Tarver
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Ext. 470955#

**Bridgestone/Firestone –
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800-681-6245
Ext. 470387#

**C.W. Owens Enterprises –
Scrap Tire Management**
Wayne & Phyllis Owens
800-869-1372

CARQUEST Distribution Center
Jerry Dickey
334-280-5843

Carroll Tire
Cecil Bowden
205-655-2182

Carroll Tire
Don Pylant
800-446-0589

Craft Tire, Inc.
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724-438-4527

David Tire
John David
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Federated Insurance
Matthew D. Graves
404-497-8840

Harris Tire & Rubber Company
Mickey Taylor
334-566-2691

Hornsby Tire Distributors
Roger Hornsby
334-762-2333

Jones Tire & Supply
Bill Jones
334-874-2265

L.A. Equipment Service
Jack Dale
800-385-6644

Mac's Tire Recyclers, Inc.
Kitty Black
Harry McBride
662-869-1860

McGriff Industries
Barry McGriff
Bert McGriff
256-739-0780

McGriff Treading Company
Randy Drake
256-739-7080

Metro Recycler
Phillip Tidwell
205-841-1930

Minor Tire & Wheel
Roger & Deanie Minor
256-353-4957

Myers Tire Supply
Barry Morgan
800-328-5110

Parrish Tire
Gary Waters
800-877-2431

Robison Tire
Joe Robison
800-824-3225

Robison Tire
Mike Brown
334-834-6138

S & S Tire
Jeff Hodgens
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Snag Equipment Brokers, Inc.
Doug Gans
205-664-1869

Tenneco Automotive
Ed McArthur
205-589-2781

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Yokohama Tire Corp. – Medium Truck Division
Leslie Wright, Jr.
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**Yokohama Tire Corp. – Passenger & Light
Truck Division**
Doug Robinson
513-218-8543

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