



CHAIRMAN'S CORNER



It's All About Attitude

In this my first message to HADA members, I must tell you up front how very proud and honored I am to represent you as your 2010 Chairman. There is simply no harder working, more dedicated group of dealers in the country than those in Houston. And we are supported by a metro association

that is second to none with a long and distinguished history of accomplishments and civic programs.

This business is all about attitude, and the most impressive thing I have seen in a long time is the positive attitude and growing optimism I now see – not only in the car business but other businesses as well. It seems like when '09 rolled over, everybody had a giant weight lifted off their shoulders.

With the exception of Toyota, which continues to suffer a firestorm of bad publicity, we have seen an up tick in business as all the numbers are showing. NADA recently forecast national sales of 11.9 million sales for 2010. That is an increase of 14 percent over the dismal 10.4 million sales last year. As I told the Houston Chronicle recently, I am optimistic that Houston, with its diverse economy and historically quick recovery from economic downturns, will see a similar increase in auto sales due to loads of pent-up demand that has been building for the past couple of years.

And if our recent Houston Auto Show is any indicator, that optimism is well founded. Despite only a 5-day run, down from 9 days in 2009, the auto show exceeded expectations and recorded considerably larger day-over-day attendance compared to last year. That should help put shoppers back in our showrooms.

We can all draw inspiration from my predecessor, Mac DeLaup, whose undying optimism and positive attitude helped see us through an extremely difficult year and motivate us to operate smarter and more efficiently. After the cost cutting and adjustments we were all forced to make in '09, I firmly believe that Houston's resilient dealers are now poised to move forward and reap the rewards in a year of recovery.

And please know that your association will be behind you 100 percent through a variety of programs, including media campaigns stressing why now is a great time to buy a car. HADA has an unmatched record of representing, defending and promoting the interest of *all* dealers. And although we are a very competitive business by nature, the strength of your association comes from the input and active participation of our members and our ability to pull together in good times and bad.

I believe the time has come to “think spring” and to put this winter of discontent behind us. Let a little sun shine again on the greatest business there is.

Thank you again for putting your faith in me as your Chairman. I pledge to do the best job I can and keep building our “can do attitude.”

Cary Wilson

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DEALER SPOTLIGHT

Christopher Tine of Reliance Ford



I was born in El Paso, Texas while my dad was stationed at Fort Bliss. My family returned to upstate New York after his stay in the Army. We traveled around the country to California, Wyoming, and back to New York while my dad worked with General Electric and NASA. He worked on the Mercury mission with John Glenn at Vandenburg AFB in California.

Three years later, he was transferred to the Mississippi Gulf Coast to work on the Saturn V Rocket project at Mississippi test facility in Slidell, Louisiana. I attended high school at Long Beach High in Long Beach, Mississippi. I played basketball and in my senior year, made "All Conference", "All District", "All State", and was nominated for "All American." I went to the University of Mississippi on a basketball scholarship, but left after 2 years to pursue a retail management career with a drug store chain from New Orleans.

After 4 ½ years, I pursued a Real Estate career until the market got very tough. In 1979, I went to work as a collision estimator in a production paint shop owned by Fact-O-Bake. After moving up to a management position for two years, I was invited by a friend of mine at a Chevrolet store to sell cars. I moved to Texas and moved up from sales to management with the Bill Munday organization in 1986. In 1989, I moved to Houston to be General Sales Manager of Joe Camp Ford which is the store that my partners and I now own. After 2 ½ years at Joe Camp, I left to go to the David McDavid organization. I spent a little time with the Gillman Group, but eventually ended up with the Sonic Automotive Group at Lone Star Ford. I was with them when they went public and watched the company grow to over 140 stores. One of the stores that Sonic bought was Joe Camp Ford. I helped with the due diligence process in the buy sell and also when they sold it to Doug Adams group 5 years later.

I held several positions from Used Car Director to General Manager. I was a graduate of the charter group of Sonic Automotive Dealer Academy and ended up in the corporate office as Pre-owned purchasing director for 16 stores in the Houston Region. After 7 years with Sonic, I left to pursue my own business. I was contacted by Mike Patton with AutoExecSearch to tell me about a partnership opportunity and to meet Terry and Brian Rush. Terry Rush is a third generation Dealer-Operator of Spikes Ford in Mission, Texas. This store has been operating since 1941, and is very successful. Having an opportunity to purchase a Ford

store in Houston, Terry and Brian both contacted me and the store turned out to be the same store that I had come to know so well. Adams Ford was on the verge of going out of business and we came in and started operating it on December 1, 2005. We finished the buy sell in March of 2006. I have now been operating as Managing Partner for over 4 years and we have been profitable since day one. Terry Rush is a dealer of record and I am dearly grateful to her and Brian for this great opportunity.

I have a beautiful wife, Larisa. My son Christopher is married and has recently blessed me with a grandson. We are looking forward to a GREAT YEAR!!!

BEST PRACTICES

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION IS #1 IN ANY BUSINESS

By Christopher Tine

Customer Satisfaction is #1 in any business. We at Reliance Ford are very concerned about customer retention. We go above and beyond to make sure that each and every one of our customers is satisfied. I compose a letter about the history of our organization and I am concerned about each customer being completely satisfied. It also goes on to say that I hope their experience here at Reliance Ford was above their expectations.

When a customer pays for anything in our fixed operations and upon delivery of every vehicle, they are handed one of these letters. It tells the customer that if there is anything that they were not satisfied with in their experience at Reliance Ford, they can contact me directly. I provide them with my e-mail address, my direct line, and my cell phone number. I get a lot of positive feedback, along with the occasional dissatisfied customer. This process is obviously one of the things that works here at our dealership.

We are currently #1 out of the top twelve Ford Motor Company "President's Award" recipients for 2009 in our group. The official announcements will be made in the first week of March.



ASSOCIATE SPOTLIGHT

FISHER & PHILLIPS LLP
ATTORNEYS AT LAW
Solutions at Work®

The labor and employment law attorneys at Fisher & Phillips LLP have represented auto dealers – large and small – for over a half century. The firm currently represents thousands of dealerships from the largest consolidators, to many of the Top 100 privately held dealership groups, to single point dealerships throughout Texas and all across the country.

Because of its long and close association with the retail automobile industry, Fisher & Phillips is uniquely positioned to assist dealers in solving their employee problems, including the following areas:

- Developing and implementing effective employment policies and procedures including hiring, counseling and termination.
- Defending dealers in lawsuits and discrimination charges filed by employees and former employees.
- Training managers concerning their role in the workplace in order to help them make proper employment decisions and handle employee problems in a professional manner.
- Developing effective employee handbooks and other employment-related documents.
- Assisting dealers in conducting proper investigations of harassment complaints.
- Conducting compliance audits of the dealership's payroll, pay plans and pay practices to ensure the dealership's compliance with federal and state wage laws.
- Developing effective pay plans which make all of the disclosures necessary to avoid expensive lawsuits.
- Assisting dealers to communicate effectively with employees in the event of a union organizing campaign.
- Providing dealers and their managers with timely advice concerning day-to-day employment law matters through its unique Retainer Program.

Contact Houston Regional Managing partner Steve Roppolo at 713-292-5601 or sroppolo@laborlawyers.com.

HADA WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

Parkway Family Kia
22555 Highway 59 N.
Kingwood, TX 77339
281.242.8211
www.parkwayfamilykia.com
Jean Durdin
Granger Durdin

Parkway Family Mazda
22565 Highway 59 N.
Kingwood, TX 77339
281.242.8211
www.parkwayfamilymazda.com
Jean Durdin
Granger Durdin

Please note:

If your contact information changes or you have updates on mailing addresses or emails, please send them to us at info@houstoncardealers.com

OPEN RECORDS REQUEST

Re: Documentary Fee Filing

If your dealership submitted a Documentary Fee Request Form to the Office of Consumer Credit Commissioner (OCCC) regarding increasing the dealership's documentary fee, an open records request has been made by Steve Wolfert as to "the maximum document fee submitted by stated dealer to OCCC for review." The OCCC is requesting the Attorney General's office for an Open Records Decision as to whether the requested information is confidential and excepted from disclosure under the Texas Public Information Act (TPIA).

I will be responding for the TADA members to the Attorney General's office requesting that the documentary fee submissions remain confidential and not subject to Mr. Wolfert's request. The dealership may also submit arguments to the Attorney General's office and must do so no later than 10 business days after you received the notice from the OCCC.

If you have any information that you would like to discuss with me regarding your filing, please do not hesitate to call me. If you have any information that you think would be useful to impart to the Attorney General's office regarding the proprietary nature of your documentary fee submission, please let me know at your earliest convenience.

*Source: Karen Phillips, TADA Legal Counsel,
Memorandum 2.17.10*

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH 1, 2010

Texas Disclosure of Equity Form Becomes Effective

MARCH 10, 2010

TADA Chairman's Workshop
Houston Inter-Continental Hotel
2 pm

APRIL 9, 2010

HADA Scholarship Application Deadline

MAY 3, 2010

HADA Annual Golf Tournament
Sweetwater Country Club

JUNE 1, 2010

Red Flags Rule Enforcement Federal
Trade Commission

CONTACT US

*Email us your Best Practice Ideas or Comments to
info@houstoncardealers.com*

*If you would like to nominate a dealer for HADA Today's
dealer spotlight, please email your suggestion to
info@houstoncardealers.com*



HADA Today

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