



# Northwest TIRE TALK

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FOR TIRE, WHEEL & AUTOMOTIVE SPECIALTY PROFESSIONALS  
PUBLISHED BI-MONTHLY BY NORTHWEST TIRE DEALERS ASSOCIATION FOR IT'S MEMBERS

**DICK NORDNESS - EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR - NORTHWEST TIRE DEALERS ASSOCIATION**

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## 2017 TOP SHOP AWARD



Alyeska Tire was honored by Tire Review as the 2017 Top Shop. Owners Jerry and Carla Wortham and their General Manager, their son Craig, received the award during the TIA Awards Night at the Global Tire Expo in Las Vegas on October 30th.

Based in Akaska with 8 locations (including six retail locations, one truck tire center and one distribution center), Alyeska Tire is known for its small-town approach to customer service. Founded in 1978, the business is exceptional at both serving the diverse tire needs of its clientele and rewarding employees as part of its operations model.

“The Top Shop Awards brings out the best of our industry, giving us the opportunity to recognize and celebrate the owners and teams of some of the finest tire dealerships in North America,” said Patti Renner, editor of Tire Review.

Coats has served as the presenting sponsor of the program since its inception in 2006.

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## TIA ELECTS DIRECTORS

The Tire Industry Association has elected 4 directors, each serving three-year terms. The new directors are: Ernie Caramanico, Amityville Firestone, Amityville,.; Brad Feeney, TBC Corp, Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.; Mason Hess, who serves as an area manager for Purcell Tire and Service Center, Tucson, Ariz; and Thomas Kirk Huls, TOKAH Inc. Dba Big O Tire, Yucca Valley, California.

Also elected to the board were: Daniel Childers of TCI Tire Centers, Duncan, S.C. and Russell Devens of McCarthy Tire Service Co. Childers will serve a two-year term and Mr. Devens a one-year term. The new directors took office on October 30 at the TIA board of directors meeting at Bally’s Hotel in Las Vegas.



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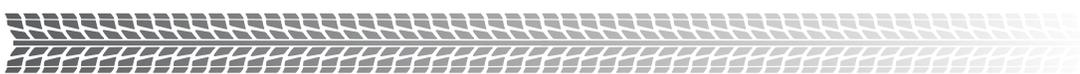
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## TIA PRESIDENT DAVID MARTIN



David Martin was elected president of the Tire Industry Association on Oct. 30, 2017 during the Global Tire Expo in Las Vegas. David is the director of sales for American Tire Distributors (ATD), headquartered in Huntersville, NC.

David's business career began as the owner of a Snap-On Tools dealership outside of Charlotte, NC. "This experience was a valuable time in my business life", said David. "It taught me all the skills necessary to run my own business on a granular level, including managing accounts receivable, accounts payable, marketing, inventory management, supply chain process, cash flow and working directly with customers".

After selling his business in 1994 he worked for several equipment companies, including Henshey Industries. David was offered the position of Director of Sales at ATD, which was a great move for him and his family because it provided the opportunity to return home to the Charlotte, NC area.

David became involved with TIA in 2012 when he was approached to run for the TIA Board of Directors. He won the spot on the board and in time became

Chairman of the Training and Education Committee. Before joining the training committee in 2014, Mr. Martin worked closely with TIA regarding ATD's own training program, using TIA-certified trainers.

"We are very solid in TIA certification training," he said. "ATD technicians have all been trained by TIA. Not all have been certified, but we have trained them through TIA."

Mr. Martin particularly praised the leadership of Kevin Rohlwing, TIA senior vice president of training, in advancing TIA's education programs. He is proud that TIA's Earthmover Tire Certification program was developed during his tenure on the Training and Education Committee, as well as updates to the Automotive Tire Service and Commercial Tire Service programs.

During its last board meeting, TIA began development of its next five-year plan, according to Mr. Martin. That plan focus, he said, will be much the same as in past years: membership, government affairs, and training and education.

One of the main points, he said, will be to develop training for point-of-sale (POS) personnel.

"We're trying to tie the back shop training to the front of the shop, to help POS people better understand what they're communicating to motorists," Mr. Martin said. "It's to help the POS person communicate what's going on with TPMS, tire repair and tire selection."

Mr. Martin said he admires his predecessors in the TIA presidency – including Tom Formanek, Glen Nicholson and Freda Pratt-Boyer – and also said his agenda as president is essentially theirs.

"Training, membership and government relations are all items that we collectively identified as core strengths of TIA," he said. "That's what I plan to do – continue the same path."



## TOP SHOP / ALYESKA TIRE

Continued from front page

Tire Review's Top Shop contest evaluates dealers of all sizes, honoring independent tire dealers that best epitomize the key attributes and values of a highly successful tire business: customer service and retention, training and education, merchandising and promotion, professional standards and conduct, appearance, solid business management, community involvement, business growth, achievement and innovation.

Finalists for this year's award include: Redwood General Tire based in Redwood City, Calif.; Waukegan Tire & Supply based in Park City, Ill.; Monroe Tire based in Shelby, N.C.; and this year's winner Alyeska Tire.

Alyeska Tire has a total of 8 locations with the company headquarters in Soldotna, Alaska, with locations in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Homer, Kenai, and Palmer.

The company stands out with a unique bonus incentive program, a full 49% of Alyeska Tire's gross profits are shared with their employees at the end of each year. Team members are eligible to take part in the bonus program as 100% vested after just 12 months working for the company.

Last year's bonus program added up to almost a quarter of a million dollars paid out to 40 employees that qualified. "Our bonus program rewards hard work, dedication, and innovation," said Craig.

The result has been an increase in employee retention as well as a more motivated workforce overall. Efficiency, quality and savings are top of mind with staff. In addition to having team members think like owners, it also has helped in the challenge of managing locations hundreds of miles apart.

Craig participated as a panelist in the "Successful Tire Dealers Share Their Secrets" during the Global Tire Expo. In that program he shared information on the company bonus program and received several questions from tire dealer owners and managers in the room.



Congratulations to the Wortham family and their fantastic crew at Alyeska Tire for their achievement as the 2017 Top Shop.

## JOHNSON TIRE CLOSES

Johnson's Tire Service, one of Alaska's largest retail tire dealerships for the past few decades, ceased operations November 3, leaving scores of customers with winter tires in storage in limbo. Anchorage-based Northrim Bank has since foreclosed on the dealership's lone remaining store, in Anchorage, and is offering to help the dealership's customers retrieve tires stored there.

The 35-year-old Anchorage-based business had been operating under Chapter 11 bankruptcy protection since late 2015. Over the past few years it had consolidated to just the one store in Anchorage, according to local media reports.

At one point in the early 2000's, Johnson's Tire had five locations in and around Anchorage.

The dealership's financial problems were tied to a lawsuit brought by the contractor that built its South Anchorage store in 2012 the suit left Johnson's Tire owing more than \$630,000 in claims and legal fees.

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# TIRE CENTERS INC. ON THE MOVE



After nearly 50 years of operation, the Yakima-based tire and automotive service company has begun a new chapter by moving its headquarters from South Second Avenue to a larger, more visible location on South First Street.

Tire Centers have taken over the old Yakima Chrysler Jeep Dodge property and transformed it to a retail tire store, wholesale tire warehouse and corporate headquarters. “We want to increase our retail sales, and we thought having a more central location with lots of traffic would help with that. Our old place is kind of hidden”, said General Manager Stuart Howell.

The new company headquarters sits on about 3.5 acres and features two large service warehouses, a showroom and plenty of parking and storage space. Inside the showroom, there will be a waiting area with televisions, as well as a kid’s play area.

Wholesale Tire Mart location on Second Street is tucked away off Walnut Street and can be difficult to find for motorists. Plus, Howell said the company outgrew the facility a few years ago.

In addition to its three Yakima store, Tire Centers also can be found in Mattawa, Tieton and Ellensburg. Five of the locations have operated under the Tire Centers Inc. umbrella for the past 10 years while the Mattawa store became a franchisee in March of this year.

Stuart’s father, Larry, founded the company in 1971 and still works at the warehouse close to full time. His other son, Cameron, manages the Upper Valley Tire Center in Tieton.

After working with car tires since he was 16 years old, Larry Howell is happy to turn over most of the day-to-day operations to his sons.

One of my goals with this business was to pass it along to the next generation,” he said. “I started working here in high school, and to finish my career here is pretty special. But it’s just as gratifying to be able to pass it on to my kids.”

Tire Centers has always served the commercial trucking and agricultural equipment industries, and that remains the bulk of their business.

The company has been retreading tires for passenger cars and commercial trucks for 50 years at its Walnut location. Tire Centers is the only place in town that will retread tires for standard vehicles.

But most of all, the company is known for its customer service – a fact that spurred the Howells to consider updating their business model to attract more everyday motorists.

Tire Centers is doing all it can to keep pace in a changing economy. With the additional space the company will offer a full range of mechanical services, including diagnostic checks for all types of vehicles. The company also perform alignments, cooling and heating system services, brake work and full safety checks. They also plan to feature car-washing services as an added bonus for customers.



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# **AUTOMOTIVE TRAINING EXPO**

**SET FOR MARCH 16-18**



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The 2018 Automotive Training Expo (ATE) returns to the Double Tree Hotel across from SeaTac International Airport for three days of intensive management and technical training classes.

“It appears that 2018 will again provide our attendees the absolute finest training available in North America,” said Jeff Lovell, president and executive director of ASA Northwest, the event producer.

ATE 2018 will offer more than 60 training classes, many oriented for shop owners, managers, service advisors, and office personnel, plus dozens of mechanical seminars for technicians.

“We always enjoy having the nation’s most popular trainers return to ATE as our attendees enjoy their classes and the updated information they provide,” said Brenda Wolslegel, ATE program coordinator.

The March event has become the West Coast’s premier automotive training event for repair facilities of all types, automotive students, high school and college automotive instructors, and other because of the quality and timeliness of classes offered, Lovell said. “We draw repair shops and other attendees from across the Northwest, from California and other states, plus we have a large number of attendees each year from British Columbia.”

More than two dozen Northwest shops that attend ATE each year close down for the three-day event. “It’s the most dynamic and cost-effective training we do annually,” said an Oregon shop owner whose entire crew will attend ATE 2018.

“ATE just doesn’t happen by accident,” Lovell said. “Our entire staff works on the training sessions and

tradeshow all year long, and our education committee, headed up by ASA Northwest Officers, was diligent about matching up the right classes and trainers that will provide the most needed and state-of-the-art training sessions for attendees next March.”

As ATE has progressed each year, the ASA/ATE staff has seen an increase in shops registering well in advance of the event.

“We’re seeing early registrations and most classes being sold out long before the actual event, so “ASA” shops should take advantage of the early bird discount to guarantee their shop’s participation in the training,” Lovell said, adding that the space at the Double Tree allows for 600 attendees and when ATE staff reached that number class registration is closed.

The majority of registrations are for the full three days of training and include attendance at as many classes as desired, two breakfasts, two lunches, all training, materials, plus admission to the ATE trade show Friday and Saturday evenings.

There are a limited number of one and two-day class registrations that do not include meals, Lovell said. “Some sessions sell out very quickly, so again that early registration is important so each attendee can take the classes pertinent to their needs.”

Management classes at ATE cover an extensive array of subjects ranging from financial issues to marketing and employee matters. Each year, the ATE staff and education committee assemble top trainers who provide a wide range of valuable training sessions.

On the technical side, classes on all three days of ATE are determined based on current need of session subject matter within the repair industry.

# WINTER TIRES FASTEST GROWING TIRE CATEGORY IN CANADA

Winter tire use is gradually rising, but driver education about safety benefits remains essential to wintertime accident prevention. Four-in-ten drivers outside Quebec still do not own winter tires.

Winter tire shipments across Canada have grown at an annualized rate of four per cent over the past five years making winter tires the fastest growing tire category, according to the Tire and Rubber Association of Canada (TRAC)

The growth of this category is due to efforts by tire makers, retailers and the government to educate drivers about the superior traction and shorter stopping distances provided by winter tires. Government incentives to make winter tires more affordable have also had a positive impact.

TRAC's 2017 Canadian Consumer Winter Tire Study found that 66% of Canadian motorists ride on winter tires. But outside Quebec, where winter tires are the law, the percentage drops to 60%. For the approximately 40% of motorists found by the survey not to be using winter tires, the top reasons were the

belief that all-season tires provide sufficient traction (51%), reduced driving in winter (22%) and cost (21%).

“Despite increasing winter tire usage, educating drivers about the safety benefits of winter tires remains critical to making our roads safer in winter,” says Glenn Maidment, president of TRAC. “The fact that 4 in 10 motorists outside Quebec are not using winter tires puts at risk everyone who drives in cold-weather conditions – regardless of whether the road surface is dry, snow-covered or icy. Every motorist needs to understand winter tires radically outperform all-seasons in all cold-weather driving conditions.”

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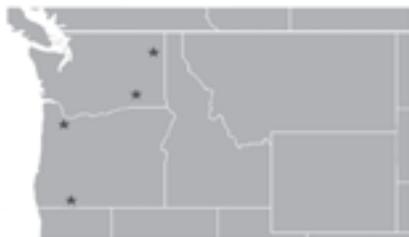
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