



CATA Bulletin



official Web site of CATA dealers

a biweekly newsletter

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CATA holiday closings

The CATA office in Oakbrook Terrace will be closed Friday, Dec. 22 and Monday, Dec. 25 to mark the Christmas holiday; and Monday, Jan. 1 for New Year's Day.

Happy holidays to all!



Documentary service fee max \$58.48 in 2007

The state's maximum documentary service fee for 2007 is \$58.48, the Illinois attorney general's office announced Dec. 15.

The \$1.15 increase over the 2006 maximum fee reflects a 3.5 percent rise in the federal Consumer Price Index for the 12-month period ending Nov. 30. The index is tracked by the U.S. Department of Labor.

As always, the DOC fee is taxable

and must be substantiated upon request by the attorney general's office.

The CATA developed a poster about the DOC fee that dealer members can post. On the poster, the DOC fee amount is left blank for dealers to fill in; any amount up to the maximum allowed may be charged, but all customers must be charged the same amount.

IMPORTANT: The new maximum fee cannot be charged before Jan. 1.

Cold enough for ya? Think Marco!

A conference and retreat exclusively for Illinois dealers and their families is March 18-23 at the Marco Island Marriott Resort & Spa in Marco Island, Fla.

The inaugural getaway excursion, coordinated by the CATA and the IADA, features speakers, workshops and line or ad group meetings as requested, plus golf outings, banquets and other events at or near the resort overlooking the Gulf of Mexico.

Committed speakers include Malcolm Bricklin, who hopes to introduce a Chinese-produced car in this country; and 2007 NADA Chairman Dale Willey.

Marco Island and nearby Naples are graced with miles

of white-sand beaches, luxurious real estate, beautiful year-round weather, sumptuous restaurants, fine shopping, dining, lively entertainment, attractions and plenty of recreational activities from boating and fishing, to golf and tennis. All that is set amid the stunning subtropical beauty that is unique to southwest Florida's Gulf coast.

The new venture by the CATA and the Illinois Automobile Dealers Association succeeds a previous annual incarnation of the IADA and the Missouri Automobile Dealers Association.

"We're very excited," said CATA President Jerry Cizek, "to collaborate with the IADA on an event that



The Marco Island Marriott

combines work and special interaction."

See the flyer in this newsletter for conference registration and transportation costs. Payment can be made in full or in three installments.

Sponsorship opportunities also exist for dealership vendor companies. Direct inquiries to the IADA's Mike Healey, 217-753-0220.

Supervisors certified to detect drug, alcohol use

Employee drug use presents a company with measurable costs—worker's compensation and disability/pension payments—that are great.

But they are dwarfed by other, hidden costs: damaged equipment, lost parts and theft, poor customer relations that damage a company's public image, supervisory and management time diverted by friction among the workforce and deteriorated staff morale, and expenses from turnover.

A public service announcement warns that "If

SEE CERTIFIED, PAGE 4

Carmaker ads increasingly pitched to buyers too young to drive

Automakers have long licensed their names to toy-car companies and designed some television commercials to attract kids. As the numbers have increased, so have the manufacturers' methods of reaching kids, extending more product placements into nontraditional places where kids go to play.

A growing number of auto companies are wading in child-oriented areas such as gyms that cater to kids, social-networking sites where young people hang out and the Saturday-morning cartoons, the Wall Street Journal reported Nov. 9.

A nationwide chain of franchise gyms for children between 3 months old and 13 years old is in talks with at least three carmakers to advertise in the gyms and incorporate miniature vehicles into classes.

On a Web site that draws 2 million kids ages 8 to 15, virtual Scion xBs are sold to those with enough "clams," the site's monetary unit. Or the children can meet with Eric, a virtual Toyota Financial Services adviser, to finance an xB.

And a ubiquitous hamburger chain included toy Hummers in its Happy Meals in August—the first time a manufacturer directly offered versions of its vehicles in the meals.

Fox 32 auto show telecast wins Emmy

WFLD-TV Fox 32 Chicago captured a Emmy for its coverage of the 2006 Chicago Auto Show. Two other Chicago stations also were nominated for their auto show broadcasts.

The Fox 32 special, "2006 Chicago Auto Show," won in the category, "Outstanding Achievement for Special Event Programs—Live Special Event Program (not sports)."

WGN-TV Channel 9 was competing in the same category with its program, "The 2006 Chicago Auto Show in HD;" and NBC5 Chicago was one of 11 candidates in the category, "Outstanding Achievement for Special Event Programs—Special Event Program, Edited," with the telecast, "NBC5 Presents: The 2006 Chicago Auto Show."

The Emmys were presented by the Chicago/Midwest Chapter of the National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences. The chapter awarded Emmys in 64 categories during a Nov. 19 ceremony in Chicago.

Terry D'Arcy, chairman of the 2007 Chicago Auto Show, said Fox 32's win and the nominations of WGN-TV and NBC5 Chicago confirm the commitment of the city's media to promote the nation's premier auto show.

"We do our part," D'Arcy said, "to present an auto show worthy of the coverage, and my hat is off to the stations for their work to broadcast the event in a manner worthy of an Emmy."

A new Web site, www.HUMMERkids.com, has games and printable coloring pages of H3 models.

The increased targeting of kids comes as evidence grows that today's doting parents can be nagged by their children into buying big-ticket items like cars—or at least take their kids into account when picking a brand.

According to a May report from a publishing division of MarketResearch.com, about 37 percent of parents with children aged 3 to 11 say their children have a significant impact on the brands they choose. James McNeal, a child-marketing consultant, estimated that children under 14 last year influenced about 47 percent of household purchases.

As for cars, about 62 percent of parents said their children "actively participate" in car-buying decisions, according to a study by J.D. Power & Associates and the Nickelodeon television network.

Advertising to children normally involves federal regulations and industry guidelines, but there are few guidelines for product placement in new advertising like virtual Web sites and video games. Company officials say the promotions are fun and in some cases educational.

Toyota Financial executives say their Web promotion helps teach kids about how financing works.

DriveChicago traffic report tracks portal's aggregate viewer searches

See the flyer included in this newsletter for a recap of aggregate traffic on DriveChicago.com during November. The report tracks the various activities—e-mail inquiries, click-throughs to dealer Web sites and the like—of all visitors to the portal.

During the first week of each month, dealers receive e-mails with traffic reports specific to their dealerships, useful for measuring leads delivered by DriveChicago and monitoring inventory listed via the portal.

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The CATA Bulletin is published and mailed every other Friday except during the Chicago Auto Show, when it is not published.

Listings of items for sale are subject to the approval of the CATA. Candidates for employment must submit a full résumé to the Editor.

Review past editions dating to 1998 or search by subject at <http://cata.drivechicago.com/>

Jerry H. Cizek III President, Publisher
Erik K. Higgins Editor, Director of Dealer Affairs

Democrats to lead next Congress

By Ray Scarpelli Sr.

METRO CHICAGO NADA DIRECTOR

After gaining control of the House and Senate last month, Democrats have outlined their agenda for the next several years. Developments that could affect the retail auto industry and dealers:

- Incoming Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi (D-Calif.) and incoming Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-Nev.) could get White House support for their **plans to encourage the use of alternative fuels and establish small-business health-care tax credits.**

- Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-Md.) was chosen as majority leader by the Democratic caucus. **Hoyer is known to be more pro-business and pro-free trade than many of his Democratic colleagues.**

- The Democratic agenda also covers a variety of reforms intended to strengthen national security, energy independence, affordable health care and retirement security; raise employee wages; and give students broader access to colleges and universities.

NADA-backed total-loss disclosure bills are pending in the House and Senate.

- The recent flooding in the Pacific Northwest and the Eastern

U.S. has refocused public attention on the problem of flooded and totaled vehicles being resold to unsuspecting dealers and consumers.

- Since the Gulf hurricanes last year, NADA has been pushing for federal legislation that would require insurance companies to disclose total-loss vehicle information in publicly accessible databases. An NADA-supported House bill would mandate that insurance companies make commercially available the VIN of a totaled vehicle, the reason for its being declared a total loss, and other data. Sen. Trent Lott (R-Miss.) has introduced a similar bill.

- The insurance company PEMCO has announced that it will voluntarily disclose vehicle flood damage information to the public.

In NADA news...

- I am pleased to begin service on the NADA Industry Relations Committee, your advocate in dealer-manufacturer relations. The committee, which will meet in late February with Rick Wagoner, has persuaded manufacturers to listen more to dealer concerns. If you have issues you want to convey to manufacturer leaders, please contact me at 847-395-3600 or rayscarpelli@aol.com.

- Remember, **pre-registration for the NADA convention (Feb. 3-6, 2007, in Las Vegas) ends Dec. 22,**

and many convention hotels are already sold out—so if you plan to attend the industry event of the year, register now. It's easy to do so at the convention Web site, www.nada.org/convention. There will be **more than 600 exhibitors, nearly 200 workshop sessions,** and, of course, franchise meetings, lifestyle activities, and many other events.

- **Limited seats are still available for the NADA Dealer Academy successors class** that begins in January. **A successors class and a general managers class will also begin in February, and there are limited seats still available in each.**

The yearlong Dealer Academy program combines six class sessions (one week every other month, focusing on major dealership departments) at NADA headquarters in McLean, Va., with 45 weeks of work experience in the sponsoring dealership.

Join the ranks of the nearly 6,000 graduates of Dealer Academy programs. For an application or more information, please call 800/252-6232, option 5.

And let me take this opportunity to wish all the dealers I represent a happy, healthy and prosperous 2007!

Fuel estimates to be re-estimated

Revamped fuel-economy estimates which better reflect factors such as quick starts, high speeds, cold-temperature driving, and use of an air conditioner will appear on Monroney stickers beginning on 2008 model year vehicles, the Environmental Protection Agency announced this month.

Dealers are encouraged to send customers to www.MileageWillVary.com, where they can learn more about the new label and become more familiar with factors affecting their MPG. Dealership sales representatives should

familiarize themselves with the new labels and with any manufacturer-specific communications on the topic. Since the fuel-economy numbers are expected to change based on EPA's new test, dealership sales staff should be prepared to caution customers against comparing MY 2007 with MY 2008 vehicles.

"Consumers should continue to recognize that their actual mileage will vary depending on how they drive and maintain their vehicles," said Ed Tonkin, chairman of the NADA Regulatory Affairs Committee. Other information about the new label is at www.fueleconomy.gov.

Certified

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

somebody who works for you has a drug problem, then you have a drug problem." If that is true, and with statistics indicating 75 percent of illegal drug users hold full- or part-time jobs, then lots of employers have a problem.

"People's lives degrade" with drug use, said Arthur Hirsch at a Dec. 7 CATA management education seminar. "But the last thing they let degrade is their job, because they need the money to continue their habit."

The union contracts with both the Auto Mechanics Local 701 and the Teamsters Local 731 stipulate that supervisors and managers cannot act against a union employee suspected of drug or alcohol abuse unless the superior is trained by a certified agency to detect and identify the same.

To satisfy that training, Hirsch and David Mayor, physicians who operate Occupational Health Consultants, LLC; spoke at the seminar with Thomas Posey, an attorney with Franczek Sullivan, the CATA's employment relations counsel.

Managers from about 30 area deal-

erships attended the training, which would be repeated in about six months for other managers. The one-time certification does not expire.

Mayor emphasized the importance of managers recording any irregular behaviors among their subordinates. "If something's not right with them, start documenting. If you learn later that their cat died, fine, then throw the paper away. But at least you started documenting," he said.

A change in appearance following lunch or breaks, mood swings, failure to meet deadlines and weariness are among physical signals of drug or alcohol abuse, said Mayor. He said one company kept a calendar of days when a particular worker was "snippy," and it always occurred after a day off.

"That person eventually tested positive for drugs," Mayor said.

Unionized employees, said Posey, can't be subjected to random testing for drugs or alcohol; a "reasonable suspicion" must exist. However, a Local 701 technician can automatically be tested if he is involved in an incident that involves more than \$500 in property damage. For Local 731 workers, the threshold is \$1,000 damage.

Consider 'adopting' a school for Chicago Auto Show

Dealerships can plant a benevolent seed with students by sponsoring a school group's visit to the 2007 Chicago Auto Show. The measure can be a community relations plum and establish customer loyalty with young consumers.

Under the Adopt-A-School Program, a dealer can purchase tickets at \$5 each for students in a group. There is no minimum or maximum potential group size. See the flyer in this newsletter.

High schoolers at or near driving age are logical students for a dealership to pair itself with. There are hundreds and hundreds of high schools in the Chicago area, probably more than one within each dealer's relevant market area.

Bill Stasek, proprietor of Bil Stasek Chevrolet in Wheeling, last year sponsored more than 100 students each from nearby Buffalo Grove High School, John Hersey High School in Arlington Heights, and Vanguard School in Wheeling. Accompanying chaperones are admitted at no charge.

"The schools look forward to the auto show so much, and they wouldn't be able to go without this program," Stasek said. "They really appreciate it, so it creates a lot of goodwill with the schools."

In the program, dealers contact a school's principal or assistant principal to arrange the weekday field trip. Stasek met the groups at McCormick Place and even popped for lunches for everyone.

Dealers interested in "adopting" a school should contact the CATA's Donna Young for more details, at 630-424-6045.

Marketplace

Parts Manager 30 years parts department experience, 25 years as supervisor. Create, oversee \$150K parts department with 48 percent shop gross, 28 percent wholesale gross. Inventory turns three times a month. Five-time Master Certified Parts Manager, six-time Lincoln-Mercury Medallion Parts Manager. Certified in ADP, UCS systems. Paul Degrassi, 630-301-4712.

GM Strong finance background, extensive experience in both business and sales management, capable of directing all areas of dealership. Proven ability to motivate staff, consistent record of increased sales and profitability, great references. Michael Kalinsky, 678-849-0555.

Payroll/HR Mgr PT okay. 16 yrs dealership exp (9 yrs as HR Mgr at diverse dlr). ADP, timeclock software, 401k, insurance, benefits, FMLA, EEO, Excel, genl ledgr, Reynolds. Wrote company newsletter & more. College grad, great refs, & 'the personal touch.'
HR_Manager_Professional@yahoo.com

Résumés of all candidates on file at the CATA.