

Headahls Headlines

EMPLOYEE NEWSLETTER

December 2004
Volume 13
Number 3

New Employee

No multiple-of-five work anniversaries, but maybe we'll have one five years from now with our new employee. Please welcome him.

DEREK SCHROEDER – Derek is new at the counter in our Beulah store. Originally from Williston, ND, he's lived in Beulah for the last ten years. Derek has three brothers and five sisters, and he enjoys mechanics and deer hunting.

Holiday Party

Saturday, December 4
Kelly Inn in Bismarck

Social 6:00 p.m.

Dinner 7:00 p.m.

Dance 8:30 p.m.



Please plan to join us!

Regional Holiday Gatherings

Also several regional holiday gatherings are planned throughout the company. You and your spouse or guest are welcome to come to any of these parties. Just let us know. Below is a listing of the holiday gatherings that we could confirm.

- ◆ **Aberdeen-Redfield-Webster:** 6:00 social, 7:00 dinner, Jan. 15 at the Flame Restaurant in Aberdeen
- ◆ **Detroit Lakes:** 6:00, Jan. 8 at D Dahl's Char House
- ◆ **Glendive-Sidney:** 7:00, Dec. 11 at the Ranger Lounge in Sidney
- ◆ **Milbank:** 7:00, Dec 18 at the Lantern Inn
- ◆ **Sisseton:** 7:00, Dec. 4 at the Hippen Steak House
- ◆ **Watertown:** In-store social hour at the end of the day on Christmas Eve

*"Merry Christmas
to all, and to all
a good night!"*

— "A Visit From St. Nicholas"



SALES TOOLS

IDEAS FOR BETTER SELLING:

Can You Hear Me Now? — Hedahls Has It!

Recently I was working with Dan Helfrich (no relation, but a real nice guy), our new salesman in Carrington, ND. We were at the Foster County Shop talking to two gentlemen when one of them told us that he replaced all three belts on his Jeep that weekend. He said out of habit he went to the local NAPA store for the belts, but they didn't have any of them. He then went to the Hedahls store in Carrington, and we had all three. Then the gentleman standing next to him said, "Hedahls Has It!" Wow, was I impressed.

First I was impressed because we had all three belts and NAPA didn't have any. Thank you, Larry Bosch, for the hours and hours you spend analyzing our inventory, and thank you to all the managers, counter-men and salesmen who help watch that inventory and comment when something isn't right. It takes everyone's constant effort to make it work. I realize that we can't have everything all the time. In fact, I had a customer in Watertown tell me that a few months ago. He said today all you can do is your best and we do! Occasionally we miss something, and if you notice an error, tell someone ASAP so we can fix it.

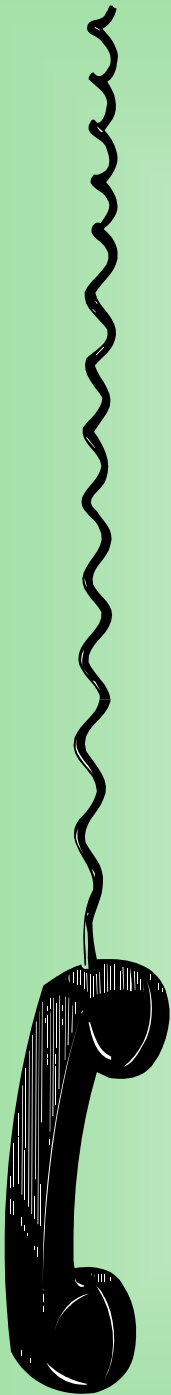
The second thing that impressed me was the gentleman who said "Hedahls Has It!" And this was in a town that we've only been in for a few months! I have to admit that when Dick Hedahl

walked into my office two years ago and told me that he wanted to start using the Hedahls Has It! slogan again, I was less than excited because I didn't think we had the inventory to back it up. But you know what? I don't feel that way anymore. Today we have the inventory to back up the statement "Hedahls Has It!"

The other day I parked my van in front of my barber's and went in to get a haircut. As soon as I stepped in the door, an elderly gentleman in one of the barber chairs said to me, "That sure is a flashy van you're driving with the stripes and everything." And my barber said, "Hedahls Has It!" It's everywhere. It's what we are about as a company. It's our slogan, just like "Can you hear me now?" People may have a little fun with it, but that's OK because that means we've accomplished our goal, established our identity, if you will.

So when you answer the phone, sing out "Hedahls Has It!" and be proud of it. When we don't have a part, and someone says, "Hey, I thought 'Hedahls Has It,'" tell them we try really hard and we'll keep trying.

Then tell them "Hedahls can get it!" often by the very next day with our warehouse connection with Uni-Select USA. On the other hand, when we have a part and the customer tells you that the competition didn't, be sure to remind them that "Hedahls Has It!" Thanks, Dale



Call Paul

Open Order: "OO"

At times you may want to check to see what OPEN ORDERS a customer may have and here is an easy way to do that from the Point-of-Sale screen:

On the Point-of-Sale screen, your cursor will be at ORD# when you are waiting to start a new order/invoice. At ORD#, simply enter OO (the letter "O" twice), and you will be taken to the bottom of the screen and you will have a question to answer. You will be asked if you want to show order detail, and if you answer "Y," you will see all items listed on all the orders the customer has open. If you answer "N," you will see only the order numbers.

Now you will be taken to CUSTOMER NUMBER in the Order Inquiry screen where you will enter the customer you want to check for Open Orders.

After doing your Open Order Inquiry, hit the F1 key to end your inquiry, and you will be returned to the Point-of-Sale screen.



Return Sign-Up Forms

You should have received a sign-up form for our Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP). **All employees** (full-time, part-time, and temporary) must complete one of these forms. You should indicate enrollment in the plan if you are eligible, re-enrollment "as is" if you want no change, or re-enrollment with a change in the amount you are investing. **Even if you do not qualify for the ESOP or if you are not interested in investing,** we ask that you fill out the form with your employee number and store or division, and mark the appropriate choice. These forms need to be returned to Darlene Birney at Headquarters **by December 10.**

Holiday Hours

All stores and divisions will be closed on both Christmas Day and New Year's Day. Since both of these days are on Saturday this year, all full-time employees will get one additional day of vacation for each holiday. This additional day is to be used within the calendar year 2005 and arranged with your manager, just as you would any other vacation day. Be sure to identify it to your manager when you use it, so Darlene can keep her records straight and give you the extra vacation pay when you use the day.

Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve are both business days for us. Each manager will determine the times his or her store or department will be open and schedule the staff accordingly. Anyone who wants to have a vacation day on either of those days (or the following Monday) should arrange it with his or her manager.

Closing times for each will be designated by the store manager, since each town will have its own needs. Headquarters will be closed on Christmas Eve, and open on New Year's Eve.



Remember,
this holiday
season,
**Let's
Eat!
Less**

Stay in Bed!

If you get sick, do yourself and your co-workers a favor: keep yourself and your germs at home! We'll miss you terribly, but at least we won't get sick too. That keeps everyone healthier and happier on the job.



Safety First:

The holidays are filled with joy, but too often they are also filled with danger. Along with the danger of overeating and too much holiday cheer, the holidays can be a minefield of potential hazards. Here are a few danger spots to be especially vigilant about.

Fire: Candles, lights, decorations, Christmas trees, and fireplaces all do extra duty during the holiday, and must be used with extra care. Be careful of dried out Christmas trees, worn out electrical decorations, open flames of any kind, and flammable decorations. Also be very careful of breakable decorations that could cause cuts or other injuries.

Food: Unfamiliar holiday foods can lead to mistakes in preparation. Pay attention to safe food handling whenever you're cooking. Then too, the activities of the holidays make it too easy to neglect proper food storage and clean-up. Keep hot things hot and cold things cold.

Weather: Ice and cold are always dangerous, but especially so when you are dressed for a party and not for winter. Dress warmly and walk cautiously over ice and snow, even in your fancy dancing shoes.

Gifts: Make sure your gifts are appropriate for the age and abilities of the people receiving them. Also, guard against new, unfamiliar toys or games with small pieces or other hazards.

Stress: Expectations, spending, and socializing are all at sky-high levels during the holidays. Be aware of your stress threshold, and don't be afraid to say no. Get plenty of rest, drink plenty of water, get some exercise, try to eat as normally as possible, and don't neglect the routines and rituals that keep you on an even keel.

Family: Family is one of the great joys of the holidays, but it can also be one of the great dangers. Whether it's in-laws or outlaws, having extra loved ones around is upsetting to the normal routine. Know when enough is enough.

There's no joy in accidents, injuries, or illness. Give the gift of safety this season to yourself and those you love.

FROM RUSSIA ... WITH QUESTIONS

By Dick Hedahl

We had the opportunity for some firsthand international diplomacy recently when a delegation of business people from Russia visited North Dakota for a three-week tour to learn about business in the United States. A retired Bismarck physician, Dr. Herbert Wilson, approached me in October and asked us to host the Russians for a day to explain how the auto parts industry works in the USA.

This delegation was composed of 11 Russian business people involved in the auto repair and parts business in Russia. None of them spoke much English, so they were accompanied by an interpreter and a bilingual guide.

They were sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Bismarck. This is the fourth such delegation brought here by the Kiwanians. Other industries have been represented in the past, such as realtors and bankers. This was the first auto-related group.

They visited lots of different auto-related businesses in Bismarck-Mandan, including Ressler Chevrolet, Cedric Theel, Cal's Car Clinic, and the Bismarck State College Automotive Technology program. Friday, November 19 was our day. We gathered in the conference room at Headquarters and started with introductions. Of course, it took twice as long as it would normally because every sentence was translated each way. Using the Hedahls Web site, I gave them a tour of our history as a company. Then I gave a broad overview of the auto parts industry and a more specific description of how Hedahls distributes parts to our market.

Larry Lysengen explained the daily interaction between our stores and Headquarters. He was quite detailed in his descriptions and examples, and they loved it. They were here to learn: they asked

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The visiting delegation of Russians, all sporting Hedahls Parts Plus denim shirts and posing in the Headquarters conference room with Dick Hedahl, Harold Larson, Larry Lysengen, and Dale Helfrich.

MORE FROM RUSSIA

(Continued from previous page)

questions and took notes.

Dale Helfrich followed with his presentation of the way we go to market to both our retail and wholesale customers.

After lunch Dan Schreck gave us a tour of the Main Street Tire facility. They had lots of questions and took lots of pictures. For some reason, they were intrigued with Dan's tire studding machine, but they were amazed at the used tire rack and the tread wear left on Dan's supply of used tires. They couldn't believe people would buy new tires when their own were still so good.

We also spent a considerable amount of time in the Bismarck store. They were interested in all the details of how we run our stores. They were surprised, for example, that we are able to display merchandise out in the open without theft as a major problem. And we were surprised that it's the policy in their businesses that there are no returns allowed to anyone!

The final presenter was Harold Larson. The Russians were interested in the relationship and functions of our accounting and administration procedures. They wanted to know about payables, receivables, payroll, and financial statements. "Who does what?" was the lead question on each topic.

They seemed very impressed by the amount of work our employees get accomplished and how efficiently we operate.

Harold's information was of particular interest because of the differences in our banking and credit structures. Banks in Russia are not nearly as well developed and structured as in the USA. Granting credit to customers is seldom done, and apparently keeping money in a bank isn't really trusted yet. It is a very cash-focused economy.

Harold put all of the spreadsheets and examples that Larry and Dale used on a PowerPoint presentation, but he translated his portion into Russian using a language website. Really. It was very well received by the Russians, as you might expect.

Larry seized the international hospitality opportunity, taking several of the Russians to the rodeo, taking them up in his plane a few at a time, and hosting

two members of the delegation at his house. They were there without an interpreter, but Larry said they communicated very effectively with hand signals and gestures. And of course, they had perfect pronunciation on "California wine."

Apparently they are used to seeing a much bigger police presence in their own country. They asked, "Don't you have police?" Larry assured them we did, and they asked, "Well, how many?" When Larry shrugged and said, "I don't know, maybe thirty or forty," they burst out laughing.

In fact, my overall impression of the Russians was of laughter. They seemed happy and eager to learn, animated and quick to laugh. I feel good that they learned a lot from their visit with us. But someone asked me later if I learned anything from the experience. Of course, all of us involved learned something about the common humanity we share with these people from the other side of the world,

and it's exciting to think we may be helping with the emerging democracy and economy of this former communist country. But when I hear of conditions there, I'm grateful to be in business here.

It was a fun, interesting experience all the way around. I'd like to thank everyone from our companies who worked hard to help with this international event. With very little notice,

our people put together several very polished and professional presentations. And I know our Russian guests were impressed, so impressed that they actually want to buy from us. We have some details to work out obviously, but there's a very real possibility that soon we may be selling parts and equipment to businesses in Russia! Since it all sounds sort of like doing business in the Wild West, we'll enter into it all with great caution, anticipating risks and safeguarding our own interests. Still for them and for us, the business relationship seems more possible because of the personal relationship we've developed through their visit. It all proves once again that the bottom line is this: no matter what kind of business you're in, or even where, it's still all about the people.

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Dick