A Message From Mark Klein, Committee Chair

As I write this, we are still struggling to comprehend the amount of devastation that Sandy has caused in the Northeast. Our thoughts and prayers are extended to all those affected by this massive storm.

2012 was certainly an interesting year. We started with no winter, then turned our thoughts to the 2012 Olympics in London, and finished up with a hotly contested election. Being from Columbus, OH (one of those swing states) it is nice to have a week without the candidates daily criss-crossing the state. Hopefully, life and business will go back to normal as we head into the holiday season and beyond.

Holiday events are coming. They offer a time to reflect on all that we have to be thankful for and to reacquaint with our business contacts, friends, and loved ones. I hope you make a point to attend one of NAFA’s chapter holiday events and enjoy time together with your friends from NAFA.

The fleet industry has been interesting for 2012 as well. Fleets continue to get greener every year and that trend continued in 2012. Fracking promises to change the future of fuel production in the U.S. with predictions we will pass Saudi Arabia by 2020. Cars are back in vogue with many new designs hitting the streets. And NAFA had another great year in 2012 with a successful I&E in St. Louis, growth in membership, and its continued
The NAFA Affiliates Committee met at the Board of Governors meeting in Tampa, FL on October 12, 2012. Some of the items we discussed were:

- **Student Sponsorship:** NAFA is leading the way in sponsoring students and has created the Student Advisory Task Force (SATF). The benefits are many: you can help a student learn more about joining the fleet community; the reward of knowing you helped someone start their career; and your sponsor efforts are published by NAFA to the fleet community. We need more Affiliates to step up and become sponsors and mentors for students. Contact Craig Cheatle at ccheatle@qek.com for more information.

- **Education Development Committee (EDC):** Kate Vigneau reported that the EDC is working on an Asset Management guide and Remarketing guide. Affiliate volunteers with expertise in this area are needed. Contact Kate at katevigneau@hotmail.com if you wish to learn more about volunteering for current and future EDC projects.

- **I&E 2013 Updates:**
  - NAFA will now have a new Opening Night Welcome Reception. This means there will now be two nights with reception events. Opening Night will feature the world-renowned band *Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes* and will be a high energy event to kick off the I&E.
  - Networking Reception: This event follows directly after the Wednesday trade show and will continue to offer networking and refreshments in a more relaxed atmosphere, similar to last year.
  - The casino and boardwalk areas have survived through Hurricane Sandy and are in great shape for our event.
  - Look for another great conference that is better than ever at the 2013 I&E in Atlantic City 4/23 through 4/26, 2013.

- **Affiliate Chapter Chair Communications:** We began with our first Affiliate Chapter Chair conference call in March 2012 and we will be hosting our second conference call in a few weeks. Our goal is to connect the NAFA Affiliates Committee to the Affiliate Chapter Chairs to improve communication.

We hope that 2013 will be a successful and prosperous year for all members of NAFA. Best wishes to everyone throughout the holidays and into the New Year!

**Effective Exhibiting Requires Extra Effort**

Exhibitors commit a lot of resources to attending trade shows and conferences, from money to manpower, with the goal of garnering a stack of leads for their respective companies. Some do not reap the rewards they were hoping for. According to Lew Hoff, President and CEO of Bartizan Connects LLC, a company focusing on lead retrieval for trade shows, success depends on diligent preparation, presenting the right image, and doing
homework.

"Before constructing the right exhibit, you need to get the word out to people who are likely to be interested in your product," Hoff said. "That would certainly help your chances of having some meaningful engagement if you reach out to people who are likely to be there and would have an interest in your product." Hoff explained that even though a main goal of exhibiting is to gain brand new leads, companies and services have to be proactive in interesting potential clients to come to the shows, and assuming the best leads will automatically show up without the preparatory legwork is a short-sighted approach. "Some companies will take that extra effort and some won't."

Now the show is on and the staff is in the booth. What kind of optics are they presenting to attendees? "Sometimes the wrong booth people are sent to the show. I remember going to a show in Philadelphia where there was a fellow in a booth sitting in a director's chair, his nose buried in a novel. He never looked up," Hoff said. "And they had a very large, good-looking exhibit -- a 20 ft. booth, but he never looked up or made eye contact with anyone."

Staff should always be mindful that even though they aren't on the company premises, they are on the job and need to be proper stewards of their corporate image. "Know your product so you are never stumped if someone asks you a question," Hoff said. "If you have to take calls and texts for business purposes, step away from the booth and have someone else cover." And if the booth personnel do not need to be in constant contact for work purposes, by all means, institute a phones-off policy. Employees chatting away at the booth instead of engaging the attendees send all the wrong signals.

Another buzz-killer at trade shows is an incoherent presentation. "There are a lot of exhibitors on a trade show floor, and if you're not being clear about what you offer, you can't expect visitors to fill in the gaps. Does the signage at your booth accurately tell what it is that you do? If you have giveaways, are they relevant to you and your product? Does it remind people of your business? Giveaways are great, but novelties that don't draw a distinct connection to your business or product don't help you."
The expo floor is only a part of the equation, said Hoff. "Some of the best business that's ever been done at trade shows is at the functions that surround the show: the meet-and-greets, the networking parties, and even at 10:00 at night at the lounge."

But now that you have the lead, what do you do with it? Hoff said the point of it all, converting it to business is, surprisingly, deferred sometimes. "Companies will exhibit, they'll get leads from people who spent money to attend as well as time to be there and have expressed interest...and then there's no follow-up. I was an attendee at a trade show and a senior vice president of a company said to me, 'I will get back to you; we have just what you want.' But I had to call him! I waited two weeks and contacted him because I never heard back."

Hoff said the most important thing an exhibitor can do is to commit to contacting each person that left their contact information, no matter what. The sale you fail to close is the mistake your colleague probably will not repeat.

Alain Primeau: NAFA Is The Umbrella That Covers Fleet

Through serving on the Canadian wing of NAFA's Affiliates Committee, I'm sometimes struck by the thought that fleet managers might not be fully aware of the benefits of NAFA. It is a realization that matters a lot to me, both personally and professionally, as I myself have gained so much from my connection.

I joined NAFA in 2008 on the recommendation of Roger Constantin, Fleet Manager of Gaz Metro, and Julie Furlotte, CAFM, who was at that time Vice-President of NAFA Canada (and is National Manager of the Land Fleet of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police). I sought to work with fleet managers, providing business solutions which integrated parts inventory management, which was developed by NAPA Auto Parts in the United States and adapted to the Canadian market.
During this time I recognized how I could be a conduit of information on many levels, not only from a product/service provider to client/user base, but also as an envoy who brings information from the U.S. back home to Canada. The relationships I gained through this worked both ways as I learned firsthand about the needs and requests from fleet professionals to me, without the usual divisions that would ordinarily (and often negatively) filter that conversation. Through the chapters, the I&E, and the many other networking opportunities the Association affords, we all somehow fit beneath the umbrella of “fleet.”

I was named Canadian Representative to the Affiliates Committee in 2010, and my primary mandate is to participate in NAFA’s annual conference (I&E) and ensure that the Affiliates have a voice in the ongoing conversation with fleet managers. I’m also responsible for relaying the news coming out of NAFA’s American chapters back to the Association in Canada. Maintaining this connection is what has made the Association so strong for these many years. That can only continue as we look to new international connections, with an extremely bright and far-reaching future ahead for us all.

In reality, we want to know what fleet managers expect from us, their parts suppliers. We want to create a partnership with them in the arena of parts and inventory management through integrated solutions and e-commerce. NAFA provides that ability, and yet they do much more for fleet. Through the Beyond Fleet program, that message of the intrinsic value of fleet to every thriving business and organization is being carried “above the heads” of the department to the administrators. The CAFM program is an unsurpassed education waterline that very clearly identifies the best in the field through their knowledge base. When it is said it is the industry standard for fleet education, that’s a commitment and not mere bluster.

In other words, NAFA has done much for me and other Affiliates, but the Association has done much for all its members and continues year-after-year in expanding and achieving. NAFA is all too often a well-kept secret, considering how much the Association has meant for light-duty vehicle fleet managers, and continues to as the definition of “what fleet is” expands, from thousands down to only a handful of vehicles. I am privileged to see the benefits from a different perspective: as an Affiliate.

**NAFA Affiliate Alain Primeau is National Director of Sales of UAP NAPA, Canada. He also serves on the Affiliates Committee for the Association.**

**Networking: Understanding One Of NAFA's Greatest Resources**

There is truth to the statement that it is about who you know. Knowing people with questions you can answer provides you with a multitude of opportunities to do business with them...but first you need to meet them.
So how does NAFA facilitate networking for members?

**Chapter Meetings** - NAFA’s Chapters are the backbone of the Association. Your local Chapter meetings are your best opportunity to reach people with the knowledge-base you may need to tap into -- and who may need to tap into your knowledge and expertise. NAFA has regional Chapters across the U.S. and Canada. Although Chapter membership is determined by your mailing address, NAFA Members and Affiliates are free to attend Chapter meetings anywhere at any time, so no matter where you are, you’re never far from fleet professionals eager to share information.

The chapters are the best place to present the products you’re representing because you have an audience that wants to know about them. This mutual exchange of ideas, solutions, and opportunities gathers together like-minded people and gives them the tools to succeed.

**The I&E** - NAFA Trustee Affiliate Mary T. Sticha, Vice President - Service Excellence for GE Capital Fleet Services said of the annual Institute & Expo conference, “(The I&E) is like a family reunion where you can reconnect to those you haven’t seen recently. It’s also an efficient way to exchange information and best practices.”

**The Expo floor** is the main arena where Affiliates and vendors can speak with fleet managers, but there are many other opportunities during the entire I&E. The **Networking Reception** is NAFA’s premier get-together with food, drink, and lots of conversation. The **Opening Night Awards and Party** will be particularly conducive in 2013 with a festive atmosphere and entertainment provided by New Jersey music legends Southside Johnny and the Asbury Jukes. The opportunities don’t stop there either. Networking happens at the general sessions; at the concurrent sessions; at **U Drive It** event; walking from one place to the next; and plus, this year there are coffee breaks to further drive point, and the networking options, home. Your biggest challenge is merely to see the moments before you and use them to your advantage.

**Membership Directory** - While networking is best done face-to-face, sometimes it simply isn’t possible, so take a look in the book! NAFA’s
professional directories come in two formats; the annual printed edition and the online version accessed only through your NAFA membership, featuring downloadable NAFA Member and Affiliate contact information. You can also search for a NAFA Member or Affiliate by accessing NAFA’s Networking Database online.

NAFA’s Services Get Your Messages Out And Brings Valuable Information In!

NAFA is offering Affiliates a survey service to help them reach Members for Market Research and Surveys. This can help you to survey Members about new vehicles; Members’ opinions about safety policies; and can assist you in gathering information about vehicle maintenance!

NAFA is the world’s premier association for the diverse vehicle fleet management profession regardless of organizational type, geographic location, or fleet composition. NAFA strives to provide fleet solutions for all fleet professionals. And now, **NAFA’s Market Research and Survey Email Service** will allow you to survey NAFA Members while giving membership the confidence of knowing their email addresses are secure. This service is available exclusively to NAFA Affiliates and NAFA Members!

NAFA Members are responsible for the specification, acquisition, maintenance and repair, fueling, risk management, and remarketing of more than 3.5 million vehicles – including in excess of 1.1 million trucks!

Surveys to the NAFA membership allow NAFA Affiliates to target every segment of fleet management from corporate fleet managers to those in the public sector. Surveys can seek feedback on such topics as options available on vehicle selector lists, driver training programs, safety policies, and the use of fleet cards. Surveys can help you pinpoint what type of alternative fuel fleet managers in a particular area are using or what percentage are outsourcing vehicle maintenance. Whatever your question, NAFA Surveys will allow you to get the pulse of the industry. Reserve your broadcast time now, as broadcasts are limited to only one message per week.

NAFA also offers an **E-Broadcast Service** to help you get your promotional message out to NAFA membership. This service allows you to reach NAFA Members while giving membership the confidence of knowing their email addresses are secure. This service helps you notify NAFA membership of your latest products; alert NAFA membership about the services your company offers; and promotes your company to NAFA membership!

This is your opportunity to get your promotional message out. Notify NAFA membership of your products and/or services or tell NAFA members of an upcoming webinar your company may be holding.

Broadcasts are limited to only two messages per week, so reserve now.

For details including pricing, or to reserve broadcast spots, please contact
Maureen Smith at (609) 986-1049 or msmith@nafa.org.

NAFA Affiliates News Bulletin © 2012 NAFA Fleet Management Association