

# TARA News

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The Truck-frame & Axle Repair Association (TARA)  
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## Greetings from Missouri

Happy New Year! I hope each of you enjoyed the holidays and are settling back into a routine for 2006. I thought I would start off the new year by telling you a little bit about myself, my family, and how I became involved with TARA.

I began working for Powell and Son Safety Service, the family business created by my father, right out of high school. My wife Susan and I were married in 1981 and settled in my hometown of Palmyra, Missouri. Susan is finishing her 26<sup>th</sup> year at Marion County R-II in Philadelphia, Missouri where she teaches Kindergarten. We have 3 children, Emily, Matthew, and Luke. Emily is a 20 year-old college senior at Westminster College and will begin student teaching this spring in Fulton, Missouri. Our son Matthew is 18 and attends the Missouri Welding Institute in Nevada, Missouri while Luke, our youngest child, is a 12 year-old 6<sup>th</sup> grader at Palmyra Middle School.

I have always tried to stay up-to-date with the newest equipment and procedures associated with our trade, and was introduced to Bee-Line Company in the mid 1980's. I had often heard of TARA through various trade publications, and through Bud Olson. In November of 1991, we received a written invitation from Ken Dias to join TARA. That invitation still hangs on my office wall today. Susan and I attended our first TARA meeting in Chicago in 1992 and the enthusiasm we had for this organization at our first meeting is still with us today! Throughout the years, we have had the privilege of hosting two meetings here in Palmyra, and as I have moved up the officer chain I have seen first hand how much work and planning go into our organization and its meetings.

As I mentioned in last month's newsletter, 2006 looks to be a busy year as TARA celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> birthday. Our first event will be the spring meeting this February in Tampa, Florida. John Messina and his staff at Tampa Spring Company are planning a wonderful meeting and I strongly encourage each of you to send in your registration and attend. In March, we host a booth at the Mid-American Truck Show in Louisville, Kentucky followed by our fall meeting in October. This year, we will be in Rochester, New York where Hawk Frame and Axle will host our organization. Somewhere in between we will have a Technical Session that Bob Razenberg and Bill Hinchcliffe are currently working on.

I would like to take this opportunity to personally encourage and invite each of you to become more involved in our organization. The more effort you put in to TARA the more you will receive. It is my hope you will make every effort to attend all or some of these events. If you have ideas for Tech-Sessions or topics for future meetings, please contact me, another officer, or Wayne at anytime. We need your input to improve TARA and to stay ahead of the competition. Our success as an organization is dependent on the participation of each of its members. I hope to see you this February!

Until next month, Dudley Powell

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Make your News Years Resolution to attend the Tampa Meeting. Register soon and get your plane tickets or maps for driving. Remember you get out of TARA what you put into it: PARTICIPATE.



Tara winter Meeting February 22-25, 2006 Update  
By John Messina, Jr.

We are really looking forward to hosting you all at the TARA Winter Meeting. The Embassy Suites located on the campus of the University of South Florida Tampa Campus is a first class venue for our meetings. From the public areas to the meeting and guest rooms I think you will be pleasantly surprised by the facility. The staff of the hotel has been a pleasure to work with and they assure me that our stay will be a very pleasant one.

Opening our meeting will be registration and a social time on Wednesday evening. On Friday evening we are planning a dinner at the hotel followed by a special entertainment program that will be fun for all ages.

Our meetings will be informative as well as educational. The goal is to provide you with information and ideas to enhance the operation of your business. To this end the program is divided into to sections:

Day One Meetings : Will begin with the TARA Regular Meeting and General Meeting followed by a presentation by Bruce Cummings of Mills, Cummings & Associates on retirement plans, this presentation will introduce you to other plans besides the 401K.

The afternoon session will be product oriented. We will be introduced to products that will help us in our operations

Day Two Meetings: The morning session will be educational with a presentation on Marketing and one on Education - Vocational Training of Employees. The afternoon session will be tool oriented with presentations on what's new in the market place to help the efficiency of your operations.

Day Three: Tampa Spring Company, we are looking forward to showing you our facility in Tampa. We hope to give you ideas that you might take to your shops. There will be a wide variety of displays and equipment demonstrations followed by lunch.

As for the Ladies, Thursday will be a day at the Museum of Science and industry with their much-acclaimed special exhibit of The Bodies as well as their permanent exhibits. They also have a wonderful IMAX theater.

Friday will be a take you on a bus tour of Tampa followed by shopping at the International Mall. Don't forget your American Express Card.

**P.S. WE PROMISE THERE WILL BE NO SNOW !!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!**

Tampa Spring Company 1927-2006 a brief history.  
By John Messina, Jr.

Tampa Spring & Wheel was established in 1927 by John Eckart. The business revolved around repairing leaf springs and straightening wheels for the automobile market. The original shop was located in Tampa, Florida on Tampa Street near downtown. With its coal fired forge, hammers and anvils this shop was truly a throwback to blacksmith shops of the past. Spring steel was made using tempering techniques that were more art than science.

In 1967 with no family member willing to take over the business, Tampa Spring & Wheel Company was slated to be closed and had even gone as far as to notify it's customers.

Seeing the need to keep a spring shop in operation in the City of Tampa, Bartle & Peter J. Azzarelli along with Edmund R. Regnier purchased the company. The Azzarelli's were in the Construction business and had long used Tampa Spring & Wheel to repair springs for their trucks. Edmund R. Regnier was working for Roper Stove Works in Kankakee, IL and he agreed to come and operate the company in Tampa. The early years were a true leaning experience for all involved.

By 1969 the company had outgrown its downtown shop and a new shop was built on Brooks Street off of Busch Blvd. The new 5000 square foot shop was opened in 1970.

At the time of the move it was decided to specialize in leaf springs for the auto and truck market and the wheel straitening equipment was liquated. Along with this change the name of the company was changed to Tampa Spring Company to better reflect the nature of the business. It was in January 1973 that John Messina, Jr. began working at Tampa Spring Company part time while going to the University of South Florida. The new owners invested in equipment to make the operation more efficient; the old coal fired forge was replaced with a gas fired furnace to heat steel for tempering, an air assist assembly table replaced the old hand screwed table, and u-bolts were made using a Horton air bender instead of a vise and clamps. This was just the beginning by the middle & late 70's we designed and built a hydraulic assembly table to replace the "finger grabber" air table and a hydraulic spring arching press to replace the sledge hammer and fitting block method of arching spring leaves. The Horton air u-bolt bender was replaced by a new hydraulic u-bolt bender manufactured by Leo Turner of L&H Threaded Rods. It was at this time that we purchased from Beeline a front-end alignment machine as well as a rear tandem aligner.

By the middle of the 1980's the shop had been expanded 3 times to approximately 14,000 square feet. We no longer tempered our own spring steel; instead we purchased repair plate and springs from such companies as Service Spring Company, Stanley Spring Works and Triangle Auto Spring. We had expanded our inventory to include a wide range of suspension parts for automobiles and trucks such as pins, bushings, kingpins, tie rod ends, hangers, etc. In 1986 John Messina, Jr. bought into the company and in 1987 became the Manager.

In the late 1980's we began altering wheelbases, stretching, reinforcing and repairing the frames of trucks. We also began servicing air brakes and repairing drive axles, clearly we were "not just springs anymore". In the mid 1990's we purchased an Axle Surgeon steering axle system as well as a drive axle boring system and become a franchisee for the central Florida area.

In 1998 we opened a branch operation in Ocala, Florida to better service our customers in this area. This shop has grown from a rented facility on Pine Ave to our own state of the art facility located on SR40 near I-75. At this location we can perform all the same job functions as in Tampa except for truck frame straightening. In 1998 John Messina, Jr. became the Operations Manager for Tampa and Ocala.

We established a system of constantly upgrading our equipment and the range of services that we provide to our customers. With this in mind in 2002 we put in place a small machine shop at the Tampa facility and in 2003 we purchased a Beeline frame-straightening machine and installed it at the Tampa facility. This complemented the framework we had been doing for many years without benefit of this equipment. Between the years 2003 & 2004 John & Barbara Messina purchased the remainder of the shares of Tampa Spring Company. In 2004 we again expanded our Tampa facility by adding 6 working bays and warehousing space. In 2005 we began work on expanding into Polk County, Florida to better service our customers in this area; I am pleased to announce that we will be breaking ground on this new facility in 2006.





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**Proud to be a new TARA member! THANK YOU for welcoming us!**



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**TARA** the truck frame and axle repair association

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Truck-frame & Axle Repair Association  
3741 Enterprise Dr S.W.  
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# TARA PROGRAM----TAMPA, FLORIDA----FEB. 22-25, 2006

Wednesday, February 22, 2006

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Registration, Snacks & Cash Bar

Thursday, February 23, 2006

7:00 AM Breakfast  
8:00 AM Closed meeting (Regular Members)  
9:30 AM General Meeting (All Members & Guests)  
10:45 AM Break  
11:00 AM Mills Cumming & Assoc. - Retirement Plans  
12:00 PM Lunch  
1:15 PM Aatro Engineered Systems  
1:30 PM Automann  
1:45 PM Dayton Parts, LLC  
2:15 PM Gaumers Industries  
2:30 PM Break  
2:45 PM MOR/ryde International  
3:00 PM VW Kaiser Engineering, Inc.  
3:15 PM PG Adams  
3:30 PM Peer Bearing Co.  
3:45 PM Ridewell Corp.  
4:15 PM Triangle Suspension Systems, Inc.  
4:45 PM Triseal Dist.  
5:00 PM Adjourn  
6:00 PM Embassy Suites - Managers Reception  
Dinner - Open

Friday, February 24, 2006 - Con't

8:15 AM Speaker - Marketing  
10:15 AM Break  
10:30 AM Speaker - Education  
12:00 PM Lunch  
1:30 PM Beeline  
1:45 PM Hunter Engineering Co.  
2:00 PM Icas Computers Systems, Inc.  
2:15 PM Grey Automotive  
2:30 PM Axle Surgeons  
2:45 PM Break  
3:00 PM Aim Supply/Ace Tool  
3:15 PM Emerson Manufacturing  
3:30 PM JPC Specialties  
4:00 PM Adjourn General Meeting  
6:00 PM Dinner - Embassy Suites  
7:30 PM Entertainment

Saturday, February 25, 2006

8:30 AM Board Bus to Tampa Spring Co.  
8:45 AM Welcome by John Messina, Jr.  
9:00 AM Tour of Tampa Spring Co.  
Trade Show & Demos  
12:00 PM Lunch provided by Tampa Spring Co.  
1:30 PM Bus returns to Hotel

Friday, February 24, 2006

7:00 AM Breakfast  
8:00 AM Opening remarks

## Ladies Program

### Wednesday, February 22, 2006

6:00 PM Registration & Social Hour

### Thursday, February 23, 2006

8:15 AM Breakfast

9:30 AM Shuttle to Museum of Science  
Tour Bodies Exhibit  
Tour Permanent Exhibits

1:00 PM Lunch

2:00 PM IMAX Theater

3:30 PM Shuttle to hotel

### Friday, February 24, 2006

8:15 AM Breakfast

9:30 AM Bus Trip  
Bus tour around the city of Tampa  
Shopping @ International Plaza & Bay St.

1:00 PM Lunch

2:15 PM Board bus for return to hotel

6:00 PM Dinner & Entertainment

### Saturday, February 25, 2006

Open morning

11:15 Board bus for lunch at Tampa Spring Co.



Registration  
 TARA Winter Meeting  
 Feb. 22 – 25, 2006  
 Embassy Suites  
 USF/Busch Gardens  
 Tampa, FL.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

COMPANY NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ CITY \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP CODE \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Fees: Regular Meeting \$275.00 Women's Program \$100.00

Print names as you want it to appear on badge. (Make copies for additional registrations.)

First Name	Last Name	Registration Amount
_____	_____	\$ _____

Spouse _____	\$ _____
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Total Registration \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Prepayment Required Check \_\_\_\_\_ or Visa/ MasterCard \_\_\_\_\_ (information below)

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HOTEL REGISTRATION: Embassy Suites  
 USF/Busch Gardens  
 Tampa, FL Phone: 813-903-6625

TARA must make reservations for meeting rates. Hotel registration deadline: Jan. 18, 2006  
 Room Rates \$134.00.00 (Your room will be guaranteed with your credit card, no checks please.)

NAME	ARRIVAL DATE	DEPARTURE DATE
_____	_____	_____

Single \_\_\_\_\_ Double - Double \_\_\_\_\_ King \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Smoking \_\_\_\_\_

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Name on card \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

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Questions:

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