

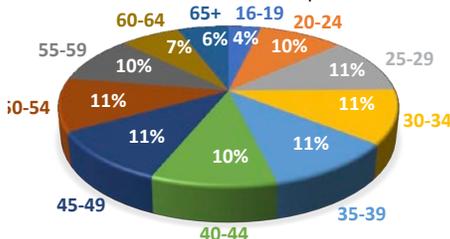


Are The Schools Failing Us?

Or are we failing the schools?

For many years now, we've heard about the shortage of heavy-duty vehicle technicians in North America. But it turns out that this is by no means unique to our industry. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, nearly half of the U.S. workforce (noninstitutional civilians) is over 45. The baby boomers are retiring. Our skilled workforce is going away.

2016 US Labor Force by Age
Civilian Noninstitutional Population



SOURCE: Bureau of Labor Statistics

It's even worse for the trades. According to a recent study cited in *Forbes*, 53 percent of all skilled trade workers in the united states were aged 45 years and over. And everyone seems to agree that it's only going to get worse.

Why?

One big reason is that the schools aren't turning out students that are fully qualified and ready to go to work, day one. So the schools are failing us. Right? Maybe not.

It may be that we, not just skilled trades but North American employers across the board, are expecting too much from our schools while, at the same time, not reaching out to help them help us.

Expecting too much? Really?

According to Peter Cappelli in his book, "Why Good People Can't Get Jobs" employers are demanding more of job candidates than ever before. They are looking for trade-school grads who can make a meaningful contribution to the company's profitability immediately. No apprenticeship. No on-the-job training. They should have learned everything they need to know in school. But is that reasonable?

In today's world of on-line job applications, there was one company that had 25,000 applicants for a pretty straight-forward engineering position. But the staffing people said that not one of them met the qualifications.

In an economy where employers can't find enough qualified workers and the work force can't find enough decent jobs, something is obviously wrong. Part of the problem is that employers expect too much from the job applicant. However, part of it is that the kids are coming out of school without the training they need. But there's something we can do to help.

What can we teach the teachers?

At a recent meeting of the TMC, it was brought out that students coming out of trade schools are missing a lot of the important knowledge that every heavy-duty repair technician needs to have. That includes things like basic electrical knowledge, precision measurement, how to follow a troubleshooting tree and even basic writing skills.

Why are these skills not taught? The answer may sound overly simplistic, but the fact is many schools don't know what skills to include in their curricula. Many of the people who sit on the planning boards have never been in a heavy-duty repair facility, well enough worked in one.

That's where we come in.

SSA members can help to change this situation by picking up the phone and calling the schools in your area. They would welcome your input. They may even ask you to volunteer to join an advisory committee.

At our meeting in October, we'll be talking about how to go about this. One of our guest speakers, George Arrants will have a lot to say on this subject. So if you haven't registered yet, go to the SSA website now:

WWW.TRUCKSERVICE.ORG



The following article is a blog written by Katie Dilse, the keynote speaker for this year's SSA Convention. It is reprinted here with her permission. You can learn more about her at: www.katiedilse.com.

WHEN YOU FILL YOUR TANK WITH GAS, YOU EXPECT TO COVER MILES. IT'S A GIVEN.

When you work, you expect to get paid... it's usually contracted. But, production agriculture is not simple. There's no guarantees you'll work and get paid. Just guarantee you will work.

We stay up at night pondering the forecast, penciling our fate. Yet, at the end of 365 days our wrinkled, callused hands don't grasp a pay check. In these tough years, we pay to work. And the gray hair comes free. And we still wait for rain.

We, the drought-affected farmers and ranchers of a very large area, are in a disaster. Our livelihoods devastated. For some, we've been hit a few years in a row. It takes its toll and it's hard to get ahead.

Imagine watching a project you've spent a lifetime perfecting, only to watch it deteriorate with the thermometer climbing and forecasts without hope. The baking of the land.

I pluck another head of wheat. The color is wrong, its shape out of whack. The plant has not produced a single seed. An empty head of wheat. Just because we combine, doesn't mean we get yields.

Glancing at the brown pastures, the cattle are hungry. The hay crop is slim. Yet, the mess needs to be cleaned up. So the tractors still run. Another expense.

Can you imagine showing up to work everyday, and not getting paid? Imagine the desire it takes to just get out of bed every day?

Let alone engage your mind? Working to find the best problem-solving skills to make the most economical and environmental decisions? The basic tasks become quite difficult.

Families are burdened. Everyone is cutting back. The entire region, our state, is dramatically affected.

Yet, everyone is looking ahead. Because there's always next year.

Maybe rain will come?

Maybe prices will climb?

But we know, expenses will not drop.

But, we get up, face the day, and find the beauty.

The pride in grilling a homegrown burger. Boiling a huge pot of noodles from our durum. Watching our kids care for their animals, and learn to weld. Appreciating wide open spaces and room to roam. Spaces to think. Chores to teach responsibility and tiny pleasures.

And dang... tractors are sexy. The new beard is pretty saucy too. And it all works out. For falling in love with farming and ranching, is falling in love with nature. With simplicity. With brilliant, unselfish souls. We appreciate the miracles in the muscling of our animals, and the delicate texture of our fields.

For we love farming. We love ranching. Sure, not everyday do we love our job, but we're looking behind with we see a whole lot. Sometimes it's just a fog. But ahead, we look with hope. And we will bond together. Through the tough years, and clinging tighter for a good year.

The Tamaya People

The Santa Ana Pueblo people who have lived on this land for over 400 years believe that their ancestors came from a mysterious subterranean world known as Shipap.

They had to ascent through four different worlds before reaching the surface. These worlds are known as the white, red, blue and yellow worlds. They were assisted on their journey by the goddess, Iyatiko.

When they emerged onto the surface, to a land they called Siapapu, they found it inhospitable. So they migrated south to a place they called White House. There, they lived with the gods who taught them skills they would need to survive.

Of course, they weren't called Santa Ana Pueblo back then. That name came from the Spaniards. Originally, they were known as the Keresans.

You might think that being taught by the gods would be a good thing. But the Keresans started to argue with them, especially the Kachinas, those gods who controlled the rain. Iyatiko became angry with them and confused their language so that they split into different factions who could no longer understand each other.

These different factions drifted apart, eventually settling in different areas. One group moved further south and eventually settled in a strip of land located in New Mexico's fertile Rio Grande valley. This group became known as Tamayame, a tribe speaking the Keres language.

The Spanish arrived in the 1540s. The Tamaya were eventually subjected to the Spaniards by 1598. Futile attempts were made to make Catholics out of the Keresans. A portion of their crops were seized each year to support the Spanish military. The rule of the Conquistadores was harsh. Consequently, the Pueblos rebelled in 1680 in a revolt led by Popé, a chief who lives in the memories of the Pueblo people with the no less stature than that of Tecumseh, Joseph, Cochise, Manuelito or Crazy Horse.

Popé was not only a masterful military strategist but also a brilliant politician who managed to unite the dispersed Pueblo leaders into one powerful force that successfully rebelled against their Spanish rulers. It took the Spaniards twelve long years to re-establish their dominance over the Rio Grande Valley. But in doing so, they were forced to allow the Pueblo nations to return to their religious traditions.

The Tamaya Regency Hyatt Resort is located on the Native American Santa Ana Pueblo Reservation, just outside of Albuquerque, New Mexico where the 2017 SSA Convention will take place. While you are there, you will have ample opportunities to experience the culture and customs of the Tamaya People.

2017 Convention Schedule

TUESDAY October 3	WEDNESDAY October 4	Times	THURSDAY October 5	FRIDAY October 6	SATURDAY October 7	SUNDAY October 8	
Early Arrivals and Check In (For those who want to play golf on Wednesday)		7:00am	Breakfast	Breakfast	Breakfast	Checkout and Departures	
		7:30am					
		8:00am	<i>"Keynote Address"</i> Katie Dilse	<i>"Air Brakes"</i> John White	<i>"There Is No Technician Shortage"</i> George Arrants		
		8:30am					
		9:00am	<i>"Cybersecurity"</i> Jim Idle				
		9:30am					
	10:00am	Break	Break				Break
	Golf Outing	10:30am	<i>"Are We Crazy?"</i> Craig Fry				Supplier Presentations
		11:00am					
		11:30am	Supplier Presentations	<i>"SSA Career Initiative"</i> Craig Fry			
		12:00 noon					
		12:30pm	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch (Board Meeting)		
		1:00pm					
		1:30pm	Booth Time	Booth Time	Round Table Discussions		
		2:00pm					
		2:30pm			Member Meetings		
		3:00pm					
		3:30pm	Family Time	Family Time	Family Time		
	4:00pm						
	4:30pm						
	5:00pm						
	Reception	5:30pm	Reception	Reception	Reception		
		6:00pm					
Dinner On Your Own	6:30pm	Reception	Reception	Reception			
	7:00pm						
		Dinner On Your Own	Dinner On Your Own	SSA Banquet			

The schedule for this year's SSA Convention is packed with seminars and business meetings that are sure to be of value to all in attendance.

Katie Dilse will be our keynote speaker. She's feisty, spontaneous and real with an undeniable Spirit on Fire! The moment Katie enters a room; you know she's there. The energy elevates, laughter builds, smiles grow and hearts open. She is a business owner, wife, mother of four boys, farmer, and Big Rig driver. She brings her vast life experiences to the stage and just as her farm feeds the world, her passion for life will feed your soul. Katie will kick off our first day of activity on Thursday morning and set the pace for the rest of our sessions.

Jim Idle, owner of a Chicago-based IT firm is next. He's going to talk about a subject that we're all concerned about: Cybersecurity. Is your business at risk for being hacked by bad actors on the Internet? Is the anti-virus

program that came with your computer good enough to protect you? How do these guys get into your system anyway and is there more you can do to protect yourself? Jim will help us to understand the risks and appropriate safeguards currently available.

Craig Fry, the Executive Director of SSA is going to talk about the psychology behind most of the management decisions that we make every day. For three years running, Craig was the most award-winning creative director in the city of Chicago. Now, as a management consultant, he's a student of human behavior as you'll see in his presentation: "*Are We crazy?*"

John White is an air brake pro who often serves as an expert witness in legal cases involving brake-related accidents. On Friday, he will present a two-hour seminar dealing with how you can make sure your work is in compliance with federal regulations and what you should do to reduce your liabilities.

George Arrants is currently the Director of Training and Recruitment for the Wheel Time Network. But that's just the beginning. He also works with NATEF, AYES, ASE, TMC and has as much knowledge as anyone in the industry about current educational programs for technicians. Want to know where your future technicians are going to come from? George is going to tell us and you'll be amazed when you hear his answer.

Skip Potter is the Executive Director of the National Automotive Service Task Force (NASTF), an organization that you should know more about. On Saturday, he'll introduce himself and explain how NASTF can be of value to heavy duty repair shops.

Finally, **Craig Fry** will talk one more time to introduce a new SSA program, the SSA Career Initiative. It's a way for you to get personally involved in shaping the future of our business. You won't want to miss it.

THE LEAF



A NEWSLETTER PUBLISHED FOR THE
MEMBERS OF THE SERVICE SPECIALISTS
ASSOCIATION

VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.TRUCKSERVICE.ORG

From the Desk of Ken Mard

New Mexico is beautiful place and I am excited that the SSA is back again!

The Hyatt Regency Tamaya Resort & Spa is an amazing place to stay. If you haven't booked your rooms yet please book them now. The views from the patio are spectacular and the hotel provides plenty to do with some great pools to relax by. If you want to stretch your legs there you can hike the many trails around the resort and enjoy the sights. The Tamaya Resort is about 20 minutes north of the center of Albuquerque and just under an hour south of Santa Fe.

Albuquerque has rich historical sites, many museums and while we'll be there the annual Albuquerque International Balloon Festival. The balloon festival is a world-renowned attraction for adults and kids of all ages. The first week in October brings the smell of roasting chiles and the beautiful, magical moving picture show of hot air balloons sailing



Ken Mard, SSA President

silently through the crisp fall air. Literally hundreds of balloons will be taking flight from the Balloon Fiesta Park.

I feel this year we have a great balance of presenters to benefit your shop and family time. Katie Dilse will be kicking off the presentations and I'm sure if you skip your coffee that morning Katie's energy will more than make up for it! Jim Idle will help keep our ever changing computer systems protected. If you want a taste of what Jim is all about check out his youtube video called

"5 reasons network security". Then when you add to the mix Craig Fry, John White and Skip Potter there is something for everyone. As usual the part of the convention I'm looking forward the most will be the round tables and seeing all of our members.

What Ever Happened to the Annual SSA Financial Analysis?

Remember when we used to ask our members to fill out an anonymous financial report on their business each year and then have an independent accounting firm publish the results? We stopped doing that because too few members were participating. Maybe they were worried about confidentiality, which should never have been a concern. Or maybe it was just too much effort. Yikes, yet another form to fill out each year!

But a number of members have expressed a desire to bring this feature back. Here's how Dave Parsons expressed the benefits he saw:

1. Management requires measurement of performance. Use of performance measures highlights areas needing business improvement.
2. Industry leaders can be identified. Group focus can target high performers for insights on how to improve, via presentations or roundtable discussions.
3. Business valuation. Industry "norms" are useful for bank financing and or buy/sell evaluations.

Thanks for your thoughts, Dave. Do you agree? Disagree? Give it some thought and be ready to express your opinion during our round table discussions when we meet in October. With everything that's going on in our industry these days, it may be time to bring this survey back.