



# THE LEAF

SUMMER 2008

## THE POWER OF THE SPRING

This year, in San Diego, you're going to have a chance to test your knowledge of springs in a contest of engineering skill: La Mouse 2008.

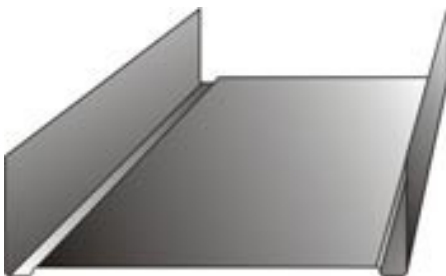
Here's how it works.

Everyone attending the annual meeting in San Diego is invited to design a car powered by the spring from a Victor Mouse trap to enter in the La Mouse 2008 model car race.

### The Rules Are Simple

The spring must be unmodified and it must be the *only* source of power. The race track will be 50 long and flat. The contest will be held in a series of elimination races with two cars racing in each heat. The car that survives all challengers in a series of elimination races will be the winner.

To keep the cars on the straight and narrow, and protect bystanders, the cars will race in a track constructed of space-age materials. Okay, it's actually metal drywall tracks, the kind you can buy at

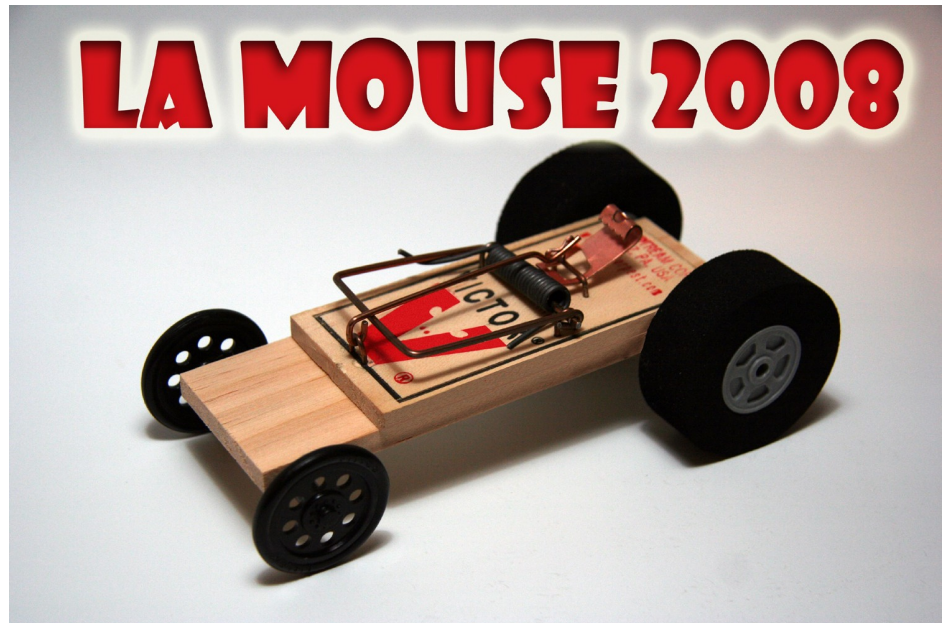


Race track is 3.625 inches wide.

most any lumber yard. But the inside width of this track (3.625 inches) is critical. If your car is too wide, you're in trouble. The inside height is 1.0625 inches. That's less critical, but we thought you might want to know just the same. The full rules to this event will be published on the SSA website ([www.truckservice.org](http://www.truckservice.org)).

### How To Build A Mouse Trap Car

Plans for how to build a mouse trap car are abundant on the Internet. Go to your



favorite search engine and type "mouse trap car." You'll quickly begin to see that there is plenty of opportunity for ingenuity in the design and construction of these vehicles. There are also quite a few kits available which can be built as-is or modified. Creativity is encouraged. Cheating may or may not go unnoticed. But the difference between a "mouse trap" spring and "rat trap" spring will likely be spotted by everyone.

### The Judging

Two awards will be given out. The first will be for performance, to the car that survives all elimination challenges. The second will be a Concours d'Elegance judging, awarded to the best looking entry. All disputes will be settled by mob rule.

### The Stakes

There is more involved in this competition than ephemeral trophies. This is a nothing less than a moment in history. It may well determine how you are viewed by your peers for years.

Will certain unnamed manufacturers walk away as winners or will they lack the backbone to even enter? There are certain members who claim to be spring specialists ... but what will those boasts fall flat if they can't even harness the power of a mouse trap?

Without an entry in this milestone event, will those who suffer from morbid timidity every be able to face their fellow members again? Or their families?

These and other questions will be answered definitively on Friday evening, October 10th in San Diego.

Be there.

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## A MESSAGE FROM SSA PRESIDENT, MARK RUBINI

This newsletter is a very important one, we are asking for your help and participation.

First, you will find the registration materials for the annual convention, October 08-12 in San Diego.

In order to make all the events go as smoothly as possible, please fill out registration forms and have them in by September 10, 2008.

As you can see from the preliminary agenda, given to you in the last newsletter and also posted on the SSA website, there will be multiple money making opportunities. It is also be a chance to reunite with friends in the business.

Secondly, you will find the reporting form for our annual 'health of the industry' survey done by Dr. Al Bates.

There is arguably no other tool as valuable as these survey results in evaluating the progress of your business, because you will be evaluated next to other operations much like yours.

Also, don't miss Dr. Al Bates at this year's convention as one of our featured speakers.

Thirdly, in our continuing efforts to provide members with as many benefits as possible, we are looking into health insurance for SSA. This will be a great benefit to everyone. The more people participate the better the savings we will be able to provide. All you have to do is answer a few questions.

Please take the time to fill in both forms included in this mailing and provide the information necessary for the insurance proposal. Then return them as soon as possible. Thank you.

I will see you all in San Diego. This will be the best gathering we've ever had.

Sincerely,

*Mark Rubini*

PS... I plan to 'kick mouse butt' in the La Mouse 2008 race... Come prepared- we may even make a small wager!

## SURVIVING THE BIG ONE: BY BOB LOSYK (A SPEAKER AT THIS YEAR'S CONVENTION)



### Have a Disaster Plan

Unfortunately, when the wolf is at the door, many owners realize then that it's too late to do much to protect their businesses. Having a well-thought-out plan will make all the difference in the world to your business' survival. Obviously, you can't have a plan for every disaster that

Mother Nature can dish out, but if you live in a geographic area that is prone to flooding, earthquakes, tornadoes or hurricanes, you can plan for those. Any plan is better than none at all.

A good start is to have written records of clients, vendors and suppliers as well as each employee's address, social security number, payroll information, and phone number. We rely heavily on computers these days. But you can't access records if you don't have electrical power to turn on a computer. Make a written list of all community emergency services. It's a good idea to keep a copy of these lists in a bank's safety deposit box as well as off-site of your business premises.

Back up all valuable computer data and store them at another location as well. The faster your business can get into your databases, accounting systems, etc., the faster you can recover.

The first thing to go, after a disaster, will be your communication equipment. You'll need to contact other employees to determine their safety and assess your company's situation. You'll need some location to work from, and it should have adequate phone lines. You'll need to contact your customers who have pending repairs or part orders, and let them know the situation.

Remember, if they are trying to reach you by phone they probably won't be getting an answer. Plan to set up a system for obtaining emergency funds.

A line of credit, set up in advance, will do miracles for accomplishing everything that needs to be done, and it will relieve the added pressure of lack of cash flow at a crucial time. It's a good idea to have cash on hand for necessities you will need immediately. Remember, your bank may be out of commission too.

### What about loss of revenue and profits?

Business interruption insurance will protect you for a halt in business activity over a long period of time. It goes into effect when the halt was caused by direct physical damage to property or equipment as a result of fire, flood, earthquake, etc. It will cover loss of net income, and continuing expenses such as payroll, rent and utilities while you rebuild, repair or replace damaged property. The insurance company will demand proof of expenses such as employee salaries and rent of a temporary location and equipment which is another reason to keep records in a safe, off-site location.

Employees need to know that they must check in with the company as soon as it is safely possible. There may be something your company can do to help them if they are affected by a disaster as well. Employees need to know that they still have a job, and how they can pitch in and help to get the business going again.

After your company has created a disaster plan, do a mock simulation and see how it goes. It's better to discover the weak areas or overlooked problems beforehand; after all, you don't want any surprises at a crucial time.

Be sure to update any changes such as employees, their addresses and phone numbers, insurance and bank information, suppliers, clients, parts and repairs pending, etc.



## HDAW LEADERSHIP SETS THE THEME FOR '09.

Held in Orlando at the Rosen Centre Hotel and the Orange County Convention Center, February 16-19, 2009 in Orlando, FL, the HDAW '09 theme will be: *Maximizing Opportunities in Challenging Times*.

The 12 members of the HDAW joint operating committee have developed this timely program theme for the upcoming 4th annual HDAW Distributor/Supplier executive conference.

"This is far more important than just a name for the conference. The independent distributor market is facing very challenging times and as distributors we can identify and maximize these opportunities through the conference program," says Marc Karon, HDAW '09 co-chairman and president of Total Truck Parts in Florida.

"The softening economy, all of the new technology and new systems are having a big impact on the market for replacement parts and service on commercial vehicles," continues Karon, "The volunteer leadership is developing an outstanding program for the independent distributors attending this premier business conference. This program will equip them to hit the ground running when they return home to their businesses. We intend to show that there are numerous opportunities for growth through our conference program."

"The HDAW education committee, made up of industry volunteers, recently met in Chicago and has been actively working on the program. Using several tools the committee of over 30 industry leaders have identified major areas of interest to the independent distributor," states Joe McAleese, HDAW

co-chairman with Karon and president and CEO of Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems.

"Our post-conference survey and a recent topic-poll of all HDAW '09 attendees have given us a clear path to address these challenging times," McAleese continues, "with several hundred responses to our attendee surveys, we are working to prepare an outstanding conference program that will provide tools and information that will make a difference for the participants, as soon as the conference concludes."

HD Aftermarket Week is an all-industry, independent distributor focused, all-inclusive, business to business conference that features an outstanding distributor information and education program, pre-scheduled one-on-one business meetings, networking opportunities with receptions and meals, a HD Industry awards program and luncheon and a first class product expo, all in one place and in less than a one week period.

HDAW is presented by a joint operating committee comprised of industry leaders from American Council of Frame and Alignment Specialists (ACOFAS), Commercial Vehicle Solutions Network (CVSN), Heavy Duty America (HDA), Heavy Duty Distribution Association (HDDA), Heavy Duty Manufacturers Association (HDMA), Heavy Duty Remanufacturing Group (HDRG), International Truck Parts Association (ITPA), Overseas Automotive Council (OAC), Power Heavy Duty, Service Specialists Association (SSA), Truck Pride and VIPAR HD Parts.

For more information on conference registration or for exhibitor and sponsorship opportunities at HDAW 2009, contact Bill Glasgow Sr., conference manager, at 708-226-1300 or email [info@hdaw.org](mailto:info@hdaw.org).

## HEALTH INSURANCE FOR SSA

We are currently gathering information in order to create an insurance proposal for SSA. The insurance that we would like to provide members will be health and dental insurance.

Our aim is to hopefully lower insurance costs for all members of SSA by creating a large group insurance plan.

Below is a list of information that is needed in order to finish the insurance proposal.

1. List of all employees including gender, date of birth, date of hire and approximate salary.
2. Total number of employees with a breakout of how many work in the shop, are in sales, in the office or in the warehouse.

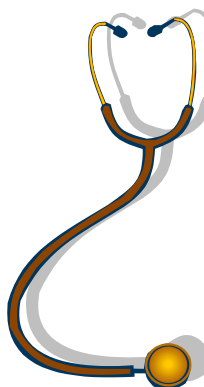
Also helpful would be a breakout of the number of employees in each age category – 18 to 30, 31 to 40, 41 to 50, 51 to 60 and 60 over.

If you do not feel comfortable disclosing salary information, you may omit it, but it is helpful in creating an accurate proposal.

Please send completed information to Kelly Holliday at [kholliday@wade-partners.com](mailto:kholliday@wade-partners.com) or 160 Symphony Way, Suite 2 / Elgin, IL 60120.

If you do not wish to participate in an SSA insurance plan, please send a written response through e-mail or regular mail.

Thank you for your time and participation. We will continue to keep you updated on the status of the SSA insurance proposal.





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## About Service Specialists Association

Service Specialists Association was founded in 1981 and includes over 300 independent truck repair facilities across North America. With the help of supplier members, SSA offers technical, business and industry information and sponsors benefit programs throughout the year, including the SSA Annual Convention.

SSA's most important goal is to provide a forum for business improvement dialogue and a networking opportunity for member shops and associate supplier members. Shop members and associate supplier members are listed on our website

[www.truckservice.org](http://www.truckservice.org).

We welcome independent truck repair facilities to join our "family" of like-minded professionals to enjoy networking and solutions to business and technical problems.

## NEWS AND INFORMATION

### "Workhorses of Yesteryear" Calendars

We have received several calls from members inquiring about the calendars usually put out by SSA. This year we will not be doing this. But we have found a company who produces the calendars at a decent price if you would like to do it independently this year. The company is called PrintGlobe: The Printing Superstore. Their website is [www.printglobe.com](http://www.printglobe.com), and the SKU for this particular calendar is 1857.

### Reminder

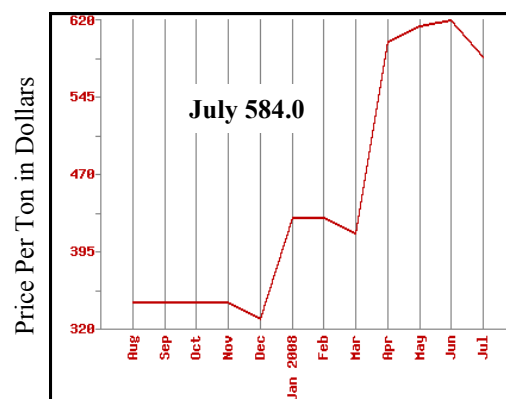
Don't forget to make your reservations for the Loews Coronado in San Diego. The nightly rates are \$199.00 a night, and that extends to 3 days prior to the convention and 3 days after. To make your reservations please call the resort directly at 1-800-815-6397.

### Upcoming Events

- August 14-17: HDA 2008 Summer Sales Meeting at the Hyatt Regency St. Louis. For more information visit [www.hdamerica.com](http://www.hdamerica.com).
- August 21-23: The Great American Trucking Show at the Dallas Convention Center. For more information visit [www.gatsonline.com](http://www.gatsonline.com).
- September 7-9: National Accounting & Finance Council's 2008 Executive Education Forum- *Managing Costs, Emissions and Profits: A New Paradigm*- at the Indianapolis Marriott Downtown. Register online at <http://nafc.truckline.com>.
- September 15-20: TMC's 2008 Fall Meeting & National Technician Skills Competition (TMC SuperTech 2008) at the Renaissance Nashville Hotel in Tennessee. Register online at [www.truckline.com](http://www.truckline.com).
- September 24-26: Safety & Loss Prevention Management Council's 2008 Safety & Human Resources National Conference & Exhibition at the Sheraton Music City in Nashville, TN. For more information visit [www.truckline.com](http://www.truckline.com).

- October 4-7: ATA Management Conference & Exhibition at the Hilton New Orleans and Ernest N. Morial Convention Center in New Orleans, Louisiana. For more information visit [www.truckline.com](http://www.truckline.com).
- October 8-12: SSA Annual Convention in San Diego, CA.
- October 19-24: VIPAR Heavy Duty Annual Business Conference at the JW Marriott Las Vegas Resort and Spa at Summerlin- in Las Vegas, Nevada. For more information email [info@vipar.com](mailto:info@vipar.com).
- November 4-6: AAPEX Show at the Sands Expo Center, adjacent to the Venetian Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada.

## SCRAP STEEL PRICE HISTORY



Iron Age Scrap Price Bulletin, Chicago Market, Low Alloy Plate & Structural, 2 ft. and Under, Low Side, First Effective Date of the Month