



2016 Prius c

# GEEKOUT

An armada of agents is about to roll out in a fleet of Prius c. Their mission: to help people get the most from their technology.

Best Buy's Geek Squad started dispatching more than 1,000 of the hybrids nationwide in April.

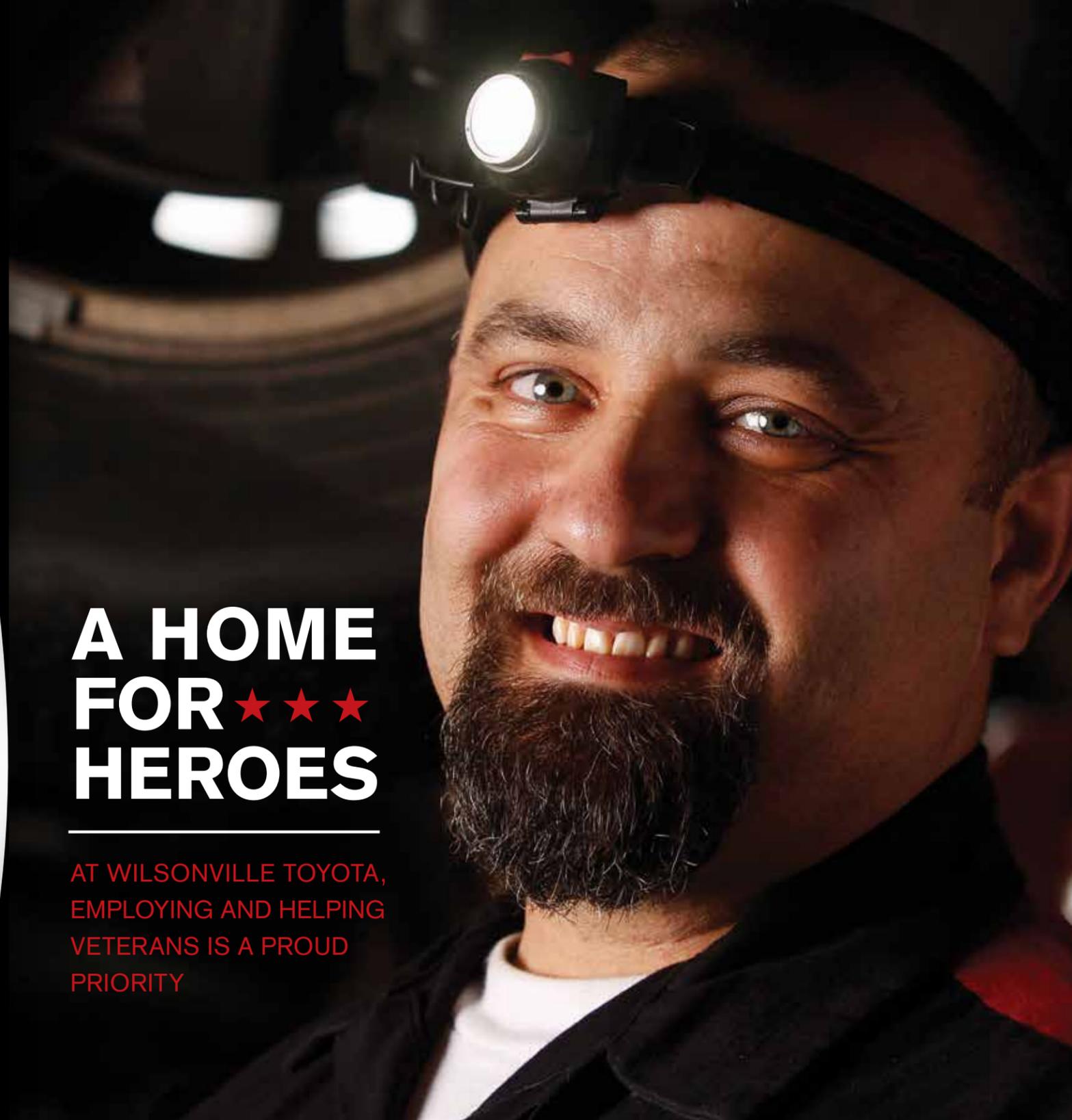
With more than 5 million house calls a year, Geek Squad Agents drive an estimated 12.6 million miles annually. That's a lot of road and gas, making the Prius c's EPA estimated city fuel economy of 53 mpg particularly attractive. Its SULEV

(super ultra-low emissions vehicle) rating also is appealing given Best Buy's commitment to reduce its own carbon emissions.

Geek Squad rolled out in 2004 as the first national computer support task force. And while the Prius c's 17-plus cubic feet of cargo space might not fit a mainframe, it is big enough to shuttle just about anything an agent might need—whether optimizing a home theater experience or installing a security system. 🚗

## A HOME FOR ★★★ HEROES

AT WILSONVILLE TOYOTA, EMPLOYING AND HELPING VETERANS IS A PROUD PRIORITY





**7 Precious Cargo**  
 B.J. Weak recently bought his fourth consecutive Prius from Toyota of Nicholasville. The former Marine relies on his Prius v to transport medicine to hospice patients.



**2 Dealer Doings**

Toyota dealers throughout the nation are breaking world records and making a positive impact in their communities.

**5 Millionaire**

Victor Sheppard's truck gets used and abused, but that didn't stop the mighty Tundra from surpassing 1 million miles. Now, Toyota engineers want to tear it apart.

**9 On the Cover: Wilsonville Toyota**

Retired Air Force Munitions Expert Jeff Pendleton is a service technician at Wilsonville Toyota. The Oregon dealership employs veterans and supports veteran causes like Home with Heroes.

**13 Best in Town**

The "Best in Town" award, inspired by TMC President Akio Toyoda, is the dealer's chance to be acknowledged for delivering an exemplary customer experience.

**DEALER DOINGS:**

**Centennial Toyota**  
 Lighting the Way for Candlelighter Kids

by Dan Nied

In 2013, representatives from Candlelighters walked into Centennial Toyota's Las Vegas dealership looking for a partnership.

The local charity—which serves childhood cancer patients and their families—brought along a few kids to tell their stories.

"There were 40 dealership employees in that meeting," says Rich Greenblatt, Centennial Toyota customer service manager. "By the end, I don't think there was a dry eye in the house."

In the three years since, the bond between Centennial Toyota and Candlelighters has strengthened to the point where the charity recently honored General Manager Anthony Woods as its Philanthropist of the Year. So far, the dealership has given a combined \$132,260.47 in the form of event sponsorships and employee donations. That means a lot to Woods, whose sister died of breast cancer in 2014.

"To see her and my parents deal with cancer on a daily basis was awful," he says. "So we got even more involved in Candlelighters. After that, we wanted to be the primary sponsor for all of their events."

In 2015, the dealership increased its donations and

continued doing whatever it could to raise money for the nonprofit.

That meant a head-shaving event in which Candlelighters kids cut the hair of Centennial employees. That meant putting out a giant change jar and wearing Candlelighters t-shirts every Friday to get customers asking. Anything to help with costs for the charity's annual 5k run and other events.

And now, when you ask Woods how many employees are contributing this year, he answers proudly: "We have 135 employees and all of them participate in some way." In that first meeting, Candlelighters made the point that no dollar is wasted when it comes to helping kids.

"We wanted the employees to understand that everything they do for us big or small, helps these families," says Kelly Webb, Candlelighters development and communications manager. "The employees have gone above and beyond by creating a huge support system for Candlelighters."

And that's by design.

"Every year, we want to be the biggest supporter of Candlelighters," Woods says. "We want to give them the most resources, and we want to have fun with it." ☺



**Reason to Smile**  
 Centennial Toyota Customer Service Manager Rich Greenblatt and Aiden Hennagir celebrate during a Candlelighters event at Centennial Toyota in 2013. The dealership has supported the nonprofit organization, which serves childhood cancer patients and their families, every year since.

**EDITORIAL STAFF**

- Manager Lora Jones
- Editor Lisa Yamada
- Writers Dan Miller  
Dan Nied
- Design AkinsParker

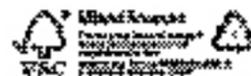
**toyotatoday.com**

Published six times per year for Toyota dealers and dealership personnel by the Corporate Communications Division of Toyota Motor North America. Copyright ©2016 by Toyota Motor North America. Contents may be reprinted with permission. All rights reserved.

Address magazine inquiries to:  
 Lisa Yamada  
 TEL: 469.585.1039 • eMAIL: toyota\_today@toyota.com

For customer inquiries please contact the Toyota Customer Experience Center:  
 TEL: 800.331.4331

For product and company information:  
 WEB: toyota.com • TEL: 800.GO.TOYOTA



## DEALER DOINGS:

### J. Pauley Toyota

#### Dealer Races Nearly 3,000 Miles in the Fight Against Autism

by Dan Miller

##### Go the Distance

Ron Pawley (left) and Brandon Shown raced a 2016 Scion FR-S Release Series 2.0 in the 3,000-mile One Lap of America race.



Ron Pawley loves the car business, racing and his grandson. All three of those passions came together when the owner of J. Pauley Toyota competed in the 34th running of the One Lap of America race in May.

With the support of Brandon Shown, a master diagnostic technician at the Fort Smith, Ark., dealership, Pawley piloted a 2016 Scion FR-S Release Series 2.0 nearly 3,000 miles over eight days. Along the way, the duo went head-to-head against other stock entries in time trials at seven race tracks from Wisconsin to Massachusetts and several states in between. One Lap of America is an iconic competition that, in its original form, was the inspiration for the movie "The Cannonball Run."

Pawley has extensive experience behind the wheel of various race cars. His personal highlight: taking the checkered flag in a prototype vehicle in the 24 Hours of Daytona in 1985. But this time around, rather than put the pedal to the metal, the 70-year-old grandfather said his objective was to go the distance.

"The main reason I did this was to raise money for the charity Autism Speaks," says Pawley, who started selling cars

in 1972 and became the owner of J. Pauley Toyota in 1991. "Gabriel, my 10-year-old grandson, is autistic. So, for the race, I pledged 50 cents per mile of my own money. I'm looking to tap into the Toyota Dealer Match program funds to increase that to \$1 per mile."

But that's not all. Pawley has also challenged customers and friends on the dealership's Facebook page to contribute a penny per mile. So thanks to social media, the final tally could be significantly higher.

Pawley also saw the competition as a fitting tribute to Scion. He was there at the experimental brand's launch in 2003, purchasing one of the first xBs while competing in a race in California. And he'll be there at the end with his limited-edition FR-S.

"People were impressed with how well this car handled," says Pawley, who finished third in the SS GT-2 class. "After the competition, it went straight into my garage and that's where it'll stay, except when I take it out on a Sunday drive. I'll never sell it." 📍

## DEALER DOINGS:

### Northern California Dealers Everybody Loves a (Prius) Parade

by Karen Nielsen

Environmentally speaking, a Prius parade is about as quiet as they come. But that was not the case when 332 Prius owners gathered to drive a 2.1-mile parade and set a Guinness World Record on Earth Day weekend.

Northern California Toyota dealers and Prius owners flocked to the Alameda Air Field on April 23 to shatter the record for the longest hybrid parade lap. Up until then it was 208 vehicles set in 2011 by Smart Motors in Madison, Wis.

The NorCal Toyota Dealers Association and the San Francisco Region didn't doubt for a second that it could be done. There's a lot of Prius pride here. The Bay Area is known for its highly dense Prius population with more than 217,000 vehicles.

Drivers proudly displayed world record numbers on their cars, honked and whooped and celebrated.

"There was a huge community aspect to this event," says Steve Waddell, San Francisco Region vehicle operations manager. "Many of the dealers were calling their customers and having pre-party events and caravanning together to

the parade. It had a tailgating vibe to it."

San Francisco Toyota invited hundreds of customers to the event, printed special T-shirts for them and even custom "wrapped" a Prius for the parade. It's a top-selling vehicle for the top-selling Prius dealership in Northern California, accounting for 30-40 percent of monthly sales.

"I've always wanted to have a Prius driving event and it was great fun to get everybody together," says Doug Donnellan, vice president and general manager, San Francisco Toyota.

As part of the pre-parade Earth Day festivities, owners could play games to win prizes, chow down at food trucks, talk to PriusChat bloggers, take a race course test drive with professional drivers in the 2016 Prius and get a sneak peek at the 2017 Prius Prime.

"It was amazing to see our loyal Prius owners having so much fun... whether on the hot laps course or driving the parade route. Everyone was excited and smiling," Waddell says. 📍

##### World Record

Northern California Toyota dealers wanted to pay homage to the Prius this Earth Day. So they and 332 owners went big and ended up setting a Guinness World Record for the most hybrid vehicles in a parade. Alameda Air Field was an ideal location for a 2.1-mile Prius parade.



# HIGH-MILEAGE MARVEL

HOTSHOT DRIVER'S TUNDRA BLOWS PAST 1-MILLION-MILE MARK

by Karen Nielsen

Victor Sheppard became an unwitting Facebook marvel as friends of Greg LeBlanc Toyota followed his 2007 Tundra's trek to hitting an extraordinary 1 million miles.

Yep, that's right: One. Million. Miles. And, it's rockin' the original engine, transmission and even paint job. OK, well maybe the paint doesn't actually rock, but it sure looks good.

Sheppard hit the rare milestone in February and

continues to draw attention, as many wonder how the Tundra keeps on trucking.

"A lot of people know me now," says Sheppard, who lives in Hahnville, near New Orleans, La. "They did the mileage journey with me. Whenever I hit a milestone, I send in a picture and Greg LeBlanc Toyota puts me on the Facebook page. When I go in to the dealership, they take care of me. I couldn't ask for better people."



"I will go anywhere and feel comfortable and not have to worry like a lot of people. My baby is very dependable."

## MAINTAINING AMAZING

"Most people can't believe how much on his truck is original," says Ron Weimer, general manager of Greg LeBlanc Toyota in Houma, La., where Sheppard has logged 117 service visits over nine years.

"That's the amazing thing about this truck," Weimer says. "Victor has been loyal to his maintenance and kept it up. I think he's a Toyota believer. He believes in the brand."

"My truck looks great and, except for a few little dents, it's almost like new," Sheppard says. "Even the seats look just as they were when I bought it. They're not as clean, of course, but they're not busted or worn out."

"I will go anywhere and feel comfortable and not have to worry like a lot of people," he says. "My baby is very dependable."

## BYE BYE, BABY

Toyota engineers couldn't help but wonder how a Tundra holds up after 1 million miles on the road and what insights they could learn for future trucks. Sheppard was confident to continue driving his truck, but on May 11 Toyota offered him a better deal: a brand new 2016 Tundra. It's, coincidentally, his 16th Tundra.

Sheppard's baby will now be a months-long special project for Mike Sweers, Toyota's chief truck engineer. And as one of the first Tundras from Toyota's San Antonio, Texas, plant, the truck is sure to provide engineers with invaluable knowledge moving forward.

Sweers and his team will tear apart the entire truck, bumper-to-bumper, top-to-bottom to evaluate how the quality and safety they engineered and built into the truck has managed to survive years of real-world driving.

"Having a million-mile truck in as pristine condition as this one with original parts is a truly rare find," Sweers says. 🇺🇸

## MY BABY, MY BEAST

The Tundra garnered regional attention when it was showcased at Toyota's outdoor truck display at the 2012 Texas State Fair in Dallas. At the time, the odometer read 666,803 miles, and Sheppard was already looking ahead to the million-mile goal.

"I knew it wouldn't be a problem. It's safe and dependable," he says.

Sheppard, who has owned numerous Tundra trucks in the past, is a hotshot driver delivering time-sensitive equipment for the oilfield and other industries needing door-to-door service. When the oil business was flush, he averaged 125,000 miles a year, but last year he logged closer to 110,000 with oil prices sliding. He regularly drives long-haul trips to places such as North Dakota, Wyoming and Virginia, and has been known to take a nap or two in the cab.

"This is my baby, my beast. It's also my second home," says Sheppard, who's 6'4". "I'm a big guy, and it's very comfortable for me."



### A Million Miles

Victor Sheppard (center) celebrates 1 million miles driven on his 2007 Tundra with his friends at Greg LeBlanc Toyota: General Manager Ron Weimer (left) and Dealer Principal Geri LeBlanc.



# “I’VE BEEN CONVERTED”

VIETNAM VETERAN AND FORMER GM LOYALIST BUYS HIS FOURTH CONSECUTIVE PRIUS

by Dan Miller

When B.J. Weak was a student at the University of Cincinnati way back when, he had a summer job in the accounting department of a General Motors manufacturing plant. A bit further down the road, he married a woman whose father owned a GM brand dealership.

Flash forward to today. Now, after more than a million miles behind the wheel of three different Prius hybrids, there’s no question where the Kentucky native’s automotive loyalties lie.

“I can afford to buy any car I want and I

choose the Prius,” says Weak. “I don’t know why anyone would drive anything else.”

Weak speaks from experience. The retiree logged all of those miles in just 11 years, delivering medicine to hospice patients throughout northern and central Kentucky. The volunteer job flowed naturally from his longtime career as a sales manager with Hillenbrand Industries that required him to call on clients throughout Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana.

## A HIGHER LEVEL OF QUALITY

When Weak made that transition, he was driving a Buick Le Sabre. The full-size sedan’s high rate of fuel consumption led him to consider the Prius.

“A gas crunch came along,” he says. “I figured out that the Prius basically paid for itself, between what I had been paying for gas and what I would pay with the hybrid.”

The Prius’ exceptional fuel economy convinced Weak to buy it the first time around. But he says the car’s smooth ride and bulletproof reliability led him to buy another. Then another. And another.

Still, the former Marine admits he initially had misgivings about abandoning his domestic roots for a high-tech hatchback made in Japan.

“At first I didn’t like the idea,” says Weak, a Vietnam veteran. “I’m very patriotic. And I’d always been a GM guy. When Toyota came up, it was kind of like a thorn in my side. But I’ve been converted. I recognize a higher level of quality when I see it. And Toyota is head and shoulders above the rest.”

Weak rolled up some 460,000 miles on his most recent Prius. The car never gave him a lick of trouble, requiring just regularly scheduled maintenance. That changed rather abruptly when a friend, who asked to test drive the Prius over the weekend with the intention of buying it from Weak, ran into a deer—totaling the car.

“I can afford to buy any car I want and I choose the Prius. I don’t know why anyone would drive anything else.”

## A HIGHER LEVEL OF SERVICE

As such, Weak had no choice but to buy a new hybrid. Lance Royalty, general sales manager at Toyota of Nicholasville in Kentucky, as well as Sales Consultant Catherine Lauderback helped put together the deal.

“I give all the accolades in the world to that dealer,” says Weak. “Every time I go back, they give me another reason to talk them up with my friends and family. The last time around, I bought some all-weather floor mats. Not only did they wash my car, they installed the mats, which they didn’t have to do. And the last thing they said to me was, ‘Is there anything else we can do for you?’ I’ve shopped a lot of dealers. This one is a credit to Toyota. It’s no wonder they’re a President’s Award winner.”

Now 72, Weak says he’s ready to give up his life as a road warrior for that of a snowbird who retreats to the warmth of Florida during the winter months. He has a daughter who lives in Pensacola and a brother near Orlando.

“I’ll still do a lot of driving, but it’ll be between here and Florida,” he says. “Odds are this will be my last car. Given how long they last, it’s going to be the Prius and then a wheelchair!” ☎

### Semper Prius

B.J. Weak recently bought his fourth consecutive Prius. The former Marine and GM loyalist has relied on the iconic hybrid to transport medicine to hospice patients throughout northern and central Kentucky.

Photos by Paul S. Howell



# HOME ★ WITH HEROES

## Tundra Donation Gives Vets a New Lease on the Outdoors

by Dan Nied

Wilsonville Toyota's relationship with Home with Heroes began with a donation of a Tundra to an organization that served as one of Dealer Principal Dave Jachter's favorite charities.

General Manager Jake Hachmeister, however, didn't know the extent of the organization's mission.

"If you had asked me 10 months ago, I would have said we are giving a truck to a great nonprofit, and they're going to take some veterans and go outdoors," Hachmeister says.

But then in October, Jachter and Hachmeister attended the organization's signature pheasant hunt and saw firsthand that the nonprofit is devoted to using every cent they make to give veterans of all stripes opportunities for adventure and bonding.

"That's where we learned how truly amazing Home with Heroes is," Hachmeister says. "That was our 'aha' moment. Until then, they had our

truck for nine months and we still didn't know much. Then we get there and it clicked. We understood exactly the kind of good they do."

### NOBLE CAUSE

On the homepage of homewithheroes.com is the organization's mission:

*Home with Heroes exists to bring veterans together in the outdoors to honor and thank them for their service. We never forget their sacrifice. We forever show our gratitude.*

The nonprofit was started in 2011 by President Jake Carse and a group of friends as their way of giving back to veterans willing to make the ultimate sacrifice for their country. They hold once-in-a-lifetime fishing and hunting events on a 3,200-acre

### Home on the Range

The nonprofit Home with Heroes hosts once-in-a-lifetime fishing and hunting events for veterans of all stripes, giving them opportunities for adventure and bonding on a 3,200-acre remote private reserve in Centerville, Wash.

Photos by Darby Brooks/True-EssencePhotos



### Happy Hunting

Home with Heroes founder Jake Carse (left) and board member Bryan Bollman have fun while hosting vets.

remote private reserve. Each veteran participant is treated like a VIP and all expenses are paid.

As the organization grew, it became more difficult to offer the vets the kind of first-class experience they wanted using personal cars.

"Our goal is to treat the vets like a VIP, so when we pick them up, we chauffeur them for the entire event," Carse says. "We literally were shuffling and borrowing trucks when we could. It was a constant nightmare."

A brand new Tundra makes a world of difference.

"The fact that the vets can get into a heated seat, and that we can haul gear without it getting wet, that's been huge for us. We would have had a hard time pulling this year off because we're growing so fast. So the Tundra gets reserved and allows us to not get stressed out."

After getting the truck in June, the organization put more than 20,000 miles on it through the end of 2015.

"As soon as we got it, it's been hauling trips back and forth on the ranch," Carse says. "It's been pulling trailers, loading gear up. It's on the road constantly."

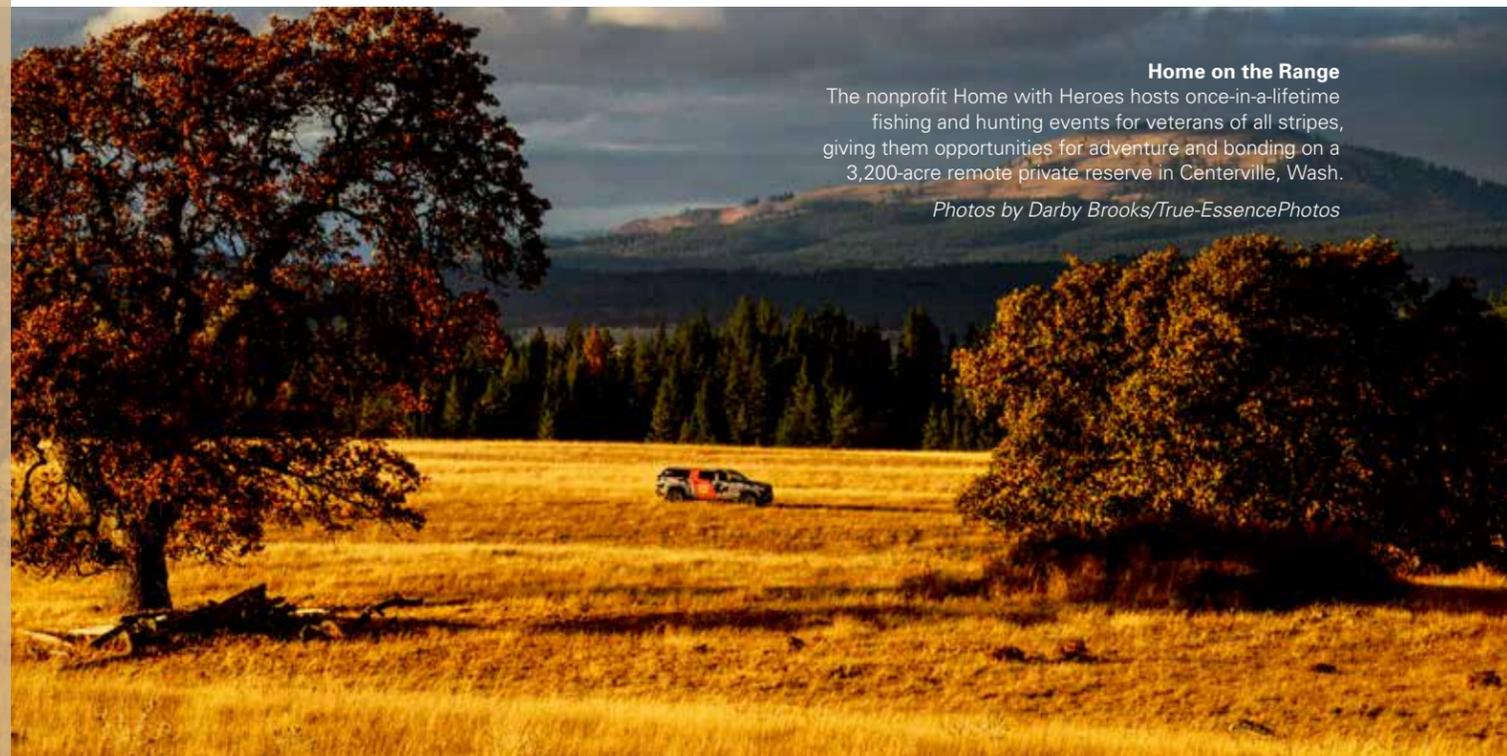
### COMMITMENT TO VETERANS

Wilsonville Toyota has 10 veteran employees (see related story on page 11) already. But part of their affiliation with Home with Heroes has to do with making that number even larger.

"Veterans tend to be a tight-knit group and they're hard to find," Hachmeister says. "That's partly why we signed up with Home with Heroes, to start interacting with veterans in a meaningful way. Once we get into that community, we can start looking for those qualified vets to hire. And we need to do that because they make our dealership better."

The vision truly came into focus at the pheasant hunt, as Hachmeister spoke with a World War II veteran who was grateful to be back outside bonding with fellow veterans who understood his struggle.

"To hear his excitement, you just can't put it into words," Hachmeister says. "It means so much to him to be around people with the same experiences. Home with Heroes is growing more and more. As it does, the more we realize how awesome their work is." ☺





**An Unbreakable Bond**  
 As lead technician at Wilsonville Toyota's Service Department, Darren Clark (top left) leads a team that includes fellow veterans Ben Strausser (bottom left) and Jeff Pendleton. "It's a brotherhood," says Clark.

# A BROTHERHOOD

at WILSONVILLE

by Dan Nied

As Darren Clark talks on the phone, his young daughter joins along in the background.

"She's learning," Clark says. "We're having daddy/daughter day at home."

Life is good for Clark. He's a lead technician in the service department at Wilsonville Toyota in Oregon, and, when he gets a day off, daddy/daughter day is always a big success.

And every day is a blessing. Clark is a veteran who served five tours of duty, including the Iraq War as part of the U.S. Naval Construction Forces, or a Navy Seabee, as they're known.

"We were stationed on the Kuwait border," Clark says. "When the Marines went forward in Iraq, we would go into Iraq, get them out and fix the vehicles. It was scary at times. We were in a small convoy, and most of the times the vehicles were in the middle of nowhere."

When Clark finished his military service, he decided to go to school to become a mechanic. As a

T-TEN graduate at Umpqua Community College, he started at Wilsonville Toyota in 2007.

As a team lead, Clark manages five other technicians, two who also happen to be veterans: retired Air Force Munitions Expert Jeff Pendleton and Marine Harrier Mechanic Ben Strausser. The three have a tight relationship because of their service.

"It's an instant bond and an instant friend to keep you calm," Clark says. "It's a brotherhood, even if you haven't served together. It's a special bond we seem to have."

And it seems that military experience can create model employees.

"In the military, basically, you're ingrained with the work ethic," Clark says. "You learn it really quickly while you're in boot camp. They teach you to bond. Everything is about the team. You're not going to make it without a team."

"That goes for the military and the dealership." ☺

# MEN OF SERVICE

Wilsonville Toyota employs 10 military veterans and expects that number to grow.



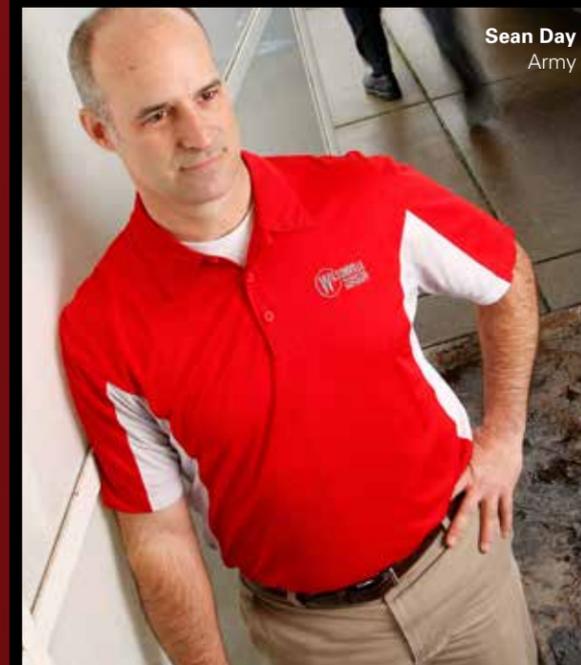
Jay Serhan's combat medal for service in Afghanistan



Paul Schnell  
Army



Jason Arthur  
Navy



Sean Day  
Army



Jay Serhan  
Army

# BEST IN TOWN

Toyota's new award, inspired by Akio Toyoda, puts the selection process in the hands of its dealers

by Dan Miller

It's often said that all politics are local. And the same applies to automotive retailing. Toyota might be the No. 1 automaker around the world. But for customers, what really matters is their relationship with their dealer around the corner.

That's why Akio Toyoda, president of Toyota Motor Corporation, created a new award in 2014—called “Best in Town”—presented to one dealer each year. In 2015 the focus was on the dealer process that best delivered an exemplary Sales, F&I and/or Service experience for its customers.

And he followed through on that promise at the Toyota National Dealer Meeting in Las Vegas last September, personally recognizing the first winner—Beaverton Toyota Dealer Principal Russ Humberston—with the new award. Like hockey's Stanley Cup, the Oregon dealership gets to keep the stunning 52-pound block of crystal until passing it on to its successor later this year.

## PEER-TO-PEER PROCESS

Toyoda might have gotten the ball rolling with this new award. But he doesn't choose its winner. By design, that's left up to Toyota's more than 1,200 U.S. dealers.

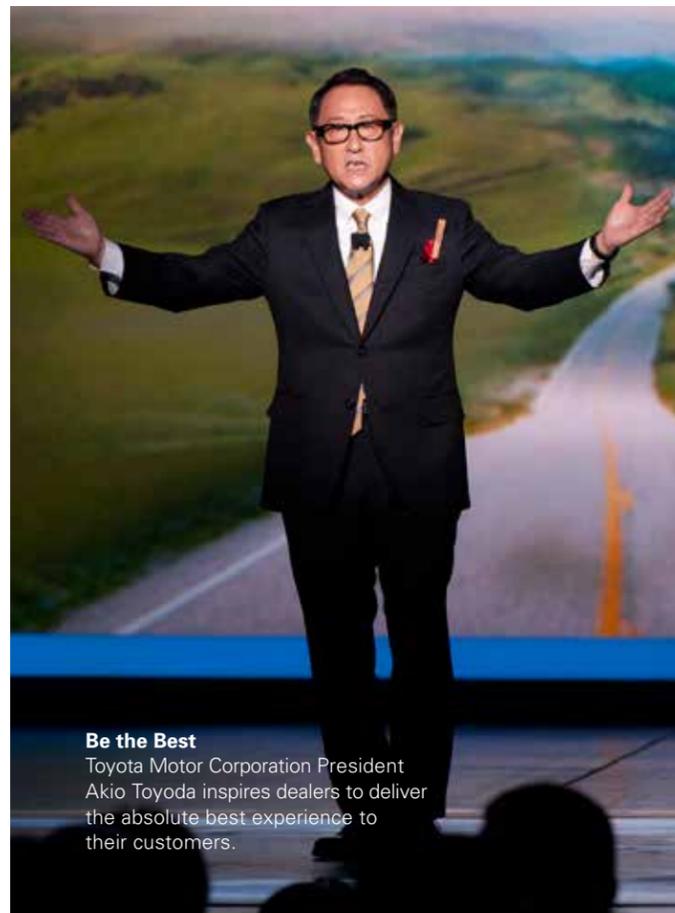
“Unlike existing dealer awards that are based on objective criteria, ‘Best in Town’ is very much a qualitative award,” says Bryan Mitchell, Toyota Motor Sales sales support manager. “And, by design, it is peer to peer. We want our dealers who are out there interacting with customers on a daily basis to decide what is truly exceptional.”

Everything flows through a centralized website, administered by Toyota's field organization. That's

where dealers can submit written descriptions, PowerPoint presentations, video clips and more to communicate their customer care innovations to their fellow dealers.

The winnowing process then follows these steps:

- Via the website, dealers peruse the best practices in their Region and cast votes for as many as three entries. Up to 36 top vote getters (a maximum of three per Region) advance to the next round.



**Be the Best**  
Toyota Motor Corporation President Akio Toyoda inspires dealers to deliver the absolute best experience to their customers.



- Next, a team of executives evaluates the entries to ensure they deliver on Toyota's Let's Go Places brand shift.
- Once again, dealers weigh in, voting for one of the national finalists. The entry that garners the most votes is deemed to have best delivered on Toyoda's challenge and gets the glory.

## YOUR TIME TO SHINE

For 2016, the “Best in Town” entry and selection process is already under way.

But there's a new focus. The theme of this year's award is dealership innovation in connecting with the local community. In other words, how does your philanthropy and charitable work set your store apart from the other businesses in your town? What are you doing to instill a feeling of pride in your customers when they drive their vehicles and think about the people who design, manufacture, sell and service them?

This is your chance to tell your unique story.

“We give dealers ownership of this,” says Mitchell. “This is about promoting and sharing best business practices. It's about recognizing dealers who think outside the box and have the courage to seek out new ways to serve their customers. When it's all said and done, that's what makes a Toyota dealer ‘Best in Town.’”

To learn more about the “Best in Town” award and entry process, dealers should click on the “Best in Town” tab at the top of the Dealer Daily home page. ☺

## Beaverton Toyota Was the ‘Clear’ Choice in 2015

by Dan Miller

What set the Oregon dealership apart from its peers? That would be its clear purchase process, which aims for each customer to work with one sales professional to purchase a vehicle at one non-negotiable price in one hour.

To get there, Beaverton Toyota developed a proprietary iPad application that facilitates virtually all of the steps of the transaction. For instance, customers can review and select financing options via the tablet's touchscreen. And they can sign off on the deal with their finger.

“Our model for this was the Apple store,” says Humberston. “We designed the process around what the customer wants. And, to be honest, this is what our salespeople want, too.” ☺



**A Shining Example**  
Dealer Principal Russ Humberston—shown here amid his store's array of solar panels—is the driving force behind Beaverton Toyota's success.