

Newsbreak

February 2020 Publication of the
Minnesota Professional Towing Association



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Celebrating the Life of



Richard "Dick" Pellow July 20, 1931 – December 23, 2019

It was a brisk, sunshine filled day with a tow truck procession seen for miles, paying homage to Richard "Dick" Pellow and the entire Pellow family along with our extended towing families. On Saturday, January 4th, our towing community celebrated the life of Dick Pellow choosing a Saturday service as Roddy told the congregation; "Dad would be pretty upset with us if we took a day off of work to put him to rest."

At an early age the Pellow children recall watching their father sitting at the top of the stairs every morning tying his shoes for the long day of work ahead.

The shoes their father wore daily were those of a hard-working blue-collar businessman laboring in his body shops, towing companies and salvage pools. As a small child, Roddy would often beg his father to take him to work with him, but he was always too busy.

Eventually, Roddy's wish came true working side by side with his Dad becoming best of friends. Dick knew how and taught Roddy how to fix most anything. It didn't end there.

(continued on page 4)



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**If you would like to make a
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efforts, please send your donations to:**

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Presidents Letter

Written by President, Ron Gardas Jr.

With 2020 well underway, the Association and our industry are looking to the year ahead in 2020. This year the MPTA is continuing our long-term goal of moving our great industry forward. By going to work, I mean, it takes more work and time working side by side with police departments and government. We want our government agencies to use us as a resource for information. If we can continue to give people information on the front side and work together, our hope is that we won't have to play defense on the backside. A prime example of this is: "our over-sized towing" permit. If they didn't know and understand how tow trucks work, and why we are different then every other truck in the world this exemption would have never been able to pass. A huge way that each and every one of us can help this effort is to be compliant. We can not move our industry forward if we continue to fight pointless fights. Each company should be enforcing hands free while driving, make sure we are wearing safety vests, etc. We need to change the perception and be viewed as equals and not as "just that tower." We have done a great job training in the field; however, we need to make as big of strides on the compliance and professionalism.

We are all in this together.

MPTA President, Ron Gardas

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As most know and understand, this was a way of life as the Pellow family all caught the bug working in the family business. With most of the Pellow children working in the family business, soon learning what a strong work-ethic meant passing down to future generations of children in the family today.

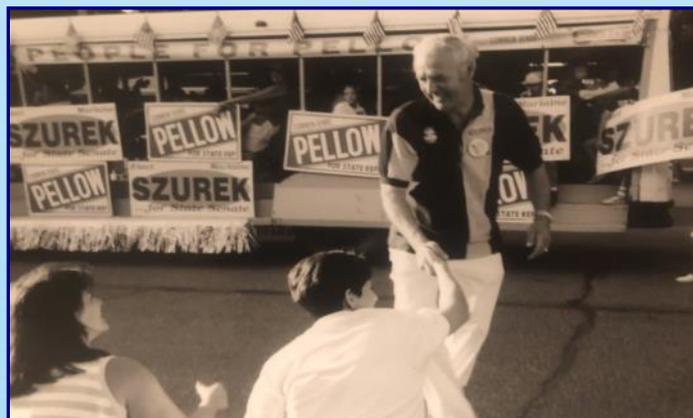
Dick, in his younger years was known as a bit of a rebel, which made it fitting when he slipped on a pair of racing shoes and pushed the pedal on his first race car, a '34 Ford. In an instant, Dick, now a racing enthusiast, soon raced newer and faster race cars driving throughout the Midwest racing circuit becoming track champion at Twin City Speedway.

In 1959 Dick traveled to Florida for the first Daytona 500 race with his friend Bernie Hentges. The car, a '59 Desota, the only Chrysler, qualified 12th of 93 cars. All of this while running a body shop in NE Minneapolis.



After a bad crash in Iowa, Dick traded in his racing shoes for pair of winter boots and bought a towing company. Over the years Dick became one of the founders of the Minnesota Professional Towing Association, Tow Times Magazine, and National Breakdown. Dick was honored by the TRAA, Friends of Towing, and inducted into the International Towing & Recovery Hall of Fame – soon followed by his Son-in-Law Ron Gardas, Sr. Dick was very proud to extend this legacy into a second generation!

Dick was not only devoted to the towing industry, but also to his family and community. He loved driving his convertible in the New Brighton parade with Stockyard Days Royalty waving at people along the way. A few times Dick would mistake an on-looker's slight wave for a high-five and nearly run them over.



Many stories surround Dick Pellow. Most of us are reminded of similar stories as a passenger in his Overland, pickup truck or on his open-sided campaign bus that he built.

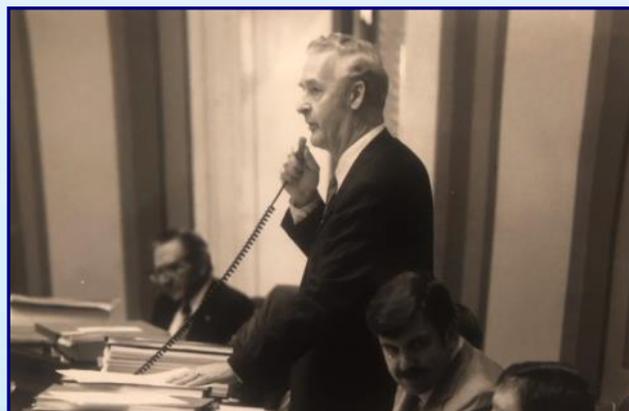
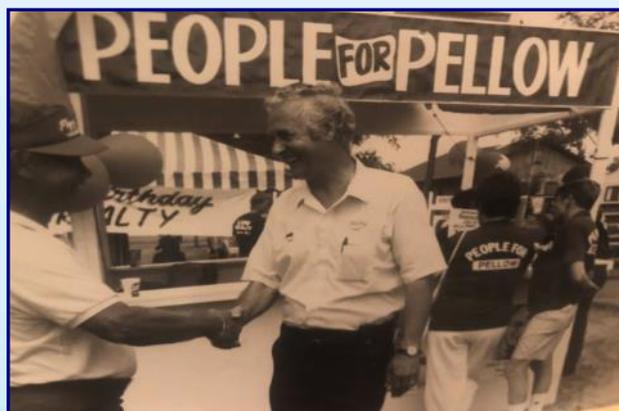
The bus served a good purpose transporting “People for Pellow” volunteers and family members including his grandchildren throughout the community during his campaign signifying a very proud man.

However, Dick chose to lace up a pair of tennis shoes and canvased several miles a day walking from house to house, knocking on every single door gaining support for his run for State Representative for the Mounds View and New Brighton area.

Dick dusted off his dress shoes, worn at the occasional wedding or funeral, began wearing them at the Capitol as a State Representative. His desire to throw his hat into the political ring stemmed from concerns of over-taxation and excessive spending in government as he continued to stand up for small business owners.

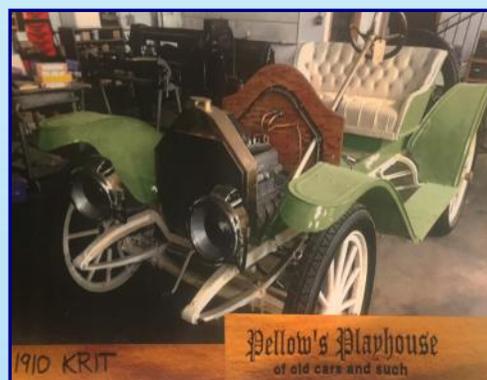


Dick always lived by a motto, "practice what you preach" and stood up for causes he always believed in. He was a man of integrity and courage.



Dick was most comfortable in the shoes that brought him to community events and car shows. When Dick caught the antique car bug in the late 70's, he shared the virus with many of the family members also. Becoming heavily involved with the New Brighton Stockyard Days and the Historical Society, dragging all of us along, once again, as a family they caught the bug again. Seems to be a family pattern...

Nearly all the Pellow family members participated in the London/New Brighton Antique Car Run or cheer them on as they crossed the finish line.



In 1993, the St Paul Winter Carnival sized up Dick in a pair of 11 ½ cowboy boots. He was pleased to be warmly welcomed into the Winter Carnival family as Prince of the West Wind. He loved people and developed many friendships lasting throughout the years. This is evident by the outpouring of love and support the Pellow family has received from local businesses and the towing communities.

He had many different groups, networks and associations he was part of that it's hard to keep them all straight.

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Prior to her death, his wife (Jean) of 62 years was by his side, ensuring the bills were paid and the children and grandchildren were raised right.

Dick's professional accomplishments pale in comparison to the father, grandfather and husband he was. He could often be found drinking his Coca-Cola and eating his candy orange slices at night while reading an old car manual of his latest project.



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As Roddy put it so kindly,

“Dad, we’re proud to call you Dad, to work by your side, and to experience many of these adventures together. We’re grateful for your wisdom, guidance and for providing a path for us to follow.

I will never be able to fill your shoes – well, mainly because yours are 11 ½ and mine a 9 ½.

But...One lesson learned through this journey together is that it’s never about the shoes you wore, but the foot-prints you left behind that lead us to who we are today.

We look at your shoes - with the treads nearly worn
And days on earth numbered - you were born
Your hard-days’ work ended - time to set your shoes aside
For God is calling you - where in heaven you’ll abide

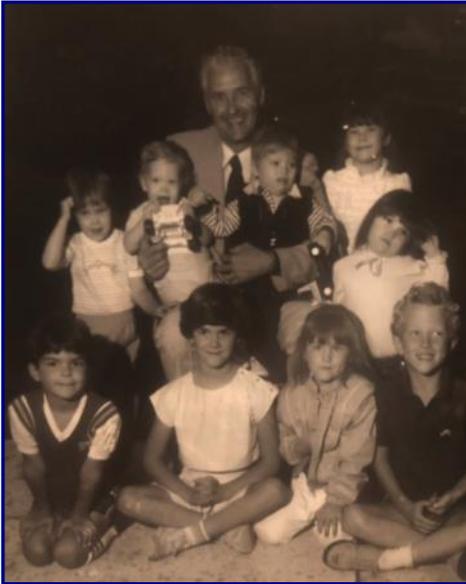
I Love you Dad!



Dick is survived by his children, Ricky (Deb), Randy (Denise), Rodney (Joyce), Renee (Ronald) Gardas and Rochelle Bottineau; 9 grandchildren; 22 great-grandchildren and brother, Robert Pellow. Preceded in death by wife, Jean; parents, Maurice and Letha; sister, Margaret Wanamaker; great-granddaughter, Jaime Pellow and son-in-law, Steve Bottineau.

A Mass of Christian Burial was held on Saturday, January 4, 2020 at 10:30 AM at ST. JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH followed by a luncheon and Interment at Sunset Memorial Park Cemetery.

The Pellow and Gardas families thank everyone for spending their Saturday celebrating Dick's life and legacy.



“Big Shoes to fill”

Strong as an ox, powerful mind
High expectations, yet respectful and kind
Time he was given, Dad created a lot
Made something from nothing, perfection he sought

A pillar of strength, from which we all drew
Getting his opinion, about things we should do
His work employed many, he'd make time for all
Sharing his viewpoint, when someone would call

Focused on business, he towed a large load
Nose to the grindstone, his work never slowed
If I measure myself, alongside my Dad
Big shoes to fill, the life that he had

Rudolf





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Is Your Gas Can Federally Compliant?

By Randall C. Resch – Tow Industry Week

Part of the road service game is outfitting tow trucks and service vehicles with proper equipment to conduct roadside services. One of those typical services that tow companies, auto club providers or those serving Freeway Service Patrol operations conduct is delivering a few gallons of gas to your roadside motorist.

There are many gas cans on today's market that aren't approved for refueling activities. It's important to read the gas can's small print before it sits on the back of your truck.

No You Don't

Tow owners are astonished when inspectors fail a truck during annual inspections because the truck or carrier was outfitted with an illegal gas can. How can that be? If a commercial inspector were to read the backside of your gas can, would the can be in compliance to federal requirements?

Example: A carrier was purchased new from an equipment manufacturer and was outfitted to meet the California Highway Patrol's Form 234B, Tow Truck Inspection Guide. The inspection guide requires a "gas can." The tow company simply brought the carrier to the inspection, w... here the inspecting officer told the tower that the can wasn't a legal container. On the back on the gas can the wording read (in raised molded letters), "Not intended for refueling on-road motor vehicles."

That's one of those terms that is open to interpretation by officers who fail the truck, or one bent on writing a ticket. Remember: Almost every cop has a pet-peeve and this is one of those "enforcement peeves" that goes unnoticed until that one-in-a-million cop stops your tow truck for inspection.

What does the statement mean? The "Not intended" part is easy as is the purpose and design of a gas can that's specific to delivering product necessary to make the vehicle go. However, to me the last part of the statement bears asking what the definition of an "on-road vehicle" is. That could have different meaning to different people.

Accordingly, that wording sent me into a frenzy of research.

According to BusinessDirectory.com, it defines a "road vehicle" as, "A vehicle designed to legally carry people or cargo on public roads and highways such as buses, cars, trucks, vans, motor homes and motorcycles. This would not include motor-driven vehicles not approved for use of the road, such as forklifts or marine vehicles."

So what's illegal about the can? Could it be the spout or gasket?

The Law Says

DOT-approved containers "need to meet the Performance-Oriented Packaging requirements of the Federal Hazardous Materials Regulations." A standard safety container doesn't meet the requirements for transport. However, there are safety transport containers that have hold-down brackets for the lid and guards to protect the spout assembly. Some portable containers have DOT caps that replace the spout assembly during transport to make them compliant. Old style jerri cans with screw-in caps that replace the spout assembly can also meet DOT requirements.

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Old style jerri cans with screw-in caps that replace the spout assembly can also meet DOT requirements.

- A safety container is approved by a third-party such as UL or FM, not more than 5-gallons capacity, having a flash-arresting screen, a spring closing lid and spout cover and so designed that it will safely relieve internal pressure when subject to fire exposure per OSHA 29 CFR 1926.155(l). Its design is intended to prevent the can from exploding by use of a venting lid and flash arrestor. They are required when used by any business or commercial enterprise.
- A portable fuel container is any reusable container designed and marketed for use by consumers for receiving, transporting, storing and dispensing gasoline, diesel fuel or kerosene. All utility jugs that are red, yellow or blue in color are deemed to be portable fuel containers regardless of how they are labeled. This container's design is intended to control evaporative emissions and reduce spillage. These are often referred to as CARB (California Air Resource Board) compliant containers. Models are also designed with child resistant features to meet the Children's Gasoline Burn Prevention Act. They are generally intended for consumer use.

While these containers can be used for storing or transferring fuel, the real key for our industry is whether they can be used for transporting fuel on our commercial road service vehicles. The short answer? It depends on the container.

Does that help?

Randall Resch is American Towman's and Tow Industry Week's Operations Editor, a former California police officer, tow business owner and retired civilian off-road instructor for Navy Special Warfare. Randall is an approved instructor for towers serving the California Highway Patrol's rotation contract. His course is approved by the California law enforcement community. He has written over 500 industry-related articles for print and on-line, is a member of the International Towing & Recovery Hall of Fame, and, a recipient of the 2017 Dave Jones Leadership Award

DID YOU KNOW?

More than 36 million heart-shaped boxes of chocolate are sold for Valentine's Day each year.



DID YOU KNOW?

Valentine candy "conversation hearts" have a shelf life of five years.

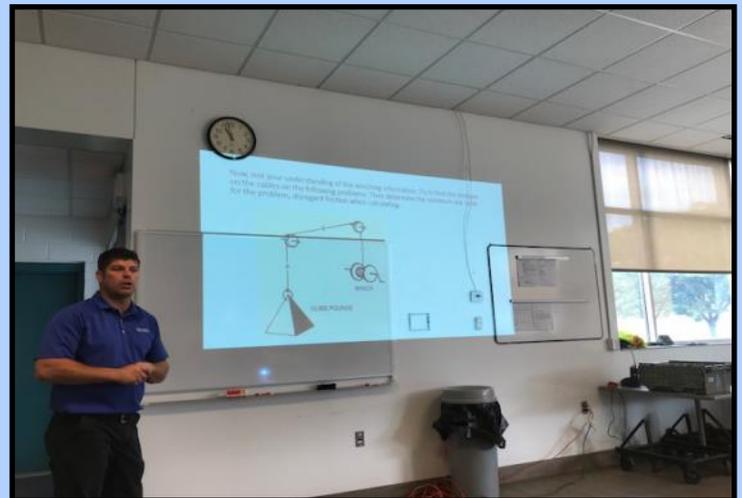


Mark Your Calendars: MPTA Educational Sessions for 2020!

May 19, 2020: One Day -Basic Light Duty Tow School

May 20, 2020: One Day Basic Heavy - Duty Tow School

Sept 15-16, 2020: Two-Day Advanced Light Duty Tow School





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Addressing Line of Duty Deaths

We're only two weeks into 2020 and the official count of line of duty deaths for U.S. towing operators is already at four (4), with some unofficial counts being higher. Losing a tow operator impacts not only their families but also the entire towing community. We'd like to assure the industry that TRAA is doing everything possible to combat the multifaceted issue of Line of Duty Deaths (LODD).

While not all of our activities are readily apparent, TRAA is pursuing multiple tracks: **Legislation-** TRAA is working behind the scenes directly with lawmakers to support and encourage legislation that will address LODDs including working with the U.S. Government Accountability Office (U.S. GAO). The GAO is the government agency that provides auditing, evaluation, and investigative services for the United States Congress.

Regulation- TRAA is working behind closed doors on possible regulatory solutions within FMCSA and FHWA. There are several options available we're exploring including reclassification.

Supporting Move Over Law Awareness- TRAA strongly supports the efforts of the International Towing & Recovery Hall of Fame & Museum, several state associations, and other entities to increase consciousness among the motoring public.

Collaborating with Industry Parties- TRAA is combining the forces of multiple industry players to unify efforts and increase our impact on LODDs and move over law awareness. Keep an eye out for more information soon.

Promoting Operator Education- TRAA was one of the first, and remains one of the fiercest, advocates for the education and professionalism of tow operators. We believe strongly that everyone working within the industry, on or off-scene, should at minimum take the National Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Responder Training. *The better educated operators are in scene management, PPE, quick clearance, etc. the less exposure and likelihood of being involved in a struck-by or near-miss incident.* From TIM training, to NDCP or TRSCP® certification, to private training programs, an operator cannot be over educated in their profession.

In order to support our efforts, this is what TRAA needs from MPTA Members:

- **Towing Traffic Incident Reporting System (TTIRS)-** Our ability to push legislation and regulation relies heavily on the availability of quality data. Please report any and all near-miss or struck-by incidents to the TTIRS database.

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- **National Incident Response Awareness Week-** TRAA is asking all state associations, and individual members, to do their part in promoting move over law awareness within their communities. The best time of year to do this is during the annual National Response Incident Awareness Week in November which coordinates the efforts of all incident management partners for maximum exposure. However, there's never a bad time to promote move over law awareness so do your part whenever you can!
- **Legislative Action Workshop-** To really make an impact consider registering for TRAA's Legislative Action Workshop in DC which will give you the opportunity to meet directly with your legislators to discuss LODDs and move over law awareness. Registration closes **February 5th**, so act quickly.

Like a duck, stoic on the surface and paddling below the waterline, TRAA is working energetically behind the scenes. We appreciate your support as we work together to make positive changes for every tow operator out there on the roadways.

Towmen & First Responders Say Goodbye to Dale Jones



More than 300 tow trucks and first responders lined up of their vehicles in Watertown, South Dakota, Jan. 9 to honor towman Dale Jones, who they say was bigger than life.

Jones, who worked for Performance Towing, was trying to help a young man whose car slid his car into the ditch Jan. 4, but was hit by another car that lost control.

Hundreds of people gathered in Watertown to pay their final respects to the tow truck driver.

Jones' daughter talked about how her dad was always there for her and his grandson in good times and bad, but always left with a hug and words of encouragement.

"As much as I want to turn back time or just wish it was me and not him, he wouldn't have it any other way," friend Andy Wicks said. "Sometimes you just got to let people help to make them feel whole. We'll drag the chains from here buddy."

A letter from the mother of the young man Jones was trying to help was read to those who attended his funeral. "My son was getting out of the car to see if he could help. Your dad told him it wasn't safe and to stay in the car; and within 30 seconds this tragedy took place. Your dad saved my son."

Source: keloland.com

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UPCOMING EVENTS

MPTA Board Meeting

February 18, 2020

**6:00 pm Dinner
6:30-8:30 pm Meeting**

**MPTA Office
2886 Middle Street
Little Canada, MN 55117**

****Weather Permitting***

Mark Your Calendars: MPTA Educational Sessions for 2020!

May 19, 2020: One Day -Basic Light Duty
Tow School

May 20, 2020: One Day Basic Heavy - Duty
Tow School

Sept 15-16, 2020: Two-Day Advanced Light
Duty Tow School

Happy

Valentine's Day