

THE MICKEY SPIRIT

COMPANY, INDUSTRY AND
BUSINESS NEWS PUBLISHED
BY MICKEY TRUCK BODIES INC
P.O. Box 2044
High Point, NC 27261
(800) 334-9061

www.mickeybody.com

VOL. 14 No. 6
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2002

“We’re not a heavily populated area, so we have to fight and scratch for every case we sell ... Our growth usually comes from a combination of three places – the competition, new users and new outlets. We are very effective at capturing business from all three.”

— Ron Hart, Coke Santa Fe

Santa Fe Coke: Still Driving ‘Straight Up’ After 83 Years

When the employees of 83-year-old Coca-Cola Bottling of Santa Fe (NM) talk about being a “family owned and operated company,” they are not merely paying lip service to upper management.

There are 12 members of the founding Hart family – either second, third or fourth generation – working in the bottling company today, led by President Ron Hart, who quickly admits that his title is almost incidental. “While I might make a final decision or sign off on an official document, we, as a family unit, work together to run this company and to always make it a better place to work,” says Hart, himself a third genera-

(To page 2)



Above: First generation family employee Eugene Hart on the company’s first delivery wagon in December 1920. Below: 2002 Mickey 16-bay trailer and Freightliner chassis.



Pre-Christmas Ice Storm Shuts Down Triad – Even Mickey!

The First week of December brought with it an early Christmas gift to the Triad region of North Carolina in the form of a severe ice storm, which knocked out power to over 52,000 homes for as much as five days and counting at press time.

Even more dramatic than the power outage, the storm forced Mickey Truck Bodies to completely close its plant for two full days – believed to be a first in the 98-year history of the company.” (The company did close for one day in 1999 on the forecast of

(To page 2)



Mickey President Dean Sink clearing downed trees from a local road near company’s headquarters in High Point, NC. Mike Sarvis, also with Mickey, approaches to lend a hand. This photo appeared in the Greensboro News & Record on December 6.

IN THIS ISSUE

Coke Santa Fe	1
Ice Storm	1
Meet Lisa Brunton	3
In-Sink	4
Sales Directory	4

Santa Fe Coke Makes A Difference with Customer Service

(From page 1)

tion family member. “We are definitely a family owned and operated business, and you probably won’t find any other soft drink bottler in the nation with as many active family members as we have here.”

Besides the family name, something else that hasn’t changed much since Coke Santa Fe opened in 1919 is the company’s mission statement, which today reads: “We will distribute a quality product, at a competitive price with exceptional service.” Says Hart, “That’s basically the same tenet my grandfather established 83 years ago, with one difference. It use to be ‘at a good price,’ but we changed



Employee Tommy Hayes with founder Albert Hart in original 1920 plant.

it to ‘competitive price’ because we don’t leave nickels on the table.”

And make no mistake, the Harts and their colleagues at Coke Santa Fe work very hard for every one of those nickels. “Without a doubt,” Hart stresses, “service is where we make a difference to our customers. We strive to be the leader within our category, so when a customer has a need or an opportunity in his store, he knows he only has to make one call, and that call is to us. They call us because of our execution levels. We probably have three times as many people in our sales force as any of our competitors, and we need every one of them because our goal is to respond to our customers in an extremely timely fashion. Every service call that comes into this plant must be answered within three hours.”

Sometimes that’s easier said than done, inasmuch as the bottler covers all of Northern New Mexico, a territory that probably has as many “jack-rabbits and rattle snakes” as soft drink consumers. “We’re not a heavily populated area, so we have to fight and scratch



Driver Joe Black in a 1925 Model “T” delivery truck.

for every case we sell,” says Hart. “We do not enjoy double-digit population growth like they do in many other parts of the U.S. Every year we have to look at where we are going to grow our cases, and that growth usually comes from a combination of three places – the competition, new users and new outlets. We are very effective at capturing business from all three.”

The new products that have hit the beverage arena recently – including Vanilla Coke and Diet Coke with Lemon – have also helped Coke Santa Fe grab some new business, although Hart points out that building an efficient load takes very prudent planning.

“There isn’t a whole lot more savings we can wring out of the system – the margins are what they are,” he says. “So now it’s basic efficiency – how efficiently can you get that case off your floor and onto your customer’s shelf or in his cooler? Like many bottlers and beverage distributors, we are revisiting our entire portfolio – particularly the non-carbs and New Age brands – as well as our route to market to make sure we are getting maximum efficiency from our routes. For example, some of the high volume, high margin products, like Dasani water, may go on our DSD trucks with our soft drinks. But there might be different opportunities for

other brands coming down the pike. We have to look at every product on an individual basis rather than just lump everything on a single truck or route.”

One such “different opportunity” for the bottler and its New Age brands may very well be the burgeoning health food market. “The first one to figure out how to market to that segment is going to win, and in this market I guarantee you it will be us,” says Hart. “If that means painting our trucks in pastel and earth tone colors with a non-obtrusive logo, we’ll do it. I am going to be looking to Mickey Truck Bodies to help us figure out the best way to maximize the space on a truck while creating the best delivery efficiencies for a multitude of markets. Maybe we have to refrigerate a couple of the bays and leave the rest for CSD all for a single point of delivery. There are probably 300 companies that sell to these health food stores in a beverage format, but none of the major soft drink companies have broken out in a big way. The one or ones that do are going to enjoy some serious growth potential.”

Coke Santa Fe will likely be looking to Mickey Truck Bodies to provide delivery solutions for a long time to come. After many years with

Pre-Christmas Ice Storm Shuts Down Triad, NC Area – Even Mickey!

(From page 1)

Hurricane Floyd, which never did materialize in High Point.)

Nancy Dunlap, Office Manager and Corporate Secretary who has been with Mickey for 36 years, says, “In hurricanes and other severe weather, some employees may not have been able to get into work, but we didn’t shut the plant except for that day in 1999. Our policy has always been to use your own good judgement as to whether it’s safe enough to travel into

work. But this last storm completely knocked out our power, so even though some employees did manage to make in to work, they were sent home.”

“Our local TV and radio stations did a great job of broadcasting area closings – including Mickey’s – on the air throughout the power outage,” says Mickey’s George Smith, Marketing Manager. “So by the second day of the storm, our people knew not to come in.”

(To page 3)

Meet Mickey's Lisa Brunton

As with any corporation these days striving to flourish in a competitive market, the strength and future of Mickey Truck Bodies lies in its young associates.

Over the next several issues of The Mickey Spirit, we will profile some of our current "shooting stars" and future leaders.

Lisa Brunton, Sales Executive, graces this issue of The Mickey Spirit with her profile.

"Our Sales Executives have a huge responsibility to our customers because they are the people here who do all the quoting and follow through to make sure the customer gets what he wanted when he wanted it," says Wayne Childress, Vice President of Corporate Sales. "You might say our Sales Executives are our last line of defense against poor service. We structured our sales department this way because Lisa and her colleagues work from the inside, so when a unit is anywhere in production, they can follow up immediately with the customer. They have established great working relationships with their customers, as well as with our engineering, manufacturing, scheduling and billing departments."

Name: Lisa Brunton
Title: Sales Executive
Customer responsibilities: Pepsi Bottling Group, Nestlé Waters of North America, American Emergency Vehicles (AEV), all international beverage accounts and vending and plumbing sales.
Years with Mickey: 4
Professional experience prior to Mickey: Title Clerk for a major auto dealership in the Greensboro, NC market

Education: Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Completing second degree in Criminal Justice with Forensic Science Concentration at Guilford College in North Carolina
Age: 34
Responsibilities at Mickey: Quote and track orders based on customer specifications. Serve as the primary interface



Lisa Brunton

between customers, manufacturing, engineering, scheduling, accounting and parts. Track orders for customer from sale to delivery. Communicate with customer's chassis supplier to coordinate information on chassis specifications and arrival delivery to Mickey.

"In general, my job is to make sure the entire process runs smoothly and that there are no surprises for the customer upon delivery. To that end I always start the process by reviewing all orders and quotes with the respective Mickey salesperson for accuracy. I also check with the customer to see if there are any changes from their last order. I send the customer a copy of order and ask them to review and discuss any

changes that need to be made. I go over every item on the order with the customer."

What do you like most about your job? "Interacting with customers to ensure that they are kept informed about their orders and satisfied with the Mickey products they receive. I also enjoy the friendly and supportive office environment here at Mickey."

Trend Sightings: "Our customers are increasingly demanding more safety and comfort features to help make the driver's job a little easier. Ergonomic features such as our internal handgrips are very popular these days. Buyers are also looking for products that deliver the best possible value for their dollars. They want quality equipment and service they can count on for many years in the future. I feel the sense of trust our customers have in Mickey since we have been around for almost 100 years, and that makes me very proud to work for this company."

Family: Husband Ed, step-daughter Katie (13)
Interests: Red Rings Hockey, college basketball (especially UNC), and "furthering my education to become a better educated and well rounded person."

Touch Points: Phone: 800-334-9061 ext 3310, FAX 336-882-8998; email lbrunton@mickeybody.com

Coke Bottler Turns to Mickey for Efficient Delivery Solutions

(From page 2)

another body and trailer manufacturer, the bottler in 2002 switched to Mickey with the purchase of a 16-bay trailer that it pulls with a Freightliner. Coke Santa Fe has two more just like it on order for the first quarter of 2003.

Eldon Geary, Plant Manager, had something to do with

the transition. He joined Santa Fe Coke from Kansas City "with a better knowledge of Mickey Truck Bodies. And when it was time to buy new units, I went to my contacts – some real experts on the fleet operations side of the business – and the consensus was that Mickey was the best product out there. These people bought bodies for a living, so I trusted

their opinions. Then when I saw the Mickey construction, especially the one-piece corner castings, I could see it was a very high quality product."

"We aim for maximum delivery efficiency on all of our routes, and Mickey definitely helps us achieve that goal," says Geary. "The population in Northern New Mexico is spread out; we have

to haul our products quite a ways sometimes to hit the next stop, and many times we are pulling a load straight up. From our plant in Santa Fe to Taos, for example, is about 75 miles straight up. We need something that is reliable and obviously it has to pull easily, brake well, wind around tight curves and, most of all, it has to make it up the mountain."

Mickey Truck Bodies Sales Directory

Lance Abbott, TX

214-693-3647

lance_abbott@msn.com

Bill Brown, NC

800-334-9061

bbrown@mickeybody.com

Wayne Childress, NC

800-334-9061

wchildress@mickeybody.com

T.J. DoVale, GA

770-650-1574

tjdovale@mindspring.com

Harold Faulkner, NC

800-334-9061

hsfaulk@aol.com

Charlie Forsyth, NJ

888-545-9527

cforsyth@monmouth.com

Steve Mason, IL

309-661-1262

skmason1@mindspring.com

Jim Thomas, FL

904-273-2659

jimmieb@mediaone.net

Jim Hiatt, NC

800-334-9061

jhiatt@mickeybody.com

Charles Cranford, NC

336-210-6127

chascranford@northstate.net

Doug Pitkin, FL

407-543-3398

papadmtown@aol.com

Kent Lopp, NC

800-334-9061

klopp@mickeybody.com

IN-'SINK'

Another Mickey Year at Mickey

By Dean Sink, President

Another year has come and gone, and I thought I would take this opportunity to recap Mickey's 2002 for you.

On the new product front, I would say we had another typically solid Mickey-type year. Our Van Division unveiled a new refrigerated Thermal Bear van body made with a digitally controlled thermal press system that holds the accuracy of the temperature to exact specifications. The new Mickey unit is believed to be the first van body "reefer" to use this unique "platen process."

That innovation closely followed the roll-out of our new Thermal Bear unit for beverages that require temperature controlled delivery. This unit has been a big hit with beer wholesalers.

We also introduced the second generation of our popular full service vending body, which we now call ProVend II, with several major feature enhancements. ProVend II is a complete redesign of the original ProVend unit introduced in 1996 for Canteen Corporation, the nation's largest foodservice provider and a major Mickey customer.

We continued to invest in our business in 2002 in manufacturing technology that allows us to design and build these innovative new products. For example, we purchased an Almega EX-V6L, the most state-of-the-art robotic welder known to industry, and which we have affectionately named "Big Al." He's helping us enhance product quality and improve manufacturing productivity and efficiency all at the same time. The total cost for Al, including his specially designed quarters in the beverage plant at Mickey's manufacturing complex in High Point; custom fixtures; set up; and training was approximately \$250,000.

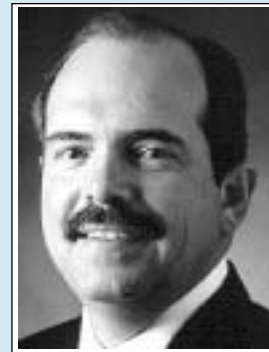
On the employee front, we celebrated several major milestones this year. The most notable, in my mind, was our streak of 60 straight days without an accident companywide. When you think about a major manufacturing company with multiple plants throughout the country, all operating heavy machinery, to go sixty straight days without a safety mishap, that's pretty incredible. This accomplishment is quite a tribute to our employees, who know the value of staying well in terms of quality of life and quality of work.

Six of our employees celebrated their 25-year anniversaries with the company this year. We have many more who have been with us even longer, but in our newsletters we only recognize those that are celebrating in five-year increments (i.e. 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, etc. There are six Mickey employees who have been here over 30 years.) I have always said you can tell the quality of a company by the quality of its employees. When you look at our track record in the industries we serve, including our market shares, you can ascertain we have high quality employees. When you look at our employment ledger, you can tell they are also very loyal!

In this issue on page 1 you will notice a story about the independent Coca-Cola bottler in Santa Fe, NM. This story, and this bottler, strike a particularly positive chord with us here at Mickey because there are so many similarities in our businesses. First and foremost, we have both been family-owned and -operated since the day we opened our doors — Mickey in 1904 and Coke Santa Fe 15 years later in 1919. And we both make customer service our absolute top priority, which is really the key to succeeding in business for as long as we both have. We have a great deal of respect here for the Hart family and their colleagues.

I would like to wish all of our employees, customers, vendors and friends best wishes for a very happy and safe holiday season, and may you all have a prosperous and healthy 2003.

See you next year.



The Mickey Spirit
is published 6 times a
year by Mickey Truck
Bodies Inc, P.O. Box 2044,
High Point, NC
800-334-9061
www.mickeybody.com

Season's Greetings