



THE WANADA BULLETIN

NEWS AND INFORMATION FOR AND ABOUT FRANCHISED NEW CAR DEALERS IN THE WASHINGTON AREA

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WANADA is Helping Our Members During the COVID-19 Crisis

During this time of unprecedented uncertainty for businesses of all sizes, WANADA is committed to doing everything possible to support our members during this crisis.

With that top of mind, WANADA is offering a no-interest deferral on two months of dental premiums for those who have dental coverage through the organization's Insurance and Benefits Trust. Dental insurance clients will have the ability to defer their premiums for May and June, and pay them back in six monthly installments between July and December 2020. Please contact Ed Mullaney at em@wanada.org if you have any questions about this offer.

In addition, WANADA is waiving all tuition costs for participants in the [Automobile Dealer Education Institute](#) for the spring 2020 semester. This is designed to ensure that students whose coursework and in-person instruction schedules have been upended by COVID-19 are held harmless for the impact COVID-19 has had on the program.

WANADA is also offering [complimentary legal resources](#) for dealer members and WANADA insurance clients, through our friends at the law firm [Offit Kurman](#). Their attorneys will provide qualified dealer members or insurance clients with up to two hours of free consultation related to state and federal policy changes, employment-related matters, or unemployment insurance guidance. Please contact Joe Koch (jk@wanada.org) for more information about this offer.

WANADA will also be doing a two-week television ad buy promoting our dealer members, and emphasizing the fact that our members are continuing to provide essential sales and repair services during the COVID-19 pandemic. The ads will run on local broadcast stations and local cable in the Washington area beginning next week.

And as always, WANADA is continuously updating its robust [COVID-19 Information Library](#), which is full of the latest and most pertinent information relevant to small business owners and employees from across the region. Among the many resources featured on the WANADA website are links to webinars and other tools that are of interest to member dealers and suppliers during this difficult time.

We would also like to note that participants in [NADA's 401\(k\) program](#) can now take hardship withdrawals without penalty through the end of 2020, as mandated by the CARES Act. NADA has also produced a [helpful guide for participants](#) in the association's retirement plan that outlines new hardship benefits available to them.

WANADA stands with all our member dealers, suppliers, and insurance clients, and we will continue providing all of them with high-quality service and guidance long after this pandemic passes.

WANADA Donates \$50,000 to MedStar Georgetown to Support COVID-19 Treatment

Earlier this week, WANADA made a \$50,000 donation to MedStar Georgetown University Hospital, to help support its work screening and treating patients during the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the COVID-19 crisis continues to spread across the world, hospitals are being stretched to the limits, while doctors, nurses, and support staff members are putting themselves at risk to heroically provide care to at-risk patients. WANADA, through this donation, is supporting a vital institution in our region at their time of greatest need.

“MedStar Georgetown staff members are on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, working tirelessly to help save lives,” WANADA Chairman Kevin Reilly said. “WANADA, and our member auto dealers, are thankful for their service to the Washington metro area in this critical time of need.”

“MedStar Georgetown University Hospital is deeply grateful for this remarkable gift of support from WANADA,” said Hospital president Mike Sachtleben. “This gift will further enable us to strengthen our efforts in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. This is an unprecedented time in our Nation and this Hospital's history, and I want to express our sincere thanks to the members of WANADA and those in our community who have given so generously of themselves to help support our mission during this critical time.”

If you would like to support MedStar Georgetown Hospital during this time of critical need, [please visit this link](#) for information on how to donate online, by phone, or by text. If you wish to donate online, [please click here](#) and select “MedStar Georgetown University Hospital” in the drop-down menu on the donation page.

[Please click here](#) to view video from Kevin Reilly's appearance on Fox 5 this past weekend, where he discussed WANADA's donation.

Danny's Bill: How a Member of the WANADA Family Turned Pain into Policy

To tell the story of Julie Funkhouser is to tell a story of resilience in times of great pain, of a life where her biggest challenges and lowest moments were the catalysts for her biggest successes. It is to tell a story about meeting both her husband and her best friend during the second most difficult time in her life, and how that time, and those two people, were the catalysts for a life focused on helping the most vulnerable.

The daughter of RRR Automotive chairman Richard Patterson, who is also a former WANADA chairman, Julie moved from Northern Virginia in 2008 and checked into an inpatient recovery center in Winchester. In 2011, while in recovery, she met Danny Funkhouser, who would become her husband, with whom she had two children. And she also met Meredith Speir when she arrived in Winchester, who would become her best friend, her business partner, and her most trusted confidant.

After leaving rehab, Julie attended Shenandoah University in Winchester, earning a degree in psychology. She got a job working at local mental health clinic, and she and Danny, who himself got clean and remained so for six years, moved into a house and had two children.

One day in early 2018, Meredith, who was volunteering at a local treatment facility, called Julie in search of a bed for a loved one who needed help for substance abuse. The two quickly realized there was a need in northwest Virginia for long-term care that bridges the gap between the typical four-week rehab experience and a return to their homes.

During the spring and summer that year, Meredith and Julie worked hard to start what would become [The Recovery Connection](#). They developed a business plan, networked with health advocates who could help them navigate the field and develop a program, and secured a location for their facility in Winchester. Together, they celebrated a combined 23 years of recovery, and the fact that their idea for a transitional recovery facility had turned into reality.

The Recovery Connection [opened and began accepting residents](#) on September 1, 2018. Ten days later, the Winchester police arrived at the Recovery Connection with news that would change Julie's life forever. Danny had passed away suddenly, alone, in a hotel room in Martinsburg, W. Va, as a result of addiction and co-occurring mental illness.

The night before Danny passed away, he went to an emergency room in northern Virginia, looking for help that he tragically didn't get.

"He was in psychosis. He went to the hospital, and he told them he had suicidal thoughts," Julie recounted. "Because he was there voluntarily, he waited forever and I believe he grew agitated. I'm sure he felt unsupported. He left."



Julie Funkhouser (L) and
Meredith Speir (R) of The
Recovery Connection

Just two weeks into running a new recovery center, Julie was now faced with raising two small children by herself as well. She said the Recovery Connection would have failed without the incredible work that Meredith, who Julie called her “hero,” did during the near aftermath of Danny’s passing.

“Meredith held me down for two weeks, when I just couldn’t work, couldn’t do anything,” Julie said. “I mean really, the first six months were so, so tough. Meredith got me through a lot of darkness and a lot of tough times.”

She said her parents were in Winchester non-stop for weeks after Danny passed away, and also mentioned the interesting additional impact of going through recovery. The fact that she was in recovery so long, and struggled for so long, meant that she also had an enormous support group around her who could acutely empathize with what she was going through.



Julie and Danny Funkhouser on their wedding day.

“I had so many people who were just...there,” Julie said. “I had this business, I had two small kids with no father, all of this stuff. And I got so much support from my family and my support network; for one thing, I had someone prepare and bring us dinner every night from the day it happened until after Halloween. At any given moment, I had constant voicemails and texts, with support. I couldn’t have gotten through this otherwise.”

As the months passed, the pain didn’t fade, but it did redouble Julie’s commitment to doing whatever she could to honor Danny’s kindness, his generous spirit, and also his struggles. As she replayed the sequence of events that led to Danny’s relapse, that fruitless hospital trip, and ultimately his passing, she once again found a huge gap in the state treatment system that was going unaddressed.

“There were so many things leading up to his passing that, in retrospect, exposed the flaws in the system,” Julie said. “Once the raw shock of it all kind of fizzled and I was able to really look back and analyze what happened, it was like this feeling in my heart that told me I was meant to do something more.”

And the fight for [Danny’s Bill](#) was born.

Early in 2019, Julie reached out to local members of the Virginia General Assembly, pitching legislation she had begun drafting that would create a statewide standard for how hospitals should treat people who show up at their facilities with behavioral health problems. Sen. Jill Vogel (R-Warrenton) called her back, they spoke for 30 minutes or longer, and Julie was invited down to Richmond to meet with her.

“I got to meet a lot of delegates and senators down there, got the chance to initially pitch my idea, and it was a great foundation for the 2020 session,” Julie said. “Senator Vogel told me ‘I believe in you, I believe in this, let’s get it done.’”

Julie returned to Richmond during the 2020 session, and with Senator Vogel’s help, worked to lobby legislators to support her bill. The legislation, which requires hospitals in the state to

develop a comprehensive standard for how to treat people who arrive at their facilities, even voluntarily, in search of some help for a behavioral treatment issue. Given the clear link between behavioral problems and substance issues, Julie said this kind of regulation could have saved Danny's life and it will save the lives of others.

"We've always sort of had this standard assessment in emergency rooms for the physical conditions, but not a consistent system addressing mental health, but they're so linked," Julie said. "This bill provides greater consistency statewide in how cases like Danny's will be handled."

Danny's bill passed the House 99-0 and the Senate 40-0. The only no votes at any step in the process were from Dels. Sam Rasoul (D-Roanoke) and Dawn Adams (D-Richmond), who voted against Danny's Bill in a House committee solely because they thought it didn't go far enough.

"There were some places in the bill where the word 'shall' became 'may,' and things like that," Julie said, while adding that, in just a 45-day legislative session, even many popular bills wind up on the cutting-room floor. "I know we have even more work to do in 2021, and this success has redoubled my commitment to ensuring that we do everything we can in this state to make sure people who need mental health treatment at the hospital can get it."



Danny and Julie Funkhouser pictured with their two children.

In the meantime, Julie and Meredith are keeping Danny's legacy alive every day with their work at The Recovery Connection. Julie said they are working diligently to get their service incorporated into the state Medicaid program, which, combined with Virginia's recent expansion of Medicaid, would allow the facility to scale and serve a wider number of patients across the Shenandoah Valley and the state.

"We were always fueled with passion for many years," Meredith said. "But in light of what happened to Danny, it's redoubled our commitment to serve the people who need it in our community."

Even during the COVID-19 pandemic, The Recovery Connection is still in service, helping vulnerable people in the Valley during an acutely vulnerable time. It's all part of what Julie has called her daily commitment to honoring her late husband in the best ways she can.

"I've been struck by the phrase 'try and be what you miss most about that person,'" Julie said. "Danny was just such a kind, relaxed, genuinely good man. And I choose to honor him by valuing life, valuing every day, and just doing everything I can to help people. This last 18 months has really changed me, and I'm grateful I've allowed it to change me in a positive way."

If you know someone in need of help with substance abuse, or to learn more information about the Recovery Connection, please visit www.therecoveryconnectionllc.com. You can also reach out to Julie and Meredith at info@therecoveryconnectionllc.com or by calling 540-504-7671.

Maryland Issues Moratorium on Repossessions, Evictions

Gov. Larry Hogan of Maryland [issued an executive order](#) last week that bars creditors from repossessing automobiles, trucks, or mobile residences during the remainder of the state's COVID-19 catastrophic health emergency. This order, however, does not impose any kind of suspension of a creditor's ability to continue assessing payments or penalties.

While this order is largely a moratorium on a number of types of evictions, the section most relevant to our members is Section III, which is reproduced below.

III. Prohibition on Certain Repossessions. To the extent any statute, rule or regulation of the State of Maryland or any political subdivision would permit a Creditor to repossess any automobile, truck, or Chattel Home by self-help (including, without limitation, [CL §§ 9-609, 12-115, 12-624, 12-1021, or 14-2008](#)), such statute, rule, or regulation is hereby suspended until the state of emergency is terminated and the catastrophic health emergency is rescinded.

The moratorium also creates a 90-day forbearance period on foreclosures once that process is initiated, and that forbearance period is in effect until the end of the state of emergency or when superseded by a following executive order.

NBC 4 Shows How WANADA Dealers Are Continuing to Serve Customers

[NBC 4](#) and their consumer affairs reporter Susan Hogan visited Alexandria Hyundai last week, where owner (and WANADA chairman) Kevin Reilly discussed the ways that his dealership, and others like it, are going above and beyond to continue providing essential services during this time.

As of the end of March, more than 80 percent of dealerships were still performing at least some sales functions, and dealerships like Alexandria Hyundai are taking great care to ensure that their employees are taking great care to protect their sales and service customers. Alexandria Hyundai's employees are covering seats and wheels in protective barriers before setting foot in any vehicle, and then they're driving those serviced vehicles directly to customers' homes.

Dealerships across the region are also getting creative and implementing robust [customer service tools online](#), and are even offering test-drive services at a customer's home.

WANADA applauds our member dealers who are going above and beyond Maryland and Virginia's business mandates, to ensure that their workers remain employed, and that their customers can get top-flight service in a way that is extremely safe for drivers and workers alike.

Best Practices for Keeping Dealerships and Repair Shops Safe

As auto repair facilities and dealerships continue to provide essential services during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is absolutely critical that dealers take extreme care to keep workspaces and vehicles as clean as possible.

It's vital that dealers comply stringently with state and local social distancing and capacity guidelines, but that requires detailed knowledge of actually *how* to accomplish those things in order to continue operating while doing everything possible to prevent employees and customers from potentially getting sick.

WANADA Kindred-Line member [Diamond Dealer Services](#), an auto detailing company based in Owings Mills, Md., has produced a guideline of key disinfecting best-practices for dealers:

- **Product Knowledge:**
 - Make sure to use disinfectant products that are EPA, FDA and GHS certified.
 - Check the [EPA's list](#) of registered disinfectants that meet the criteria against coronavirus.
 - Be prepared to have product certifications available for customer inquiries. Consider having a FAQ sheet on both the products and the disinfectant process.
 - Make sure you spend time with your supplier to learn the specifics of the product.
- **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE):**
 - Always supply and enforce protection for your employees. Employee safety matters!
 - Training.... Training.... Training! Coach and train every employee. Coach PPE use every day!
 - Supply chains are strained, but PPE products are available. Work with your supplier to establish the proper resupply procedures.
- **Training and educating your team:**
 - Training should include how to properly use PPE and the appropriate disinfectant.
 - Ask your supplier for any special manufacturer instructions.
 - Prepare a training class on the proper applications process.
 - Make sure to have classroom and hands on training!
 - Chose a cleaning pattern and stick with it.
 - Example: Clean left to right from the driver side door handle.
 - It is vital to pay extra attention to frequently touched items:
 - Steering wheels
 - Seat belt buckles
 - Door handles (inside and out)
 - Shift knobs
 - Dashboards
 - Key fobs
 - Vinyl vs. leather vs plastic - it is important to understand and identify the material that is being cleaned to ensure the product works, as intended.
 - Electronics should not be overly saturated and be extra careful with touchscreens.
 - Clean and disinfect equipment and service bays, as well as vehicles
 - Wipe down equipment and storage areas.
 - Periodically clean larger areas or items, such as a tool chest.

While primarily focused on car detailing, photos and work flow, Diamond Dealer Services has retooled their focus during this pandemic to provide disinfecting and cleanliness services for dealers and auto repair shops in the Mid-Atlantic area. If you have any questions, please contact Ken Chodnicki, Diamond's Chief Commercial Officer, at kchodnicki@diamonddealerservices.com.

WANADA Remembers Longtime Friend Bobby Mitchell

Bobby Mitchell, who in 1962 became the first player to integrate the Washington Redskins, passed away last weekend at the age of 84. A civil rights hero in this region long after his retirement from the NFL in 1969, Mitchell worked in the Redskins' front office until the beginning of the 21st Century and was an active leader in the area's philanthropic community until his death.

A cornerstone of Mitchell's charitable endeavors was the annual Bobby Mitchell Hall of Fame Golf Classic, of which WANADA was a title sponsor for several years beginning in 2002. WANADA's involvement was spearheaded by the encouragement of dealer members Bob Rosenthal and Richard Patterson, who were long-standing supporters of the event. In the decade that WANADA was involved in the event, which ran through its concluding year in 2012, the golf outing raised nearly \$500,000 annually for the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society.



Bobby Mitchell (second from right) and that year's LLC Hero honoree (center) are pictured at the 2007 Bobby Mitchell Classic with (L to R): Todd Heavener, Tammy Darvish, and Dick Patterson.

Every summer at the Lansdowne Golf Resort in Ashburn, the Bobby Mitchell Classic gathered dozens of icons from across the sporting world, including Bill Russell, Darrell Green, Oscar Robertson, Sonny Jurgensen, and dozens of others who were legends in their sport of choice. WANADA member dealers and Kindred-Line members routinely donated hundreds of thousands of dollars annually in cash and raffle items to help support the LLS' fight against blood cancers, and for several years the event was known as the Bobby Mitchell Auto Dealer Classic.

Each year, the tournament also highlighted young leukemia survivors, who were "living proof" of the power that advancements in blood cancer research and treatment had in improving outcomes for those stricken with the rare diseases. Survival rates for blood cancer patients in the United States have continued to improve over the years thanks to improved medicines, transplant procedures, and other treatment regimens that were found through public investment and philanthropic ventures like the Bobby Mitchell Classic.



Bobby Mitchell and his wife Gwen salute the audience at the final Bobby Mitchell Classic in 2012.

In terms of memorial contributions for Bobby Mitchell, it would seem altogether fitting to support the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society as he, together with WANADA dealers, did for so many years. [You can donate to the LLS National Capital Area Chapter at this link.](#)

Born in segregationist Arkansas, Bobby Mitchell overcame immense structural obstacles to break the Redskins' color barrier, make the Pro Football Hall of Fame, and devote his later years to serving vulnerable people across the D.C. area and the United States. Bobby Mitchell was a sports celebrity for sure, but he was also a wonderful human being and friend to Washington area dealers who WANADA will never forget.