

## MERCED, CALIF., DEALER HONORED FOR COMMUNITY WORK

### [DEALERS' DEDICATION TO COMMUNITIES, CAUSES EARNS FORD MOTOR COMPANY 'SALUTE TO DEALERS' AWARD](#)

#### *Tim Razzari of Razzari Ford/Mazda earns Ford's annual 'Salute To Dealers' award*

MERCED, Calif., Jan. 31, 2007 – Tim Razzari is not just a businessman but a passionate community activist who combines his many talents to inspire others. Razzari is dedicated to helping raise money and support for a wide variety of worthwhile causes, including domestic abuse programs, groups that serve the underprivileged, animal rescue, education and local athletics.

Razzari, who owns Razzari Ford/Mazda in the central California town of Merced, is a salesman in the best sense of the word. When he gets behind something he believes in, this man quickly persuades others to hop on board.

“I believe a successful businessperson has an obligation to give back to the community,” Razzari said. “Our visible contributions of time and energy inspire others to get involved. My own contributions are inspired by the commitment and generosity of others as well as the needs of the individual organization.”

For his outstanding corporate citizenship, Ford Motor Company has named Razzari among the nine recipients of its seventh annual *Salute To Dealers* award.

Razzari is a firm believer in helping provide the tools that enable people to better themselves. “To really help people, we have to give them the opportunity to improve their environment and skill set,” he said. “Educating a person and helping them realize they can contribute and make a difference does a tremendous amount in helping them gain self respect. They do not have to be victims.”

That’s why his association with A Woman's Place of Merced County is so gratifying to Razzari – because the organization is committed to providing others an opportunity to change their life.

A Woman’s Place serves men, woman and children in its dedication to eliminating domestic violence and sexual assault. To help support its programs, Razzari and his team cook the organization’s annual Steak and Pasta fund-raising dinner. When the auction at this year’s event, attended by about 400 people, slowed down, Razzari came out of the kitchen to spice things up. He offered to cut his long hair for a bid of \$10,000. It worked, although Razzari had to agree to a full shave of his head – after his daughter’s wedding. The stunt raised needed funds and generated more awareness of A Woman’s Place – all for a good cause.

“I think that’s one of the extraordinary things about Tim; he has the ability to think outside of the box,” said Diana Almanza, executive director of A Woman’s Place. “That’s kind of our same approach to providing services for battered women and their children.”

In fact, Razzari puts his talents as a chef to work for many causes. “I started cooking by helping my friend Mike Salvadori, who is an excellent chef, at a fund-raiser for the Italo-American Lodge,” Razzari said. “Mike doesn’t know how to say no and committed us to cook for almost every organization in Merced.” Together they cook many gourmet meals, which are sold at fund-raising auctions that generate thousands of dollars to benefit schools, charities and civic organizations in their community.

Razzari also lends his auctioneer skills to Trails of Happy Tails, a nonprofit group that takes animals from the local shelter and places them with rescue organizations throughout California, Nevada and Oregon and ultimately adoption. The group’s efforts have helped cut the local animal euthanasia rate from 80 percent to 35 percent, Executive Director Mary Jo Campodonica said.

“Tim has a real knack to work a crowd into paying at least 10 times the value of any given item,” said Campodonica, a friend of Razzari. “This past fund-raiser we made \$22,000 on 15 live auction items! That’s a lot of money for a small town in one evening.”

Lending support and serving as auctioneer for their annual fund-raiser is simply a way of thanking their team for what they do, Razzari said. “Their concern and passion made it impossible to say no,” he said.

Razzari got his start as an auctioneer at a St. Luke’s Episcopal School in Merced, which his children attended and where his granddaughter is a preschool student. Razzari and his wife, Billie, helped organize the school’s first auction fund-raiser in 1982, which has since raised more than \$1 million.

“Over the years, Tim has solicited items to be auctioned, invited friends, purchased items and served as the auctioneer,” said St. Luke’s the Rev. Ron Parry. “Because of people like Tim, we are able to provide a Christian setting for a secure and nurturing environment that encourages academic excellence and challenges children to achieve their full intellectual, emotional, social, physical and spiritual potential.”

The Razzaris have been instrumental in the development of St. Luke’s school for 25 years, helping it broaden its programs and create opportunities for children to attend who might not otherwise be able to pay the tuition. “Now my kids give back to the school, too,” he said proudly.

Razzari gives his time, talent and resources to dozens of other efforts, too, including the Italo-American Lodge, which promotes and supports community needs such as youth groups, sports teams, scholarship programs and medical research; historical societies and civic organizations. He also was actively involved in securing Merced as the site of the 10th University of California campus, which opened in September 2005.

“To be selected for this award is humbling simply because I know how generous others are,” Razzari said. “We all like to be recognized, but this truly is not an individual accomplishment. My wife, family, friends and dealership team have been an integral part in my community involvement.”

***Salute To Dealers*** was established in 2001 to demonstrate Ford Motor Company’s commitment to its dealer principals who improve the lives of those in need in their communities while providing outstanding products and services. The program is conducted under the guidance of Edsel B. Ford II, great-grandson of Henry Ford and a member of Ford’s Board of Directors.

“Tim’s involvement in and dedication to his community underscores Ford’s commitment to making a difference in the places where we work and live,” Edsel Ford said. “He is inspiring.”

This year, 71 exceptional dealers from 26 states and two countries were nominated for the seventh annual award. Dealer principals representing all Ford Motor Company brands – Ford, Lincoln, Mercury, Jaguar, Volvo, Mazda, Land Rover and Aston Martin – are eligible to be nominated by a regional representative. A panel of judges selects the honorees based on the dealer’s individual activities, length of participation and personal motivation.

This year’s award recipients will be honored February 2 at a private reception preceding the National Automobile Dealers Association (NADA) convention in Las Vegas. Ford Motor Company commissioned a portrait of each honoree depicting in montage form the dealer’s involvement in his or her community. These portraits commemorating the corporate citizenship efforts of the 2007 honorees will join those of previous honorees in a special display in the lobby of Ford Motor Company’s World Headquarters in Dearborn, Mich.