

# REMAN CONNECTION



## APRA SALUTES ITS OLDEST MEMBER Van Bergen & Greener Company

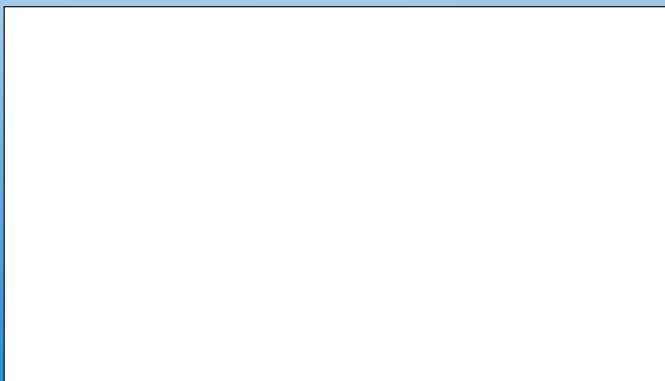
remanufacturing auto parts from 1919 to 2019



1919 Ford Model T

2019 Ford Explorer

### USA E-COMMERCE MARKET GROWS May Exceed \$12 Billion In 2019



**TARIFFS**—Effects On Auto Parts Suppliers

**RECYCLING**—Exhaust Aftertreatment Parts

**TECH**—Switches, Relays and Solenoids





# MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: VAN BERGEN & GREENER 100 Years of Reman and Innovation

By Betsy Grueninger

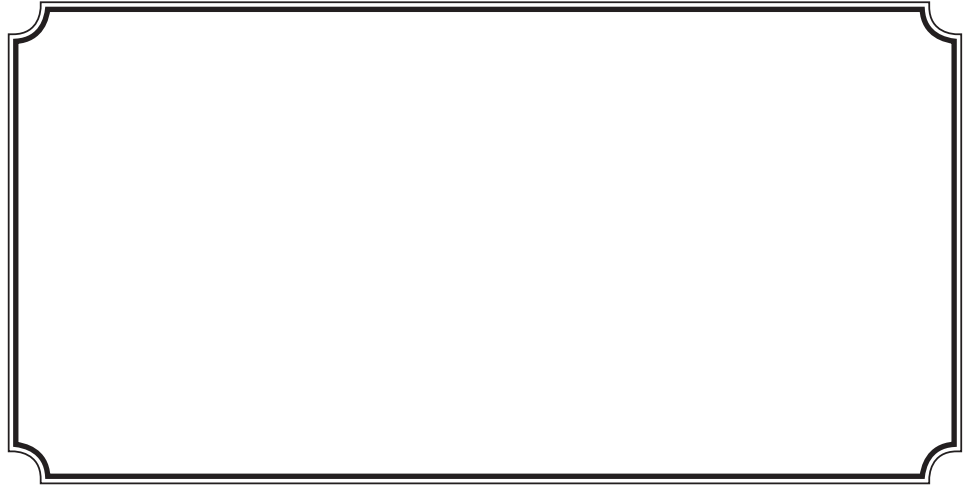
The Van Bergen & Greener Company has been an American automotive parts remanufacturer for the last 100 years! Today, it is the only USA manufacturer of starter drives and starter drive components. Founded in 1919, this company, based in Chicago, has played an important role in the formation and the history of APRA, the Automotive Parts Remanufacturers Association. Here is how they came together.

One of the rebuilding industry pioneers, George Marquardt, worked as a manufacturers' agent for several automotive parts companies in Illinois and Indiana. In 1925, he added the line of Van Bergen & Greener rebuilt starter drives. (They were one of the original rebuilders in that field.) In 1927, Marquardt joined in partnership with William R. Weldon, who was also an agent selling the Van Bergen & Greener line.

It was in 1937 that the two partners bought the Van Bergen & Greener Co. after Van Bergen was killed in an automobile accident. Marquardt became the company president and held that position until he retired in 1954, when he sold his share of the business to his partner, W. R. Weldon.

It was in California in the early 1940s when a group of automotive parts rebuilders, led by Ralph A. Van Alen, formed a small organization to help each other out. They called it Automotive Parts Rebuilders Association. APRA was first incorporated with the help of H. P. Lester (of catalog fame), and H. A. Henderson.

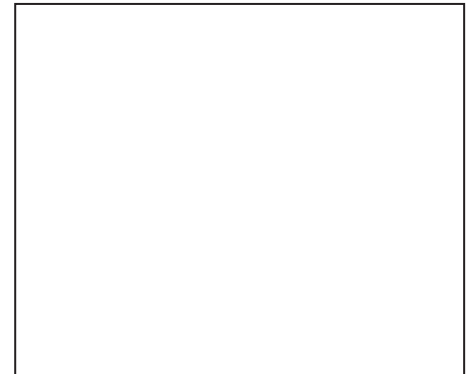
When the U.S. became involved in World War II, automotive parts production was curtailed. The nation's raw materials were needed for the war effort. Automotive parts rebuilders were suddenly seen as the solution to the new-parts shortage which caused a transportation crisis. Van Alen traveled the country as a one-man evangelist, attracting rebuilders to his relatively local organization. During the war, sole-proprietor rebuilding shops grew to become large factories, providing rebuilt automotive parts to keep vehicles running. They were needed to transport people and



Left-to-Right: Three generations of Weldons—William R., William G., Paul



At the 1957 convention these two rebuilders, W. G. Weldon (left), Van Bergen & Greener, Co., and J. W. Harper, Lee Electric Co., enjoyed the hospitality of Miss APRA.



At the 1958 convention, APRA President, Bill Weldon (right) receives an advertising award. Van Bergen & Greener won 1st place for companies with less than 25 employees

war materials across the country.

By the end of World War II, many of the major auto parts rebuilders, including Van Bergen & Greener, realized that their original association needed to be reorganized to take them into the post-war economy. What had grown out of a wartime need, had now become an American peacetime necessity. The rebuilding industry leaders met in Chicago in 1946 and founded the "national" APRA! George Marquardt, president of Van Bergen & Greener, was elected the first president of the new APRA. A staff of officers and a board of directors were chosen to assist him and to write a new constitution and by-laws.



William Weldon rebuilt these inertia friction drives for Bendix, to Bendix specifications over 50 years ago.

For the past 70-plus years, the Van Bergen & Greener Co., led by the Weldon family, has given continuous support to the APRA. William R. Weldon headed the company since 1954. He was followed by his son, William G. Weldon, who also served as the president of APRA from 1957-1958. Upon his death in 1988, his wife Patricia Butler Weldon became the CEO of the company. In 1992, she was honored for her service to the industry by the Automotive Parts Rebuilders Association. The company moved from Chicago to Maywood, Illinois in 1985, where her son, Paul Weldon, is the now the current head of Van Bergen & Greener. He is the third-generation owner of this family-run business. Paul served as APRA president from 1988-1989.

Paul Weldon, a mechanical engineer, uses his knowledge of metallurgy and mechanical innovations to continue to improve the quality of their new manufactured starter drives, remanufactured starter drives, drive components and solenoids. He has created

a durable spragg-clutch starter drive which has been a great boon to Harley Davidson motorcycle owners. Never being satisfied with past successes, Weldon strives to innovate, adapt and improve everything they produce—from starter drives to solenoids to clutch pulleys. They aim for perfection of fit and materials.

Weldon says he has been given a wonderful legacy from prior generations: Industry, Integrity, and Innovation. His grandfather taught him the value of hard work, his father personified “a man’s word is his bond”, and his mother demonstrated perseverance and achievement. Weldon adds his own legacy to the list ... “The E in CEO stands for Energy and Enjoy! Work is fun when you enjoy what you do!”

APRA is proud to acknowledge the loyalty and support of the Weldon family, and we wish Van Bergen and Greener continued success for the next 100 years!



Van Bergen and Greener proudly labels their “Made-in-America” products with the American flag.



The first APRA logo design, created in the 1940s, is the one that Van Bergen & Greener would have displayed during that era.



Harley Davidson motorcycles have a slippage problem with the OE Denso starter drive. Paul Weldon saw the need and created the solution—a spragg-clutch starter drive. This made-in-America starter drive has earned high praise from Harley owners around the globe.

## 50,000 Rotating Electrical Units

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