

TACOMA SUSPENSION BUILDER'S GUIDE

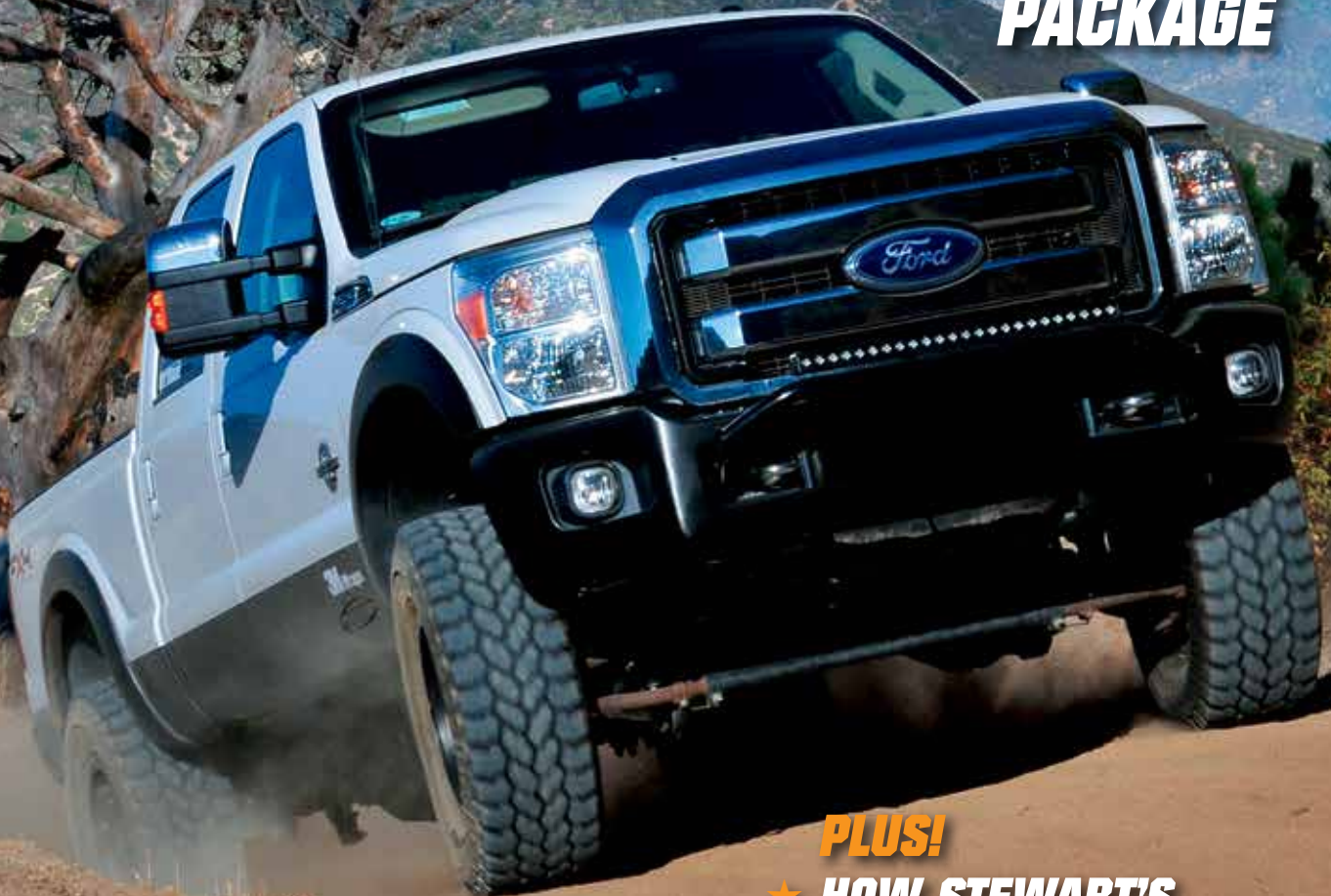
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# Off-Road

ELECTRONICALLY REPRINTED FROM DECEMBER 2012

**THE BEST** OF BOTH WORLDS  
**ULTIMATE OFF-ROAD & TOWING PACKAGE**



**PLUS!**

**DIESEL SUPER DUTY MODS**

- ★ 6.4L OIL COOLER
- ★ 6.0L HI-PO INTERCOOLER AND COOLANT FILTER
- ★ 6.7L TOW-HAUL-CHASE SUSPENSION

- ★ HOW STEWART'S RACEWORKS GOT ITS START
- ★ OFF-ROAD'S PERSON(S) OF THE YEAR

# NEAL BROTHERS

## OFF-ROAD'S 2012 PEOPLE OF THE YEAR

BY JAY KOPYCINSKI  
PHOTOGRAPHY: OFF-ROAD  
STAFF & JAY KOPYCINSKI



**B**EGINNING IN 2011, OFF-ROAD SET OUT TO ANNUALLY RECOGNIZE INDIVIDUALS FROM OUR WORLD OF DIRT AND TRUCK MOTORSPORTS. IT'S AN HONOR GIVEN TO AN INDIVIDUAL WHO DOESN'T JUST STAND OUT BY CONTRIBUTING TO THE INDUSTRY BUT IS ALSO A TRAILBLAZER IN AND AN ASSET TO OUR OFF-ROAD COMMUNITY.

This year, we're renaming the honor as OFF-ROAD magazine's People of the Year Award, because we're recognizing two individuals: Ken and Gene Neal. These siblings reside in Mesa, Arizona, and are the owners of BulletProof Diesel.

### BROTHERLY BOND

Ken and Gene formed a solid brotherly bond early in life when they both agreed that no matter what may lie before them, neither would ever rat out the other. Ken was the kind of kid who was

always tearing apart mechanical assemblies. Gene, on the other hand was a natural salesman, profiting from selling bubble gum to his classmates. Their brotherly pact stuck through adolescence and brought the brothers closer as they grew to adulthood.

Here, they parted career paths with Ken pursuing his ASE mechanics certification and becoming a skillful automotive tech with a specialty



► The early years, already in the mud.

# NEAL BROTHERS

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in diagnostic troubleshooting. Gene, on the other hand, pursued a mechanical engineering degree and found a job working for an electronics firm.

The Neals grew up in an entrepreneurial family with both parents self-employed, so it was natural that they ultimately evolved to forming their own business. Ken had started an auto repair business and Gene joined forces with him after securing a master's degree in business.

Diesel 6.0L Power Stroke fans will know where the Neals ended up. The brothers formed a goal to pursue improvement of these engines where the factory had shortcomings. When the brothers saw consistent EGR cooler failures, they set about finding a way to provide their customers with a more reliable product. On top of that, they developed a replacement oil cooler as well. BulletProof Diesel, and its rapid expansion over the past few years, is the result of those efforts.

### DIRT AND SWEAT

They've worked hard to develop improved solutions for mechanical issues that exist for their customers. They've created a thriving business by catering to the truck segment with those

solutions. They spend money within the community to bolster it, and they serve the community by producing products for enthusiasts needs. Hard work has gotten them to the point they're at today and their journey can serve as a good model to others aspiring to build up a truck or off-road related business.

Years past, Ken would often do a lot of fuel tuning on engines when he was asked to tune a truck destined to race in the Baja 500. He did the tune and soon found himself headed to Mexico, and hooked on supporting off-road racers. He did a lot of wiring and fuel injection work on various rigs and through a contact with Rick Geiser, the brothers started an association with the Desert Assassins race team about four years ago.

Racer Cameron Steele put it quite succinctly when he told us, "These guys are awesome." Ken is a big part of their pit and chase team, and chase team guys are the unsung heroes of racing. They work their butts off, spend their own money to do so, and are satisfied with the reward of seeing their race truck driver do well in the race.

### PASSION AND COMPASSION

The Neal brothers fit into the off-road community deeper



◀ One of the brothers' "off-road" vehicles: a '60s British Chieftain tank. And we just got word at time of print that they recently bought a troop carrier with tank tracks.



▲ Gene having a little fun rattling a Dillon Mini Gun in the Arizona desert.



▲ South of the border, preparing for another desert race with the Desert Assassins crew.



▲ "Uh, honey, yes, we're stuck out in the desert again."

Off the beaten path in one of the BulletProof Diesel chase trucks.



▲ Ken in a moment of levity, challenging the main gun on the British Chieftain tank.



▲ Paying respects to Jeff "Ox" Kargola after his passing.

than you may see at first glance. We found they care about that community. They care about people in need and respond with charity. Twice in the past year or so they've donated \$10,000 to a charity event for a young girl suffering from brain cancer. Time and again they've proven they can be counted on to support the community. People speak complimentary of the brothers, and they're described as enthusiastic and just plain fun.

Ask some of their employees (and we did) and you'll find Ken and Gene to be well-respected by their work crew. Their employees describe the pair as smart, business-wise, and with a good dynamic between the two. We could tell their crew looks up to their bosses, and respect their work ethic in the business world, where they consistently strive to be best in the market and offer top-notch customer service. To us in the industry, they're also helpful and an excellent source of diesel tech information.

We asked the guys for the best advice they could give our readers who aspire to reach goals in life, be those personal or career. Their input was to take it a step at a time, be consistent in your actions, and go that extra step to push a good result to a great result. When we visited their gleaming new business location, we found a Thomas Edison quote they had purposely etched in glass on their conference room wall: "Opportunity is missed by most people because it is dressed in overalls and looks like work." Thanks again for your contributions, Ken and Gene. **OR**

