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Spartan Motors Introduces New Entry-level Chassis at RVIA 2003

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Spartan Brings a Commercial Drive Train to Diesel Pusher Market

CHARLOTTE, Mich., Dec. 2 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- For more than 15 years, Spartan Motors Chassis has led the RV industry in developing diesel motorhome chassis that feature uncommon performance and innovation.

Now, the Charlotte, Mich.-based subsidiary of Spartan Motors, Inc. (Nasdaq: SPAR) has utilized a Ford drive train to introduce the lowest cost entry-level diesel chassis on the market, further narrowing the price gap between gas and diesel alternatives without sacrificing performance.

Spartan Chassis today debuted the new Competitor concept chassis, the first-ever diesel motorhome chassis built on a commercial drive train, at the annual Recreation Vehicle Industry Association (RVIA) trade show in Louisville, Ky., which runs from Dec. 2-4 (Booth #1025). Spartan said the new Competitor concept chassis utilizes the Ford 325hp 6.0L diesel engine, the same engine used on the Ford F150 pickup.

"Working with a Ford drive train on this unique configuration has allowed us to develop a very competitively priced diesel-pusher chassis that's designed to be high quality, high performing and easy for OEMs to build on," said Richard Schalter, president of Spartan Chassis. "The Competitor is our response to an industry shift towards low- to medium-end Class A motorhomes. As the motorhome OEMs have gotten better and more efficient building motorhomes, there is a segment of buyers who are focused more on coach amenities and less on pure power. The Competitor fits the bill for these buyers."

Spartan said the introduction of the Competitor chassis, coupled with its new high-line K3 chassis, the most feature-packed, premium diesel chassis on the market, gives Spartan Chassis the broadest selection of products in the diesel RV market. The Company expects to ship its first prototypes of the Competitor concept chassis to OEMs in the second quarter of 2004, with production scheduled to begin later in the third quarter.

The Competitor will feature exceptional performance, ride, handling and safety features at the lowest price point in the diesel market. The new chassis will also be easy to build on, and offer a better horsepower/GVW (gross vehicle weight) ratio. In addition to supporting the Ford diesel engine, providing a Valeo cooling system and a straight frame-rail construction, the Competitor also includes:

* A Ford TorqShift(TM) 5-speed transmission, a newly designed 5-speed gearbox, and new control system that provides smoother shifts between gears. The TorqShift also features higher first- and second-gear ratios to launch a

vehicle loaded with cargo more quickly and smoothly.

* Detroit Steel's Stabil-Ride(TM), an integral stabilizer system featuring a softer spring design for a better ride without sacrificing handling performance. The Stabil-Ride is featured on both the front and rear suspensions, providing 15,000 lbs. of GAWR (gross axle weight rating).

* The Competitor also features 25,750 lbs. of GVWR (gross vehicle weight rating)

* The rear-engine position on the Competitor provides a quieter ride in the cab.

"The Competitor will help pave the way for more entry-level products in the diesel pusher market by lowering the cost to OEMs -- and RV end-users -- and offering them a viable, more comparable choice between gas and diesel powered engines," said John Szykiel, Spartan Motors chief executive officer. "Innovations like the Competitor chassis represent Spartan's continued focus on becoming the most-desired brand and lowest total-cost producer in the markets we serve. Our commitment to operating efficiency and lean manufacturing were also critical elements that made it possible to bring this product to market."

About Spartan Motors, Inc.

Spartan Motors, Inc. (theshyftgroup.com) designs, engineers and manufactures custom chassis and vehicles for the recreational vehicle, fire truck, ambulance and emergency-rescue markets. The company's brand names -- Spartan(R), Crimson Fire(R) and Road Rescue(R) -- are known in their market niches for quality, value, service and being the first to market with innovative products. Spartan Motors employs approximately 700 at facilities in Michigan, South Dakota, Alabama, Minnesota and South Carolina and is publicly traded on The NASDAQ Stock Market under the ticker symbol SPAR.

The statements contained in this news release include certain predictions and projections that may be considered "forward-looking statements" by the securities laws. These forward-looking statements are identifiable by words or phrases indicating that the Company or management "expects" that a particular result may occur, or that its "guidance" or "initial guidance" is that a particular event may occur. These statements involve many risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results to differ materially, including but not limited to economic, competitive, governmental and technological factors affecting the Company's operations, markets, products, services and prices. Additional information about these and other factors that may adversely affect these forward-looking statements are contained in the Company's reports and filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. The Company undertakes no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements to reflect developments or information obtained after the date of this news release.

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