

TRUCK NEWS

September 2008 Volume 28, Issue 9

Delivering daily news to Canada's trucking industry at www.trucknews.com

Nova Scotia set to test bigger trucks

HALIFAX, N.S. – A pilot project in Nova Scotia will allow double 53-ft. semi-trailers to be hauled by a single tractor on selected stretches of highway.

Officials are hoping that these long combination vehicles (LCVs) will help increase business to the Port of Halifax, transloading facilities where shipments are transferred to and from trucks, and other transportation partners.

The Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal will assess the vehicles on selected four-lane highways.

“LCVs will help expand business and competitiveness in Nova Scotia,” said Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Minister Murray Scott. “They will help increase Nova Scotia’s competitiveness with other East Coast ports, and boost the transportation industry in this province.”

Other potential benefits of long combination vehicles include reduced truck traffic, by using one engine to haul two trailers, and environmental advantages such as using less fuel and cutting greenhouse gas emissions.

“We are pleased the province of Nova Scotia will be launching this pilot project,” said George Malec, vice-president of business development and operations for the Halifax Port Authority.

“Many customers of the port,
Continued on page 13 ■



TEAM EFFORT: Marty Gardner, the 2008 *Truck News* Owner/Operator of the Year, credits his wife Lisa (pictured) and a supportive carrier for much of his success. Gardner runs five trucks – each of them contracted to FedEx Ground – on various lanes across Canada.
– Photo by David Benjatschek

Slow and steady

O/O of the Year shares his recipe for success

By James Menzies

FERGUS, Ont. – With owner/operators and fleets of all sizes going broke and decrying the state of the trucking industry on a daily basis, it’s refreshing to speak with Marty Gardner.

Business for the 15th annual *Truck News* Owner/Operator of the Year, crowned at the Fergus Truck Show July 25, is thriving. He just added two more trucks to his small stable, bringing his total to five. All are contracted to FedEx Ground, running various lanes ranging from Vancouver to Southern Ontario.

In an industry sometimes accused of having its share of dinosaurs, Gardner’s success has come as a result of evolving with the times. His traditional-styled trucks have been replaced with fuel-efficient, aerodynamic models, and it doesn’t dampen his pride a bit.

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No job too big

Quebec fleet focuses on the big and the bizarre.

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- **Green for green:** Award-winning APPS Transport Group reveals the real reason it’s going green. The planet itself may be an unwitting benefactor. Page 42
- **Highlights from Fergus:** A selection of photos from the Fergus Truck Show, where some of the country’s most riveting iron was on display. Pages 44-45
- **Dalton and the Bandit:** Nothing’s sweeter than when a plan comes together, Dalton realizes. Page 68

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PERFORMANCE DRIVEN



JUMBO LOADS

We profile a Quebec company that seeks out some of the biggest, and most bizarre, loads. Find out why one fleet's philosophy is go big or go home.

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feature of the month...

NEW ALTERNATIVES: There's been a lot of talk about how alternative fuels can help reduce emissions and lessen our dependence on foreign oil.

But how far away are such fuels and what new challenges do they present? We take a detailed look at several options.

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FOCUS ON FERGUS

A look at some of the rigs that caught photographer Adam Ledlow's eye at this year's Fergus Truck Show.

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ROAD TEST

On-road editor Harry Rudolfs returns to his roots to test drive the International 5600 SBA construction truck. He finds a lot has changed since he last piloted a construction rig.

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TRUE VINTAGE

We visit a B.C.-based vintage truck collector who says his collection is more than just a hobby. A look at how Glen Morrow's passion for trucks has also become a successful business.

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What is behind the excellent results of Roadcheck?

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Mark Dalton in... Mark Dalton and the Bandit Part 4



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A look at two industry initiatives that go a long way towards improving our image.

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Liberal 'green' plan won't work for truckers.

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CRIME-FIGHTERS

By Bruce Richards

Recapping an eye-opening seminar on trucks and terrorism.

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ARE YOU SECURE?

By Jean Marie Gagnon

What you need to know about keeping your loads – and your operation – secure.

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JUST PEACHY

By Karen Bowen

Peaches are a great fall fruit that offer many of the vitamins you need to remain healthy.

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TAX TIME ALL THE TIME

Scott Taylor

Taxes shouldn't be something you think about once a year. How to plan ahead.

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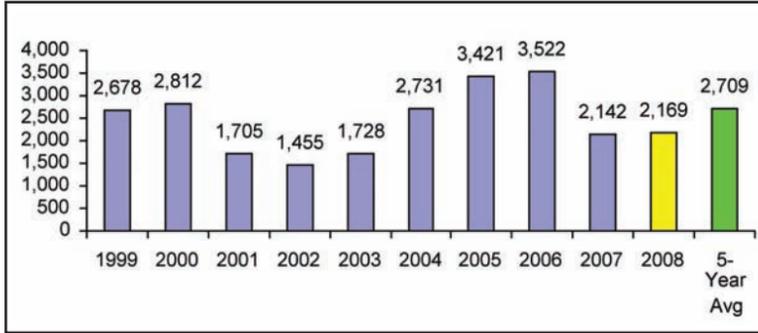
TRUCK SALES TRENDS

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Monthly Class 8 Sales - June 08

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	386	400
Kenworth	376	355
Mack	175	127
International	445	495
Peterbilt	202	253
Sterling	195	213
Volvo	250	130
Western Star	140	169
TOTALS	2,169	2,142

Historical Comparison - June 08 Sales



Motor Vehicle Production to Jan 08

	Total Prodn	For Export
International	4,444	3,729
Paccar	4,659	3,964
Sterling	17,156	14,563
TOTALS	26,259	22,256

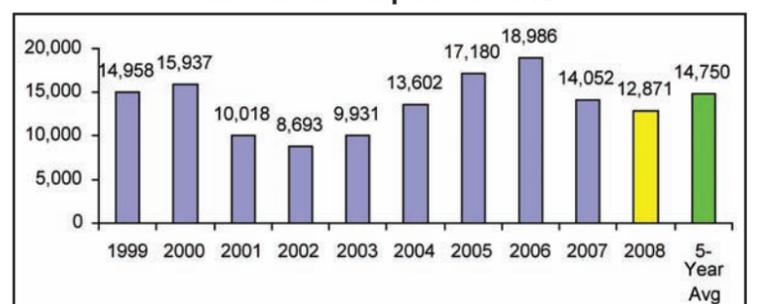
Canadian Class 8 sales during the first half of 2008 have offered a mixed bag of disappointments and pleasant surprises. Sales started off quietly in the first quarter, coming in below last year's level and considerably below the record numbers posted in the 2006 - not surprising considering the impact of the pre-buy strategy and the serious doubts about the economy's health. However, sales for March climbed above 2,000 units, avoiding the steep declines of 2001 to 2003, April's sales were higher than last year's, May's were not far off last year's pace and June's were slightly better than last year's. Can this pace be sustained into the third and fourth quarter? It wasn't last year.

With the days of coping with parts and materials shortages and record demand for new trucks nothing but a memory, truck manufacturers instead now face continuing to bring their operations in line with the reduced sales. They also are preparing for the next jump in sales volumes as fleets and owner/operators respond to the next round of engine emissions standards in 2010 and the anticipated rebound of the North American economy.

Class 8 Sales (YTD June 08) by Province and OEM

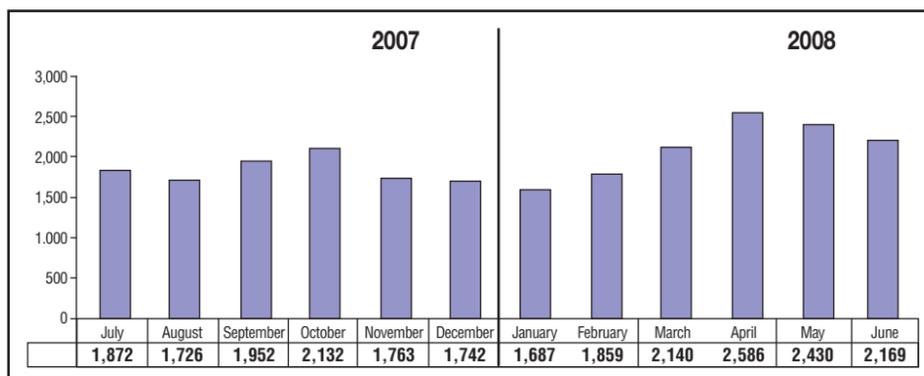
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	206	451	105	121	954	375	132	64	0	10	2,418
Kenworth	292	763	122	97	458	436	21	39	0	0	2,228
Mack	83	148	65	89	361	117	25	35	0	0	923
International	125	373	45	177	1,313	774	112	56	3	41	3,019
Peterbilt	149	454	160	77	298	170	83	31	0	0	1,422
Sterling	124	188	50	41	346	265	16	36	0	3	1,069
Volvo	80	161	79	155	445	176	34	35	0	7	1,172
Western Star	107	163	22	14	175	92	21	24	0	2	620
TOTALS	1,166	2,701	648	771	4,350	2,405	444	320	3	63	12,871

Historical Comparison - YTD



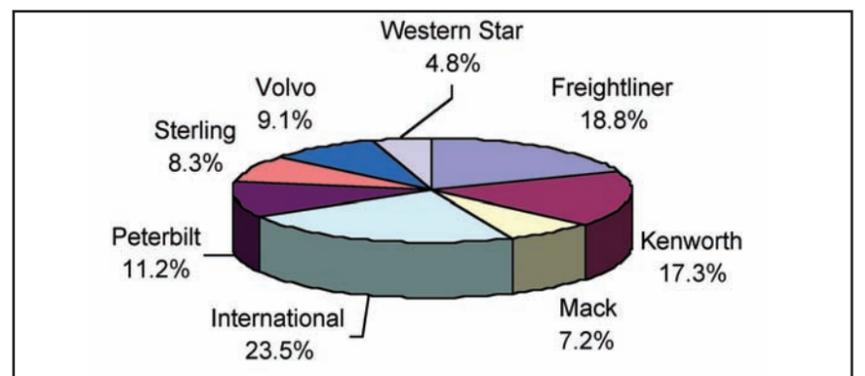
After a stronger than expected second quarter, Class 8 sales for the first half are at 12,871 or about 1,100 units off last year's admittedly slow pace but less than 2,000 units off the 5-year average in Canada. Obviously, this year's sales are way off the record pace set back in 2006. Currently, 2008 is shaping up as the fourth worst sales year in the past decade as the pre-buy strategy employed by many fleets combined with a slowing North American economy is giving fleets second thoughts about adding capacity.

12 - Month Sales Trends



Monthly total sales never climbed above the 3,000 mark last year, after doing so seven times in the previous record-setting year. It's highly unlikely to see such strong monthly figures this year either. The 2,586 Class 8 trucks sold in April marked the strongest sales so far this year with May's 2,430 trucks sold the second best. The 2,169 trucks sold in June marked the third-best performance of the year and also the fourth consecutive month over the past 12-month period that monthly totals have climbed above 2,000 units sold.

Market Share Class 8 YTD



Last year, International wrestled the market share lead from perennial front runner Freightliner and International jumped out of the starting blocks with a lead in the first quarter, capturing about 22% of sales. With a very strong second quarter showing, International has added to that lead and now controls almost a quarter of the market with Freightliner controlling almost 19% and Kenworth 17.3%. Peterbilt is the only other truck manufacturer with a market share greater than 10%.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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The driver shortage hasn't permanently disappeared

The current plight of the trucking industry may provide some relief to one of its biggest problems: the shortage of qualified drivers. However, it would be naive to think this issue has permanently disappeared and would be a major mistake to place human resources issues on the back burner.

There's reason to believe the lack of qualified drivers will once again be at the forefront of carrier concerns when the industry recovers. In fact, the problem may even be greater than it was before the current downturn.

While some carriers have reeled in their fleet size and others have disappeared altogether, it must also be remembered that this is a cyclical industry and demand for drivers will return as soon as the freight does. When it does rebound, it may be more difficult than ever to find qualified drivers. Consider that many owner/operators are also going out of business during these difficult times. There's no guarantee they will return to the trucking industry when the industry recovers. Chances are good that they've already moved on to 'greener pastures.'

Also, while the industry remains mired in its current slump, its driver population continues to age. Drivers

Editorial Comment

James Menzies



are continuing to hang up their keys and despite the best efforts of the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (CTHRC) and the industry as a whole, there still aren't hordes of young folks beating down the doors to get into this business.

So instead of pretending the driver shortage is no longer an issue of concern, now may be an excellent time for fleets to re-evaluate their hiring procedures and take a closer look at how they can minimize turnover. Recently at the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada's annual convention, the CTHRC's Linda Gauthier provided an excellent analogy (which she borrowed from some of the CTHRC's most recent training material).

She likened turnover to the foundation of a house. Without a solid foundation, the walls (recruitment) and roof (retention) will not remain intact. The issue of driver turnover must be addressed – or all the

recruiting and retention initiatives in the world will not provide any meaningful long-term relief, she pointed out.

Why address turnover? The CTHRC estimates it costs between \$7,000-\$8,000 to replace a single driver, and that's not even considering the related intangible costs. Too many fleets have accepted turnover as a cost of doing business, but Gauthier said it doesn't have to be that way.

"We can stop turnover," she insisted. But with an industry turnover rate of 20-32% per year (which believe it or not, is better than it recently was) tackling the issue may seem like a daunting task.

To that end, the CTHRC has developed many tools for fleets, one being: *Your Guide to Human Resources: Practical Tips and Tools for the Trucking Industry*. This comprehensive guide serves as an HR toolbox for managers who generally wear many hats, HR being one of them. It's currently being supported by a half-day course the CTHRC offers when and where there's enough interest, which helps unlock the guide's vast capabilities.

The shortage of qualified drivers may not be top of mind at the moment. But forward-thinking fleets will continue to invest in HR-related training and solutions even in the toughest of times, with the knowledge they will be better positioned to compete when the industry bounces back. □

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You gotta hang on

Have you finally managed to tan your body and your brain during your summer vacation? They didn't actually say it (being Canadian they were too polite) but I could tell by the look on their faces they were thinking it.

What prompted this was the idea I floated during several presentations to transportation industry groups this summer that we could actually be an economic uptick away from another serious capacity crunch in the trucking sector and a return to upward pressure on rates – perhaps as early as the next few months.

Talking about a capacity crunch and rising rates in the midst of the worst downturn the industry has faced in a decade is admittedly jarring. I understand all too well that many motor carriers are too

Viewpoint

Lou Smyrlis
Editorial Director



busy hanging on by their fingernails right now to have the luxury of thinking ahead.

But there really is a reason to my "madness." And it has to do with the end result of the carnage going on right now.

The 935 trucking company failures reported in the first quarter of 2008 in the US represent not only a 142.9% increase over the previous year but about 42,000 power units exiting the market or around 2% of the country's total truck capacity.

To place that in a Canadian perspective, it's the equivalent of pretty well wiping out the entire British Columbia trucking industry.

Then on May 20, 2008, Jevic Transportation closed its doors, representing the largest failure of an LTL carrier since the departure of Consolidated Freightways in 2003.

Canadian motor carrier bankruptcy figures aren't as up to date. Al's Cartage was the biggest name to go under this year and it wouldn't surprise me if a few more familiar names joined the ranks of the departed.

But it's just as important to keep an eye on lower-profile small carriers exiting the market; their contribution to capacity, although not what it once was, is still important.

The last economic downturn in the late 90s, claimed about a quarter of our small carrier base.

After 2005, tight capacity was loosened to a significant degree by the pre-buy.

While another pre-buy is likely, it won't be anywhere near the size we saw back in 2005 and 2006. There simply isn't much time to put a pre-buy strategy in place this time around and, more importantly, there aren't as many Class 8 trucks up for replacement.

If we assume a seven year average life cycle there are only 18,361 trucks up for renewal in 2009 – too low a base number to envision Class 8 truck capacity being increased by 35,000 to 39,000 as was the case for 2006 and 2007.

In short, there are enough significant factors limiting supply that as soon as demand perks up we'll feel an instant impact on truck transportation pricing. □

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Did you know?

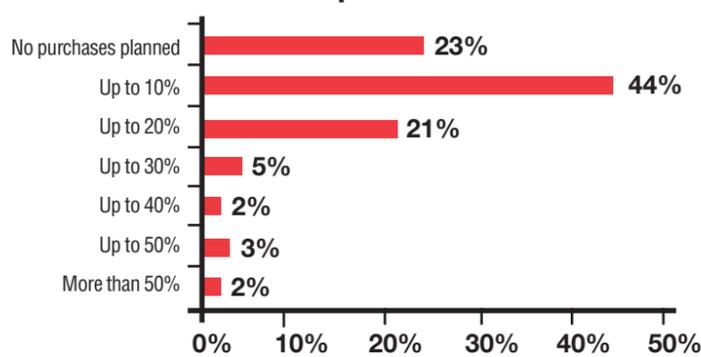
The likelihood of another strong pre-buy in 2009

Will fleets and owner/operators renew their interest in new iron in 2009, perhaps boosting Class 8 truck sales near to previous record levels? Next year will be their last opportunity to squeeze in another pre-buy prior to the new engine emissions standards coming in 2010. Our recently completed research shows that 41% of owner/operators plan to buy a new truck over the next 12 months (to July 2009) while 59% have no purchases planned. In comparison, 64% of owner/operators

had no truck purchases planned during the same period last year. More than three quarters (77%) of fleets intend on buying new iron over the next 12 months (to July 2009). The majority of carriers (44%) intend on replacing up to 10% of their fleet while a fifth are looking to replace up to 20% of their fleet. Less than a quarter (23%) have no purchases planned over the next 12 months. That is an improvement over the previous year but not by a great deal. Last year 43% of carriers were looking to replace up to 10% of their fleet while 21% were planning to replace up to 20% of their fleet. Twenty nine percent had no purchases planned.

Another way to gauge potential

% of Fleet to be Replaced Next 12 Months



truck sales for next year is to examine how many trucks are due for replacement.

Canadian trucks carry heavier weights and travel longer distances so we prefer to employ a seven-year replacement cycle for our projections rather than the nine-year replacement cycle used by analysts in the US. (It should be noted that a

truck may go through more than one owner during those seven years.) Based on the seven-year replacement cycle there are 18,361 trucks up for renewal in 2009, 20,289 in 2010 and 22,490 in 2011. Question is how many of the replacements scheduled for 2010 and 2011 will be pulled into 2009 as part of another pre-buy.

During the previous two pre-buys about a third of motor carriers and up to a fifth of owner/operators opted for a pre-buy strategy.

However, the low base number of trucks due for replacement in 2009, combined with lingering concerns over the economy will prevent 2009 sales from getting anywhere close to the record set in 2006. □

IN BRIEF

Ontario ponders ban on in-vehicle distractions

TORONTO, Ont. – The province of Ontario will introduce legislation this fall that will ban the use of electronic distractions such as cell phones and Blackberries while driving, according to a report by Toronto-area media.

Ontario Transport Minister Jim Bradley reportedly confirmed the impending law recently in an interview with Global TV's *Focus Ontario*.

"We think we can come forward with a very good package that will improve our safety record," Bradley told *Focus Ontario*. "Even though we're the tops in North America year in and year out, outside of the Northwest Territories, we still think we can make even more progress."

Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty, who once ridiculed a ban on cell phones, saying "Where do we draw the line? Do we ban coffee drinking in cars?" has reportedly had a change of heart. One US study estimated driver distraction was a factor in 80% of car accidents.

Newfoundland, Nova Scotia and Quebec already ban the use of cell phones while driving. The Ontario Trucking Association issued a statement saying it does not support a ban on cell phones while driving. □

Good news, bad news from EDC report

OTTAWA, Ont. – Export Development Canada (EDC) is predicting more turbulent times ahead for Canadian exporters. The agency says Canada's total exports will increase 4.2% over the remainder of this year, mainly due to soaring energy prices. However, its Global Export Forecast also predicts a 1% decline the following year.

"Since our Spring Global Export Forecast, there hasn't been much good news for Canadian exporters. Losses due to the US sub-prime crisis and its spillover effects into Canada continue to mount, the impact of soaring commodity prices upon consumers continues to increase, and proof of slowing global production is rampant," said Peter Hall, vice-president and chief economist for EDC. "The gain of 4% in exports in 2008 is actually an energy price story, but when all price effects are removed, Canadian exports are actually on track to tumble by 4% this year."

EDC said the loonie will continue to be near parity with the US greenback through the summer, but will pull back by year-end and remain between 94 and 97 cents through the first half of 09. The forecast also suggests crude prices will sink below US\$100 per barrel by the end of the year and will average US\$84 per barrel next year.

"While EDC recognizes that global supply and demand for crude is tight, we see signs that a large price correction is on the horizon," Hall said. "On the demand front, growth expectations are likely to moderate as the global slowdown spreads and oil price subsidies in emerging markets are scaled back. On the supply front, the Energy Information Administration is already forecasting a doubling of OPEC surplus capacity, to four million barrels per day in 2009, and non-OPEC supply gains of one million barrels per day." □

Fuel thieves active in Maritimes

DIEPPE, N.B. – The Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association (APTA) is warning its members to be cautious as actual and anecdotal evidence is pointing towards an increase in fuel thefts. In an advisory to members, APTA executive director Peter Nelson said carriers have reported increased cases of fuel cards and pin numbers being stolen from trucks as well as fuel being siphoned from reefers and trucks.

"It is advised that you keep fuel cards and pin numbers separate as well as increase vigilance in your facilities," Nelson advised. "This is a nasty downside to the rise in fuel prices in that it has created a lucrative black market for diesel fuel." □

Behind the headlines

Editorial director Lou Smyrlis was a guest speaker at Transcore's annual user's conference. He spoke about industry trends, outlining research that indicates why we may be "just one economic uptick away from another capacity crunch and the return to upward pressure on rates." Earlier in the summer Smyrlis addressed the annual conference of the Professional Pharmaceutical and Cosmetics Logistics Association. □

Antique truck show in the works

ABERFOYLE, Ont. – An antique truck show will be hosted Sept. 27 by the American Truck Historical Society's Old Trucks and Friends Chapter.

The event will be held from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. at Schneider National, 7475 McLean Road

East (off Brock Rd., one mile north of the 401's Exit 299).

A silent auction, 50/50 draw and lunch will be available as part of the event. The entry fee is a donation. For information, contact event organizers Shirley or Alvin at 519-942-4033. □

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US truck tonnage continues climb

ARLINGTON, Va. – US truck tonnage continues to climb, increasing 1.3% in June, marking the second consecutive month-to-month gain.

That's 5.4% higher than June of last year, which marks the eighth consecutive year-over-year increase, according to stats released by the American Trucking Associations. June's figures mark the largest year-over-year increase since January, 2005. While anecdotal evidence collected from the ATA supports the increase, the association's chief economist Bob Costello continues to warn against becoming overly optimistic that a turnaround is imminent. He said it's still possible that the US will slip into recession.

"It seems that truck tonnage is once again leading the US economy," Costello said.

"During the 2000-2001 cycle, trucking pulled out of a recession before the aggregate economy fell into one. Unfortunately, truck tonnage could slow later this year as the overall economy is expected to be quite weak in the fourth quarter and the first quarter of next year."

He noted capacity has tightened significantly as carriers continue to fold due to high fuel prices. Other carriers continue to reduce their fleet size and some have exited the US market.

Costello said these trends are all likely to continue. □

Trucker charged for poor English skills

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. – A trucker in Alabama has been fined US\$500 for failing a roadside English test.

It's an issue that *Truck News* brought to light in January, 2008. At that time, contributor Anne Peters wrote that while English language proficiency has been a requirement since NAFTA was inked, enforcement officers did little to enforce the rule. However that was set to change, and the Commercial Vehicle Safety Alliance suggested it was going to place more emphasis on ensuring truck drivers travelling in the US were proficient in the country's native language. Truck drivers who are unable to communicate in English may face fines or even be placed out-of-service.

The issue was discussed at the Ontario Trucking Association's convention last November. Manuel Castillo's story made headlines last month after he was hit with a stiff fine for failing a language test.

"It just doesn't seem fair to be ticketed if I wasn't doing anything dangerous on the road," he told the *Associated Press*.

Castillo admits to speaking English at about a Grade 3 level, according to news reports. However, he said he was able to understand the officer well enough to provide his driver's licence and registration upon request. He wasn't speeding and wasn't in violation of any laws, besides the rule he was charged with, being a "non-English speaking driver." □

US/Mexican truck program extended

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has extended a controversial pilot program granting Mexican trucks access to the US. The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers' Association (OOIDA) said it was stunned by the two-year extension.

"The Administration has shown time and again that when it comes to this program they are willing to run roughshod over Congress and the American public," said Todd Spencer, OOIDA executive vice-

president. "Announcing this on the first day of the recess is unfortunately par for the course with them. Sorry for the cliché, but it's 'Bush league' tactics."

Congress has voted several times to end the program, which allows some Mexican truckers to operate beyond the commercial zone along the US/Mexico border.

"DoT has consistently bent over backwards to force this program on the public. They seem oblivious to the inherent safety and security risks," Spencer added. □

ATA lauds Bush plan to drill for oil off US coast

ARLINGTON, Va. – US president George W. Bush's proposal to lift an executive moratorium on offshore drilling has been lauded by the American Trucking Associations (ATA).

The association said Congress should follow suit to pave the way for offshore drilling which could provide some relief for the trucking industry and lessen the country's dependence on foreign oil.

"We need the ability to explore new, untapped areas for domestic energy supplies," said ATA president and CEO Bill Graves.

"The US has an opportunity to improve our energy situation and continue to support economic growth, while providing consumers and businesses with the essential energy they need."

If Bush has his way, American companies will be able to drill for oil and natural gas on the Outer Continental Shelf, 100 miles off the US coast. The ATA reports that currently restricted areas of the shelf hold at least 18 billion barrels of oil and 76 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, which can be recovered using environmentally-friendly techniques. The oil could power 40 million vehicles for 15 years while heating two million households. □

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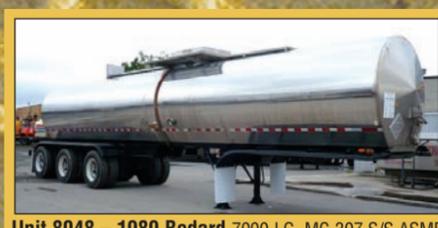
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Gardner feels at home behind the wheel

■ Continued from page 1

"I used to run a lot of nice rigs, the polished large cars," Gardner admits. "I cut back and got more into the aerodynamics, watched the motors, spec'ed the trucks right, went to super-singles on a couple of them, put speed limiters on them – anything just to get the fuel savings."

While image is important to Gardner, it simply can't come at the expense of running a profitable business, he says. But that's not to say he doesn't still appreciate the glitz and glam of the show trucks which dotted the fields that played host to the Fergus Truck Show. After all, that's what lured him into the business in the first place.

"Being a young kid in the back of Dad's pick-up trucks, I always looked up at the chicken lights on the big trucks and thought 'Gee, it'd be nice to get into that someday,'" Gardner recalls.

He bought his first truck at 18 – a Kenworth T600 that he put to work hauling auto parts for Ram Automotive between Windsor and Montreal.

Gardner's trucking career has taken him around the country, and even around the world. He spent six months supervising a crew of eight drivers in Africa while they installed a fresh water pipeline.

"That was quite the experience," he recalls. His responsibilities involved teaching the locals how to drive commercial trucks. It was a year-long assignment that was cut short after six months due to some instability with the government there.

When the position to haul for FedEx Ground came up in 1994, he leapt at the opportunity. Since then, he has slowly grown his busi-

ness to where it is today – five trucks, the latest two additions joining the fleet just days before he was notified he was this year's Owner/Operator of the Year, a prestigious award sponsored by Freightliner, Markel Insurance, Goodyear and supporting partners OBAC and Natural Resources Canada.

"I wouldn't go anywhere else," he says of his carrier, FedEx Ground. "It's a great company to work for."

Gardner credits FedEx Ground with much of his success as an owner/operator. The company provides him with tools and criteria to assist with the hiring process and other elements of running the business.

The support he receives was evidenced by the presence at the awards ceremony of both Jack Brown, senior linehaul manager, FedEx Ground Canada, and all the way from FedEx Ground headquarters in Pittsburgh, Penn., John Payne, vice-president, linehaul.

Gardner is all too happy to deflect the glory from himself, onto those who have helped him achieve success in the business. Most notably, his wife Lisa, who in addition to running the home while he's away and working a full-time job across the border from their home in Belle River, Ont., still finds time to manage the trucking business after hours.

"If it wasn't for her, I wouldn't

'I find that being in the truck, it's easier to manage the business and know what's going on... If I sat at home, it would be hard to manage my business.'

Marty Gardner



A COMPANY THAT CARES: The humble Gardner says having regular runs with scheduled home time is key to finding happiness and one reason why driver turnover has not been an issue for him. *Photo by James Menzies*

be here today," Gardner says humbly. "She has a full-time job working in IT at Detroit Diesel. She travels from Windsor across the border every day, she comes home – we have four kids at home – she manages the household and then after that she'll be on the computer managing the business. There's times she's up until two or three in the morning and then she's back up at seven in the morning to do her regular job," Gardner explains, his voice painted with admiration.

As with anyone who makes a living out on the highway, Gardner admits to missing his family while on the road. He appreciates the regularly-scheduled runs, which get him home every week-

end, but that's not to say he doesn't pine for home when he's away.

"It's very hard," he admits. "You miss out on the kids. I miss a lot of their soccer games. Even with Lisa, I don't get to see her that much during the week. We might see each other for half an hour during the evening – she'll meet me at work with a coffee then she'll go home and I'll go to work. We kinda meet in the middle. But come Friday, I'm done. I have Friday, Saturday and Sunday to hang out with the family."

With four other trucks hauling steady for him, one wonders what keeps Gardner out on the road in the first place? The way he sees it, it's the only way to properly run the business.

"I like being in the truck myself," says Gardner, who personally averages 120,000 miles per year. "I find that being in the truck, it's easier to manage the business and know what's going on. You know what's going on with the trucks, you know what's going on with the drivers. If I sat at home, it would be hard to manage my business."

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SPONSOR SUPPORT: Owner/Operator of the Year Marty Gardner (centre) is pictured with sponsors (L-R): Lynda Harvey, Natural Resources Canada; Rick Ulias, representing Goodyear Canada; Rob Wilkins, publisher of Truck News; Rick Geller, Markel Insurance; Joanne Ritchie, OBAC; and John Bennett, Freightliner Canada.

Gardner's willingness to spend time in the trenches also extends to the maintenance of his vehicles. He personally meticulously maintains his equipment, while ensuring he has a decent warranty to cover the big stuff.

His hands-on approach has earned Gardner the respect of his drivers. While large fleets deal with double-digit – sometimes even triple-digit – driver turnover rates, Gardner has a loyal team of drivers piloting his vehicles.

"All my drivers have stayed with me," he says. "They like the runs because they're dedicated runs. They have a schedule, they have home time. They know when they're going, when they have to be back and they can have a life with their families too."

While Gardner is quick to credit others for his accomplishments, his safety record speaks for itself. During his 22-year driving career, Gardner has never been involved in an at-fault accident.

He was part of a 10-member linehaul team at FedEx Ground that set a new safety record, accumulating more than 20 million miles without an accident. He has covered 2.2 million miles on his own at FedEx Ground, without an accident.

The key, he says, is just taking it slow.

"I take each day as a challenge," he explains. "You get in the truck,

and you can't just look at your job as though it's the same routine. You have to watch the people around you, avoid getting in big clusters, lay low, take your time and do your thing."

"FedEx is good with us," he adds. "They allow us plenty of time to get to our stop, so we have plenty of time to deal with weather conditions." There he goes again, crediting others with his success.

While Gardner wasn't born into a trucking family, there's a chance he may have started one. He says two of his and Lisa's four children (three boys and a girl, aged seven, 11, 16 and 18) have shown an interest in the trucks.

Whether it's his own children, or just another youngster staring up at the chicken lights from his father's pick-up truck, Gardner does have some advice on how to achieve success in what can be a grueling industry.

"Start slow," he suggests. "Start with a used truck. Get low payments on it because you have to factor in the price of fuel and how much work there is out there. Start slow and work your way up. I did the same thing, basically. I worked as a sub-contractor, built up a little bit and said 'You know what, I think I can make a go at it,' and I've been doing so ever since." □

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National Trucking Week set for Sept. 7-14

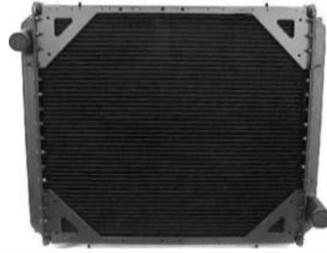
OTTAWA, Ont. – National Trucking Week, held annually to spotlight the important contributions made by the more than 400,000 Canadian men and women who keep the country's freight moving, will be held Sept. 7-14 this year. Trucking in Canada is a \$54.7 billion industry, it employs over 260,000 drivers and moves 90% of all consumer products and foodstuffs within Canada – and almost two thirds, by value, of trade with the US. Without trucking, the wheels of commerce would stop rolling and Canadians would be unable to enjoy a high quality of life, states the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA).

"Each year National Trucking Week provides an opportunity to thank the tens of thousands of Canadians who have chosen to make a career in the trucking industry," says David Bradley, the chief executive officer of the CTA. "The work these men and women do is invaluable, because it is thanks to their dedication that groceries get to the supermarket; gasoline is delivered to the local gas station; and the goods Canadians produce make it to markets, across the border and overseas. It is the people of the trucking industry, whether they work behind-the-scenes or over-the-road, who are the backbone of the economy," he added.

The week also serves as a platform to enable the country's trucking associations to deliver important information to the community about the vital role of the trucking industry, and how all road users can be partners in safety. The date of this annual event is set each year by the CTA in cooperation with the country's seven provincial trucking associations.

For more about National Trucking Week and a list of celebration ideas, refer to the CTA Web site at: www.cantruck.ca. □

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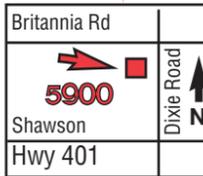
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Struggling to survive

Fuel surcharge small comfort to Nova Scotia dump truck owners

By Carroll McCormick

AYLESFORD, N.S. – When Kerrigan Weihers, owner of Kerrigan Weihers Trucking & Excavation, in Aylesford, Nova Scotia began trucking in 1988, he made a good living hauling aggregate and asphalt for the Department of Transportation.

“I’d get \$250 a day and make \$100,” he recalls. But these days, he says, “You get \$600-\$700 a day and you make \$100. Now there is no-one making a living just hauling for the DoT.”

That \$100 net, after fuel and driver wages, is only if the operator is doing work for the N.S. Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal (DoT) that is eligible for its fuel surcharge. But other costs have gone up too.

Add unpaid waiting time, contractors overbooking trucks and unpaid travel to and from the job site, and you have an industry on thin gruel.

Remove the surcharge and you have truck-sized lawn ornaments.

“We have had guys go to work, make no money, rip off a mud flap and not have the money from the

day’s work to pay for the mud flap,” says Wayne Onda, executive director of the Truckers Association of Nova Scotia (TANS). In fact, Onda notes, “The DoT has a hard job finding trucks. Anyone who has private jobs won’t do it.”

The DoT pays a fuel surcharge for so-called 80/20 work, an unwritten rule for tendered jobs designed to keep local truckers in the game.

At least 80% of the trucks the prime contractor uses must belong to TANS members; the other 20% can be his own trucks.

According to Onda, the contractor can ask to have the 80/20 rule suspended so he can use his own trucks or non-TANS trucks, but for these the DoT does not pay the surcharge.

In 2006 the DoT set up the current surcharge system, which increases or decreases the surcharge to reflect the cost of diesel at the end of each month.

In one government example, an operator earns \$597.52 in a day. After paying for fuel, his net is \$210.02.

The fuel cost 64.85% of his day’s gross. The surcharge bumps

the gross up to \$728.97 to compensate for the fuel, lowering the cost of fuel to 53.15% of his day’s gross.

The problem is that other expenses, such as insurance, plates, tires and repairs have gone up too, so the operator’s net is still less than it used to be.

There is another problem: When a contractor puts out the call for TANS trucks, TANS dispatchers make their first calls in the county in which the work is being done.

Lucky operators will be close to the gravel pit and the construction.

Others may have to drive up to 300 or so unpaid kilometres round trip to the job site each day, likely turning jobs into money losers.

“We have no real big stick, no bargaining power to get paid for the trip into work and home,” says Onda.

Some drivers leave their trucks on-site and carpool. Others tell the dispatchers “no thanks” and drop to the bottom of the rotating call list.

“The more times a TANS guy refuses work, the more he is penalized,” Onda says.

“The government wants TANS to guarantee trucks, but how can I tell a driver to come to work and lose money?”

Contractors also overbook dump trucks so their men and equipment will not be idle. The TANS drivers take the hit. “They don’t care if you wait an hour,”

Weihers says.

Donald Whynot is the secretary-treasurer of TANS and owner of Donald Whynot Trucking in Danesville, Queens County.

He says, “We have been pushing to get a waiting time. We always say, ‘We don’t mind giving the first hour, but we should be paid after that.’ We hear of guys showing up at the asphalt plant at 6 a.m. and waitin’ til 11 a.m. We have asked the government to put pay for waiting time in the tenders, but they won’t. They say no.”

Work without the fuel surcharge sounds like slow starvation: “You wouldn’t make anything without the fuel surcharge,” Weihers says.

So is TANS in trouble? Onda cannot say for sure, but he does note that current membership is 576 members and 899 trucks, down from a high of 1,200 trucks and 1,500 members.

Some operators are near big jobs, like the twinning of the 101 but, he says “The newer guys are having a hellish time. Older guys are having trouble with no work in their areas.”

When I asked Whynot how many years TANS has left, he said “That’s a good question. I don’t know.”

When I offered to call him in a couple of years and find out, he said, “I’ll probably be out of the business by then. I’ll be drawing an old age pension and the devil with it.” □

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Nova Scotia latest to test LCV waters

■ **Continued from page 1**
and especially those involved in transload, want to use LCVs to transport their goods to inland markets.

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our customers to grow their business through the Port of Halifax."

Under the pilot program, the vehicles will be permitted to operate under strict conditions, including only on four-lane divided

highways from Halifax to the New Brunswick border, operating at a lower maximum speed of 90 km/h, and using trained drivers with a minimum of five years and 150,000 kilometres of tractor-trailer driving experience. Long-combination vehicles will be re-

stricted during unfavourable weather, such as freezing rain, sleet, fog and heavy snow.

Qualified truck operators can participate in the pilot project, by submitting an application to drive LCVs. The vehicles could begin operating in Nova Scotia by Oct. 1. □



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Jumbo loads

No job too big for Quebec fleet

By Carroll McCormick
BELOEIL, Que. – To hear it told, transporting oversized loads is just good fun. “It is like a vacation for me, going down the road with an oversized load. You feel special when you are hauling something special,” says Ken Harrison, safety and compliance supervisor with Beloeil, Quebec-based Transport Watson Montreal.

However, adds company co-owner and vice-president Yves Dupuis, “It takes a special class of driver. The driving demands a lot of attention. It is a constant stress.”

To qualify for the job, which can include hauling loads ranging from

aircraft fuselages to giant boilers, applicants will want at least 10 years of experience, a tolerance for trips lasting as long as two to three weeks, eyes like hawks and the patience of a saint. Yet Watson has no trouble finding drivers. “We have never had to advertise. There is always someone knocking on our door. They hear of us by word of mouth, like when our drivers talk to other drivers at truck stops,” says Dupuis.

Yves Dupuis and his brother Martin run the company, which their father Andre purchased from Frere Watson in 1989. At the beginning, when they had just 10 trucks and 10 trailers, Andre worked in the office

and the boys worked behind the wheel. But now les Dupuis have more presidential responsibilities: the company currently has 28 trucks, 100 trailers and 28 drivers.

The youngest driver isn't less than 35 years old and the senior driver, Jean Claude Vegiard, is a gnarly 66. Vegiard recently drove a rig to Vancouver, picked up a wing for a Bombardier CL 300 Challenger business jet and hauled it back to the Dehavilland plant in Toronto. It took two days just to reach the Alberta border, because oversized loads can only travel in British Columbia at night, and eight more days to reach Toronto; he was away over two weeks – a long time in a sleeper.

About 85% of the company's business is oversize loads: about 95% of the jobs are negotiated directly with 65-70 regular clients and the rest are assigned by load brokers. The walls of the Watson offices and the company Web site are plas-



tered with photographs of their rigs hauling bridges, beams, vessels of all shapes and sizes and giant packages wrapped in bright blue plastic.

The heaviest loads weigh in at about 65 tonnes. The longest one was a 125-foot long bridge beam. Load widths generally do not exceed 20 feet, but one load was 30 feet wide and 30 feet tall. It takes about a week to plan a trip. Sometimes the provincial and state departments of transport know the maximum size of the corridors. Other times it is the escort companies that supply this information.

Crossing the border isn't so tortuous, thanks to C-TPAT and FAST, Dupuis says, although there is no fast lane for oversize loads. “We have a guy in our office who works only on the border papers. It is Okay. The inspections for us are less frequent at the border.”

Last year Watson won two contracts for regular hauls for Bombardier: One is to transport car bodies from Bombardier's La Pocatiere plant to Plattsburgh, where the cars are finished. Then Watson hauls them to Chicago. The other contract is to bring completed trains from Bombardier's Thunder Bay plant to Toronto. Watson had Saint-George de Beauce-based Manac build 10 trailers, and Trail King Industries in Pennsylvania build six more, for the Thunder Bay-Toronto journeys.

Custom trailers do not come cheap, which is why Watson decided not to buy into the growing windmill-moving business. It would cost \$150,000 to build a single trailer for that work, and Dupuis is happy to leave that niche to other companies.

Almost all of the loads Watson moves are manufactured in the Montreal-Quebec City corridor for export to the US. Some loads head to Ontario, like the 1930s vintage Lockheed Martin Super Constellation Watson moved on six trailers in 1985 from a little aviation museum in St-Jean Port Joli to the now-closed Constellation Hotel in Toronto. There are some north-bound oversized loads too: a Mexican transporter called Fitzley moves Challenger 850 business aircraft fuselages from Mexico City to Laredo, Texas, which Watson then brings to Montreal.

Watson also picks up aircraft fuselages that Bombardier ships from Ireland to Baltimore and Newark, delivering them to Bombardier plants in Dorval, Mirabel and St-Laurent. Dupuis does not drive anymore, and Harrison has little time to get behind the wheel. But it's a good gig for the right drivers, says Harrison. “We have the challenges. There is always something new, different. At any time you can learn something new. You may be thinking you have done something big, but you can do bigger than that.” □

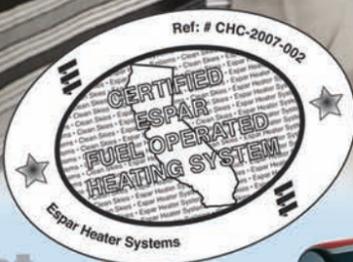
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Ontario continues to 'spif up' remaining truck and trailer fleet

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – Phase 4 of Ontario's transition to Safe, Productive, Infrastructure-Friendly (SPIF) trailers is set to begin in 2010, affecting straight trucks and trailers with non-king pin connections.

As with previous phases of SPIF integration, units purchased prior to 2010 will be grandfathered for the "reasonable operating life" of the vehicle, Ron Madill of the Ontario Ministry of Transportation explained at the Canadian Fleet Maintenance Seminar (CFMS). He hinted the grandfather period would last about 15 years, meaning all trailers remaining in Ontario by 2025 will be of the SPIF variety, or their operators will face significant weight penalties.

Previous phases of the transition to SPIF trailers included: Phase 1, light semi-trailers, 2001; Phase 2,

dump tractor-trailers, 2003; and Phase 3, all remaining tractor-trailers including heavy combinations and doubles, 2006. By the time the final phase is implemented, Madill said Ontario will have lessened the damage that infrastructure-unfriendly units impose on roads and bridges by \$300 million per year while also resulting in fewer and less severe crashes.

He pointed out that some of the configurations outlawed by the SPIF initiative have crash rates three times higher than the accepted SPIF alternatives. Even when the switch to SPIF trailers is complete, Madill insisted "Ontario will have some of the most productive trucks in North America."

During previous phases of the transition to SPIF equipment, payload has generally not been compromised, he pointed out. As for the

final phase, there are currently 150 truck and trailer combinations that are under consideration.

"By the end of the year, we'll have a pretty good idea of the SPIF combinations that will satisfy our concerns," Madill said.

Ed Tschirhart of the Canadian Transportation Equipment Association (CTEA) said Ontario's Transportation Department should be commended for how smoothly the transition has gone.

"SPIF has not been handled by a bunch of politicians at Queen's Park," he said. "It's been heavily researched."

As the grandfather period for previous phases of the SPIF transition draws to a close, some fleets may be interested in retrofitting their existing equipment to meet SPIF standards, Tschirhart acknowledged. However, he said it may not be prac-

tical to retrofit existing equipment, due to the complexity of the work and the costly testing that's required.

"Does it make business sense to spend all that money on existing equipment?" he urged CFMS delegates to ask themselves. "Trailers are not allowed to be turned into SPIF by Joe's Welding Shop."

He pointed out that a Transport Canada-approved NSM-qualified trailer builder must make the upgrades. And there is also some very rigorous testing that must be completed before a trailer can be SPIF-approved. There are seven CMVSS regulations that must be met when SPIFing a trailer.

For instance, the trailers must meet a CMVSS 121 air brake system standard which costs \$15,000-\$20,000 to have tested by a third-party. The CMVSS 223 rear impact guard test could cost as much as \$70,000 to complete. And then there are liability concerns which may haunt do-it-yourselfers.

"Why put yourself in jeopardy to SPIF a trailer without going to the people that have all that stuff in place already?" Tschirhart asked.

Ray Camball of Trailmobile agreed, especially when it comes to van trailers that often lack the rigid structure underneath the body to support the addition of liftable self-steer axles, for instance.

"Yes, it can be done. But you want to have a good strong structure underneath," he said, suggesting tankers may be a more viable candidate for a retrofit. He also suggested outsourcing the retrofit to an approved installer.

"You know it's certified and properly done," he pointed out.

For more information on Ontario's conversion to SPIF trailers, visit www.e-laws.gov.on.ca and search for Highway Traffic Act Reg. 413/05. □

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Mark Seymour to headline Driving for Profit seminar

KINGSTON, Ont. – The third seminar in a four-part Driving for Profit series will be held in Kingston Aug. 21 and highlighted by a keynote address by Kriska Holding's Mark Seymour.

The event will be held at the Ambassador Conference Resort from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. Seymour plans to discuss success strategies in his presentation entitled 'Protecting Your Investment.'

Organizers of the event say Seymour will address ways to drive future profits. Len Anderson, partner at KPMG Enterprise, will also be speaking at the event. He'll make the timely presentation 'Managing in Recessionary Times.'

The seminar series is hosted jointly by KRTS Transportation Specialists and NAL Insurance and is sponsored by SelecTrucks. The cost is \$49. Online registration for the event is available at www.drivingforprofit.com. □



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A vintage collection

It's more than just a hobby for West Coast classic truck collector

By Jan Westell

SURREY, B.C. – Don't call multi-vintage truck owner Glen Morrow a mere collector. His hobby is also a business – he modifies his trucks for commercial use, vehicles which he says can compete with any vehicle on the road.

"It's not collecting. It's changing," says the 65-year-old owner of S.W.A.T. (Specialty Work All Types). "Everything I do is an improvement. It's worth more, in all respects, the value of it."

His vintage modifications melds easily with his specialty four-wheel drive service, and other miscellaneous repair services, which includes fabricating and welding. Morrow works out of a mechanic's dream facility, a spacious commercial shop that's almost 3,000 sq.-ft., and located on the Fraser Highway in Surrey. It's the back half of a larger 5,000 sq.-ft. facility that he owns, with an adjacent yard.

The other portion of this increasingly valuable property in the pricey Metro Vancouver region is rented out to another business.

It's a solid real estate investment, but the facility also brings in revenue that helps to support Morrow's sin-

gular passion.

Inside his commercial shop, there are three vintage vehicles on the main level, with a loft overtop for spare parts and other equipment, and a corner for a huge display of truck show trophies. In the opposite corner, the mechanic/welder/metal fabricator has parked one of his proudest possessions: a 1959 Chevy five-tonne Spartan 80, slide tilt roll back. That multi-award winning vehicle formerly had a basic cabin chassis, which he has modified to a six-wheel drive. He calls it a six-wheel drive, because it has gear lockers in both ends, which mean all six wheels turn exactly at the same time, "even if it is in the air" it will still be turning, he says.

"Most of them have an open differential, so if one wheel is in the air, then the power won't transfer to the ground."

Morrow has plans to improve the mileage on the '59 Chevy truck, by replacing the gasoline engine with a Cummins diesel twin turbo, "bigger" fuel injectors and other "miscellaneous components," including a six-speed, double-overdrive Allison transmission.

"Those things shift so smooth," he



CHEVROLET WAY: Antique truck collector and restorer extraordinaire, Glen Morrow, shows off a couple favourites from his private collection.

says. "Unless you are watching the tach – the RPM – you'll never know it shifted, especially in town."

When he bought the 59 Chevy, it had 12,889 miles on it, and was previously a fire truck in the Fraser Valley, with an 80-gallon a minute pumper, according to Morrow, before it was sold to the Chilliwack army base as a Vancouver-area emergency back-up vehicle. At that time, it packed 15,000 lbs of water in the tanks, adds Morrow, who enjoys researching the background of his vintage vehicles and talking about the historic, and modified technical details of his unique collection.

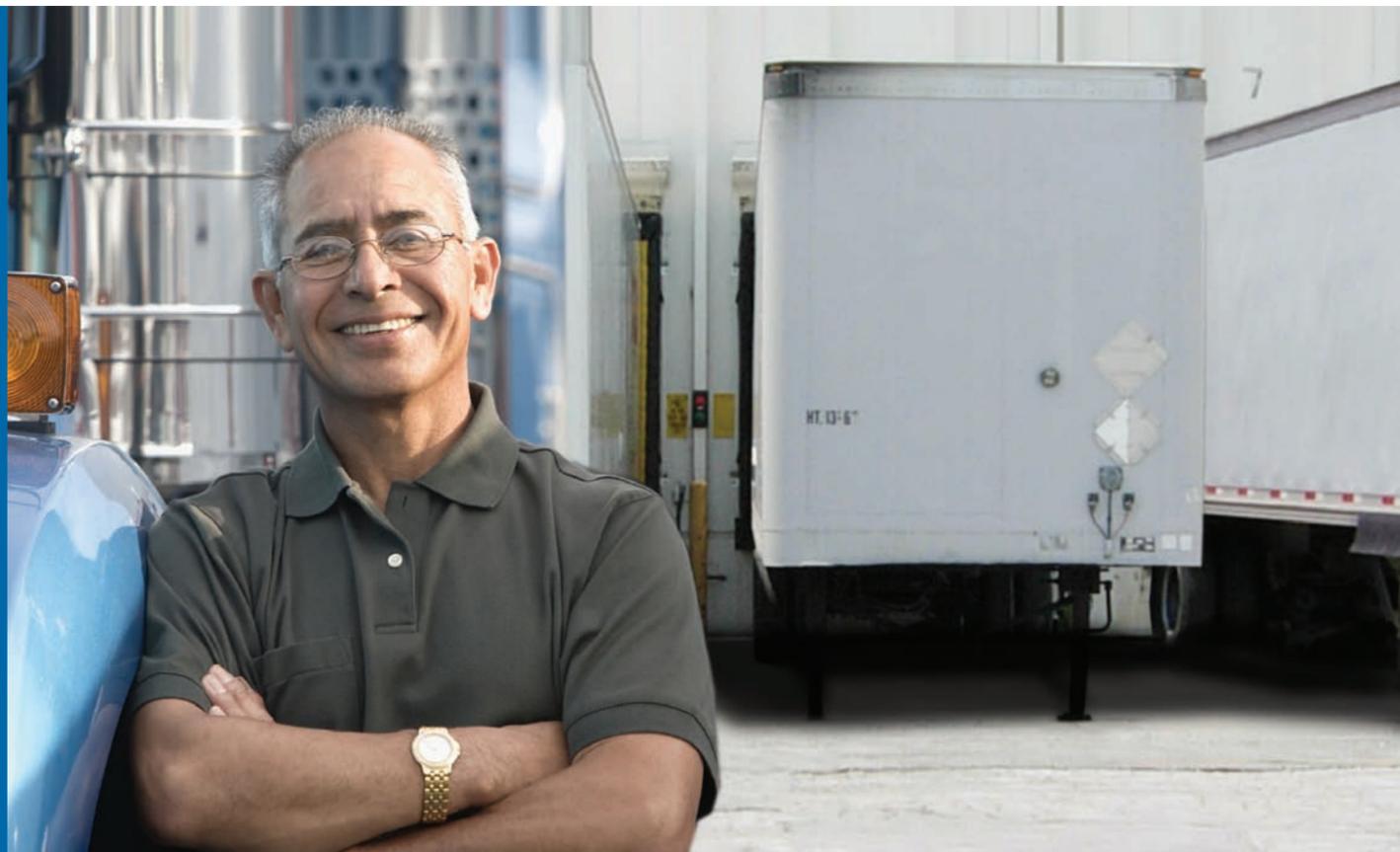
Also in the commercial shop, Morrow has made space for his latest project, a decayed, but rare 1928 2.5-tonne Pontiac flatbed truck,

which has an adapted box from another dilapidated truck, all of which came from a 100-acre antique vehicle junkyard at the Reynolds-Alberta Museum, located near Wetaskiwin, Alberta. He has big plans for the rusty antique, from the ground up – some of which are already complete – although not immediately apparent.

"It will take a while, because we are doing the woodwork in the cab now. But all the sheet metal is done: the fenders, the aprons, the running boards, the grille radiator surround is done. It just needs to be plated in the bumper. I've got to cut one, and organize that for the plating. The box in the back is a grain box, with all the cast iron stuff on the side. I'm

Continued on page 20 ■

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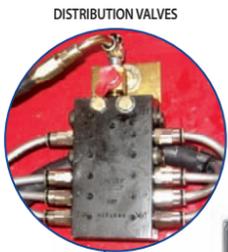
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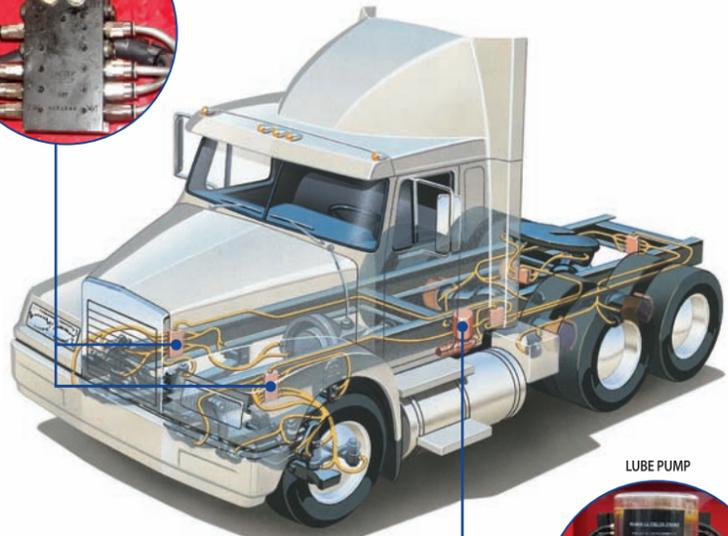
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■ Continued from page 19

going to duplicate that, rather than having a flatdeck. Flatdecks to me are not very exciting. No imagination."

Outside in the yard, Morrow has parked his "everyday" truck, a 1959 GMC. He took the GMC, with the two other vintage trucks, to a truck show in Chilliwack a few weeks ago, but otherwise it could have 5,000 pounds of scrap loaded on it, he says. "I work everything."

His home is only five minutes away from the commercial shop, where Morrow has another large 1,200 sq.-ft. six-car garage, where four vintage vehicles are kept dry and warm.

That's where he houses the only car in the collection: a 1938 Chevrolet two-door trunkback town sedan, which he purchased almost 50 years ago, when he was 17.

It was a purchase he instantly refitted for street-racing, and subsequently raced in a circuit that included the old Mission drag strip, as well as Washington State events, including Arlington, Bremerton, Kent and Puyallip. It's a resurging hobby, not only for himself, but many of his peers who were otherwise compelled to forfeit drag racing due to family and business responsibilities that often curtail youthful pursuits.

Also in the same home shop, is a 1934, 2.5-tonne Diamond T refrigerated cube van, that Morrow believes

was used to deliver cheese in Vancouver. He also has a beloved 1979 Toyota four-wheel drive pickup, which he believes was the first, and is the oldest Toyota four-wheel drive truck in Canada, which makes it a likely attraction at truck shows.

"I got it right from the dealer: serial number 00009365," he says. "It came from Japan on a special order."

Unlike most truck enthusiasts, Morrow refuses to baby his vehicles.

"I don't care if it's raining or snowing. I'll take the (Chevy) '38 out in anything. I'm not afraid of rain drops. Most people are afraid of a rain drop. They'll trailer them to a show, rather than drive them," he says.

As for salt, or other roadway grit, Morrow says you just have to deal with it, and clean it thoroughly later.

"The Toyota has been so brown, you don't know what colour it is. But right now you could eat off of it, anywhere, underneath it. The (59 Chevy) five-tonne is the same way. You could eat off of it anywhere, (including) underneath the deck."

Morrow has an efficient, and thorough system for cleaning and polishing his vehicles, and he doesn't get fancy about the products that he uses, favouring plain dish soap liquid and hot water. He recently spent five and a half hours to prep the 59 Chevy for a show, a job that he prefers doing solo.

"If you get help, it takes longer because you're fighting over the hose and the bucket. I have a system that works. I've done it long enough. I've figured out a way, that's inside and out. I could get even fussier, if it was important," says Morrow.

At the shows, Morrow enjoys the older visitors, who recall driving similar models of the working vintage trucks that he displays. However, when critics start to advise, he's not impressed, or open to further discussion.

"Everybody has an answer or a comment saying: 'shoulda, coulda, woulda.' However, I've found the ones with the lips that flap the most, have the least, or don't do anything. They just talk."

Quite a few of Morrow's trucks have appeared in locally shot TV or film productions numerous times, sometimes with Morrow driving, which means extra remuneration in this credit-conscious business.

"They like it because it's not too shiny," says Morrow. "They don't like shiny vehicles, because there's too much glare from the lights."

Morrow has an interesting background: first purchasing a welder as a teenager, for hobby purposes. He also had a long stint building aluminum boats for the fishing industry before its downfall, and subsequently did specialized welding for pulp mills and breweries, as well as working on logging trucks and flatdeck trailers. He eventually opened his own business, and purchased his Surrey property in 1973, where he's earned a regular flow of customers, much of it through word-of-mouth, including over the Internet.

"It's just steady," he says. "I'm busy all the time." □

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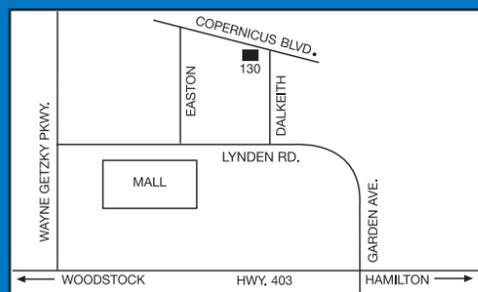
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Turning the tide of public perception

Public perception of trucking and truckers – frequently negative and often mistaken – is a concern that's always with us. When you're struggling to pay the fuel bill or driving around in circles looking for a place to park, it's not always top-of-mind. Then wham! You learn through the mainstream media that trucks are responsible for all the death and destruction on our highways, and global warming to boot.

And, so the story goes, you – the driver – are part of an unskilled and unwashed pack of hooligans who is driving truck because you're unemployed elsewhere.

While it's individual drivers who take the hit at the personal level, public image is a concern for the industry as a whole. The perception of driving as an unskilled trade is a huge barrier in attracting career-

Voice of the O/O

Joanne Ritchie



minded people into the industry. So, in a business environment where there's stiff competition for workers from a shrinking labour pool, trucking, like many industries, is looking at a makeover as one strategy for survival.

In the US, for example, the industry-wide "Good Stuff. Trucks Bring It" image campaign presents the public with a positive, modern image of the industry and emphasizes the relevance of trucking to their lives. In Canada, the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council has en-

gaged industry stakeholders in a concerted effort to reposition the industry, enhancing the profession's image and promoting recognition of driving as a skilled trade.

The industry is investing in top-down strategies to combat negative stereotypes, but at the grassroots level, where the rubber hits the road, I can't think of two initiatives that foster more goodwill and understanding and help bridge the divide between trucking and the public than Trucker Buddy and the World's Largest Truck Convoy.

Trucker Buddy, a pen-pal program that matches truck drivers with elementary school children in grades two to eight, boasts close to 4,000 drivers communicating with more than 100,000 students around the world. Trucker Buddies send post-cards, notes, letters, e-mails, and pho-

tos to the children in their assigned class each week; the kids track the driver's travel on maps in the classroom and write individual letters to their Trucker Buddy each month.

The benefits of improved skills in reading, writing, geography, mathematics, and history are obvious, and it's learning in a fun and stimulating way. But Trucker Buddies also teach important road safety lessons – like sharing the road – and send positive messages to their kids as well: don't do drugs, study hard, stay in school.

Since its inception in 1993, Trucker Buddy has helped educate over a million school children and introduce them to the world of trucking. And every one of those million kids has a family – parents, siblings, or other relatives – whose lives are touched in a meaningful way by truckers. How many "Good Stuff" stickers is that worth?

It's hard to describe the potpourri of feelings – pride, satisfaction, and just pure joy – that overwhelm one when a Special Olympics convoy comes rolling over the finish line.

The World's Largest Truck Convoy for Special Olympics brings truckers, cops, and athletes together for a very special cause: a one-day celebration every September to raise awareness – and money – for Special Olympics.

The Convoy, a spin-off from the Law Enforcement Torch Run, was the brainchild of Cpl. Norm Schneiderhan, of the Orange County Sheriff's Department in Florida, who created the Convoy as a way to get his friends in trucking involved in a fundraising effort.

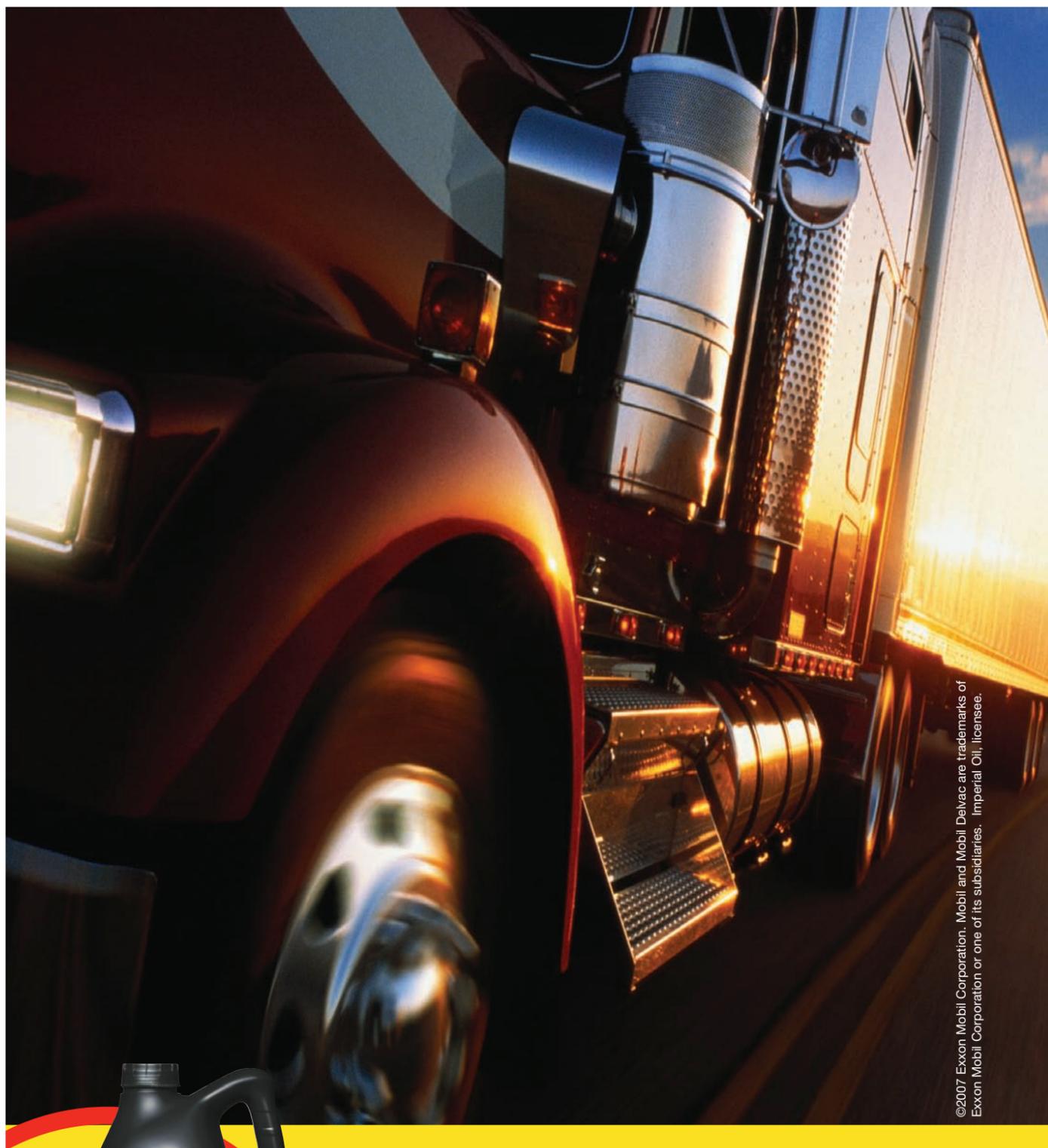
Since the initial convoy in Florida in 2000, the idea has spread to more than 40 jurisdictions in the US and Canada. Last year, nearly 400 drivers participated in five events staged across Canada, and hundreds more took a day out of their schedules south of the border to participate. Their efforts raised a whopping US\$698,000, and the best thing about the money? All the money raised locally stays in the community to benefit that community's Special Olympics programs.

The impact that participating drivers have on the athletes is obvious – the smiles and the cheers are not soon forgotten – and when you see truckers hugging cops, and tears flowing freely all around, you know there's something happening inside.

But it's not just the athletes and the cops who come away from a Convoy with a greater appreciation for truckers. Hundreds of community volunteers work throughout the year to plan and stage each event; that's hundreds of people who experience first-hand the generosity and compassion truckers.

We celebrate Trucker Buddy and the Convoy because they are unique and effective approaches to teaching, mentoring, role-modeling, and fundraising, but their value as image-builders and stereotype busters can't be overlooked. Perhaps it's time broaden the top-down strategy for changing public opinion to include tools that work. □

– Joanne Ritchie is executive director of OBAC. Are you ready for a makeover? E-mail her at jritchie@obac.ca or call toll-free 888-794-9990.



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Liberal Green Shift carbon tax plan doesn't fly

Part II on taxation of diesel fuel in Canada

At the end of June, federal Liberal and Opposition leader, Stéphane Dion unveiled his plan for a national carbon tax – the centerpiece of what he calls his party's Green Shift Plan. Dion has clearly put his political career on the line with this one. My assessment: While the devil is always in the details, the last thing the trucking industry needs is more tax on diesel fuel. With diesel fuel prices at record highs and fuel overtaking labour as the number one component of operating cost, the trucking industry does not need further price signals from government to know that improving fuel efficiency and thereby reducing GHG emissions is a good thing.

Reflecting the economic theory that by putting a price on carbon emissions, individuals and businesses will make decisions to reduce polluting activities, the initial price for carbon will be set at \$10 per tonne of greenhouse gas emissions and will rise by an additional \$10 per tonne each year to \$40 per tonne within four years. The carbon tax will apply to home heating oil, jet fuel, kerosene, natural gas, propane, coal and diesel fuel. Gasoline oddly enough would not be subject to a carbon tax supposedly because the current federal excise tax on gasoline of 10 cents per litre is equivalent to \$42 per tonne of GHG.

In addition, since diesel and aviation fuel are already taxed at four cents per litre, the carbon tax on these fuels would see no increase in the first year of the plan. In the examples provided in the plan, the federal tax on diesel fuel would rise by an additional seven cents per litre by the fourth year – or 4.9% compared to current prices.

As someone who is trained in and once practiced the dismal science of economics, I appreciate the theoretical underpinning of a carbon tax, of pricing externalities. I could probably even design a carbon tax that the trucking industry would find palatable and that would actually help the industry improve its fuel efficiency, but the Green Shift Plan will simply make freight transportation in Canada more expensive, impairing Canada's competitiveness and impeding investment in fuel efficiency – all things which Mr. Dion says his plan promotes.

We already have the four cent a litre federal excise tax on diesel fuel, which serves no policy purpose whatsoever, other than to raise cash for the federal government. While last month I argued that this tax should be repealed or at least brought under the GST umbrella, I suppose if Mr. Dion really wants a carbon tax, he could have proposed to make the excise tax a carbon tax, and earmark the revenues generated by it to assisting the industry in its efforts to accelerate the penetration of the new generation of smog-free trucks and fuel efficiency technologies into the marketplace. Taxing diesel fuel is not going to help that process; it will only make it more difficult for carriers.

The Green Shift Plan also professes to be revenue-neutral. It proposes

Industry Issues

David Bradley



to shift part of the burden of taxation away from income (by modestly lowering personal and corporate income tax rates) and towards pollution. Under the plan a Liberal government would put into law that every dollar that is raised from taxing carbon pollution be returned to Canadians in tax cuts or through increased spending for certain social programs. However, truckers likely have a very different view of what tax revenue-neutrality means com-

pared to what is espoused in Green Shift. There is no tax neutrality for truckers in this plan, which clearly states that at the end of the fourth year “the average freight trucker's total annual operating expenses (will be increased by) approximately \$1,700 per year.”

Moreover, the proposed modest reductions in corporate income tax rates will do little to offset the impact of a carbon tax in a low margin business like trucking. In addition, the plan proposes to accelerate CCA write-offs for “green technologies,” investments that would help the trucking industry to conserve fuel – APUs, aerodynamic fairings, wide-base single tires, and the other components of an enviroTruck – are not currently eligible for faster CCA treatment. The tax system is geared to providing incentives to other industries, like manufacturing.

The Green Shift Plan is silent on how or if it intends to collect the carbon tax from US carriers. It is possible that US trucks will be exempt which will exacerbate the tough competitive position that Canadian truckers are already in, given the high dollar and shrinking trade surplus. On any given day, about 30% of the transport trucks on Canada's major trade routes are from the US; a carbon tax that applies only to Canadian trucks would have a profound impact on our industry's competitiveness and would do nothing for the environment. On the other hand, CTA's enviroTruck initiative – which is all about getting those vehicles and other technologies into the marketplace more quickly – could have a profound impact on lowering smog and GHG emissions now. □

– David Bradley is president of the Ontario Trucking Association and CEO of the Canadian Trucking Alliance.

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Big crime needs big trucks

Recapping an eye-opening seminar from the PMTC conference about trucks and terrorism

During the recent conference hosted by the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada I was astounded to learn more about the extent to which trucking operations, even the best run operations, are exposed to infiltration by criminals.

I was of course aware that truck fleets are subject to theft and hijacking, particularly when carrying high value or easily saleable products.

And through our participation with Transport Canada on an assessment of risks to Canada's infrastructure I know a little more about how terrorists pose threats to our country through the use of trucks to carry explosives, and

Private Links

Bruce Richards



other contraband.

But during the PMTC conference, a seminar entitled *Trucks and Terrorism* conducted by Const. Paul Webb of the Niagara Regional Police provided some eye-opening facts. The seminar reviewed a program that was developed by the RCMP and the United States DoT to train enforcement officers in what to look for when inspecting a commercial

vehicle. In this case we're not talking about a check of the brakes and the lights, but an inspection that could unveil contraband in many forms, hidden in creative ways.

He gave many illustrations of how truck equipment can be modified to create hiding places for drugs, guns, explosives, and people – all of which are smuggled across domestic or international borders every day. He talked about training officers to look for signs that a driver may not be telling the truth, or that a load had been tampered with, and what they should do when they find these situations.

Webb readily admitted that most officers are somewhat intimidated by big trucks, and when they do stop them, the officers don't have enough training in what to look for; hence the development of this program to provide that training.

Of the one million or so law enforcement officers in North America, less than 2% are certified to perform an inspection on a commercial vehicle, according to Webb. His point was that the trucking community is a valuable and necessary partner that is in the best position to assist in the war on this criminal element.

As he correctly pointed out, professional drivers can readily see when something doesn't look right and the police want those situations reported.

The training program, while designed primarily for enforcement officers, is also able to help fleet managers and dispatchers become aware of critical signs that will help them avoid having their fleets used inappropriately. Once armed with this training, Webb believes that those in the legitimate industry can be the eyes on the road, assisting enforcement groups with information about suspicious or unusual activity. Webb pointed out that professional fleet operators and drivers can be an enormous assistance in counteracting criminals.

Recently, a PMTC member provided tractor-trailer units for use in one of the training sessions, and the drivers stayed close at hand to answer questions from the officers – a very successful example of the industry working with enforcement groups.

I'm sure that most fleet operators believe their fleets are well monitored and controlled and therefore beyond the reach of criminals, but Webb pointed out just how easily fleets can be infiltrated. A disgruntled or even a careless employee can provide – intentionally or otherwise – all the information criminal groups need to target and then steal loaded equipment or even empty trailers to use on other jobs.

Casual conversation from employees about products hauled or yard security, for example, can lead directly to the theft of equipment and products.

Webb also showed a video demonstration of a trailer seal being opened in under a minute giving complete access to the trailer without the seal actually being broken.

In a case like this, a driver could be completely unaware that the load had been tampered with as he continues down the road. Freight could have been removed during a rest stop, or contraband added to the trailer to be retrieved later in the trip, with your truck providing the transportation. So, while you may think your fleet is beyond the reach of the criminal element, there is a very good chance that they are sizing it up right now.

To quote Const. Webb, "Big crime comes in big trucks," so be aware. □

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Follow the guidelines and feel more secure

The lessons about cargo securement procedures can be tragic.

One driver who recently travelled a scenic route through Washington, D.C. didn't notice that his load of dressed lumber was shifting inch by inch with every turn of the wheel.

And when the lumber did break free in the midst of a curve, it fell off an overpass and onto the traffic below.

Three cars were crushed and two motorists were killed.

Tragedies like these do not need to happen.

The North American Cargo Securement Regulations offer clearly detailed guidelines for virtually any type of load, whether it includes coils of steel, boulders, crushed cars or even dressed lumber.

But as detailed as the rules are, the regulations are only effective if they are understood and followed by fleets and their employees.

A fleet's commitment to load securement begins the moment that candidates are first interviewed for a job.

While interviews should gather information about experience with freight that will be associated with specific contracts, road tests should also include a practical example of the related procedures.

Do your job candidates know that a rub rail is not actually an

Ask the Expert

Jean Marie Gagnon



anchor point?

For that matter, how many straps are required for a particular load?

Any securement system is supposed to withstand 0.8 g of force in a forward direction and 0.5 g from side to side.

To put these forces in perspective, a typical stop on a dry road will produce less than 0.6 g in a forward direction.

And unless the right tools are properly used, the cargo will continue to move as the truck comes to a stop.

Whenever a fleet agrees to move a new type of freight, it also needs to secure the detailed information about the way everything should be strapped, chained and blocked to the trailer. These details should be included in a document that a driver can use as reference materials, and be incorporated into any training programs.

Fleets also need to be aware of any needs to upgrade equipment. A new contract to haul loads of steel, for example, may require the addition of headache racks to

protect drivers from the threat of any shifting cargo. And purchasers should familiarize themselves with the ratings of every component within a securement system. A 5,800-lb strap may appear to offer enough protection, but it will only be as strong as the lesser-rated winches at the other end.

The attention to load security should not be limited to flatbeds, either. The cargo that is shielded inside a van trailer also needs to be held in place with the help of friction mats, dunnage bags and load bars.

Drivers, meanwhile, need to be confident that everything is ready for the road before they ever accept a load.

Granted, that can sometimes be easier said than done, particularly if a trailer has been sealed.

But your employees should look for the opportunity to witness loading procedures, check bills of lading for details about cargo that presents a potential threat, and inspect the load from one end to the other.

According to an interpretation guide from the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators, drivers should even document situations in which they are instructed not to break a seal and inspect a load.

Once they are on the road, drivers need to pay close attention to

en-route inspections. A load that appears to be properly secured when it is first added to a trailer can wiggle itself loose, ultimately becoming a projectile.

The elements of any securement system should be inspected at 160-km intervals, even though the regulations require an inspection for every change in duty status, 240 km of travel or every three hours.

There is no such thing as being too careful.

These efforts are not simply needed to secure the freight as a vehicle travels down the highway. Personnel should also be confident that they can open a trailer's barn doors without dumping the cargo onto the ground or themselves.

It is all a matter of safety, and that comes by following the clearly defined standards that allow everyone to feel more secure. □

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— This month's expert is Jean Marie Gagnon. Jean Marie is the manager of Markel's Safety and Training Services, Eastern Canada (Quebec and Atlantic Provinces), and has over 25 years of experience in safety, training, and management positions. Send your questions, feedback and comments about this column to info@markel.ca. Markel Safety and Training Services, a division of Markel Insurance, offers specialized courses, seminars and consulting to fleet owners, safety managers, trainers and drivers.

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Peachy keen fruit season

Before talking about this month's topic, I'd like to pass on this interesting suggestion I received from Ray Camball regarding the article on mosquitoes. Because mosquitoes usually attack during calm weather, using a fan to stir up the air is a great way to keep these pests from biting. I recommend this approach since it's both environmentally-friendly and chemical-free. Thanks, Ray!

Now, this month we'll be looking at a favourite fall fruit: peaches. Different varieties of fresh peaches can be found year-round, but peaches are especially tasty when picked up at a roadside stand during this season.

Popular Ontario varieties, listed in ripening order include: Harrow Diamond; Garnet Beauty; Early Redhaven; Redhaven; Vivid; Loring; and Harrow Beauty. This variety of choices lets us benefit from the nutrition in fresh peaches throughout the fall.

How can you be sure you've picked a good, fresh peach?

The skin's background colour should be yellow or cream and fresh looking. Whether or not a peach has a red "blush" depends on the variety, but this colouring doesn't tell you how the fruit will taste when it's ripe.

When choosing fruit, don't just look at them, but touch them, too. Peaches should be soft, but not mushy. Stay away from those with wrinkled skin, a greenish tinge at the end, or bruises and blemishes.

Smell them, too. Fruit that smells sweet, taste sweet.

Once you get your peaches home, you can ripen them in a brown paper bag at room temperature over two or three days. Since they go bad quickly, only buy as many as you can eat within a few days.

Don't store them in the sun.

After they've ripened, put peaches in the fridge for up to five days (stored in a single layer). They taste best when they're eaten at room temperature, so remember to take them out of the refrigerator at least one hour before eating. Still, use them up immediately when they become really soft.

Then before taking your first bite, gently rinse off any pesticides under running water. If you decide to peel the fruit, make it easy by briefly immersing in boiling water for 30 to 60 seconds then cooling immediately. This blanching will make the peel slide right off. To keep peeled slices from turning brown, toss them lightly in lemon juice or dip them in ascorbic acid diluted in water. You can even freeze these slices to eat later.

When you take your first bite, you'll find either yellow or white flesh. White flesh is "sub-acid" and tastes more sugary sweet. However, the more traditional colour, yellow, is more acidic and a bit more flavourful.

Fresh peaches are excellent. Later when the harvest season is over, enjoy peaches from a can. And remember that choosing cans

Preventive Maintenance

Karen Bowen



labeled 'Packed in its own juice,' 'Packed in pear juice,' and 'No added sugar' is healthier than those packed in sweetened syrup.

Fresh, canned or frozen, peaches can be included in your breakfast, lunch or supper.

Slice peaches on top of your favourite cereal, pancakes or waffles. Blend a breakfast smoothie with peaches and yogurt. Pack a fresh peach, a snack pack, or a can of peaches to finish off your lunch or for a light afternoon snack. Or, for a protein boost, add low-fat yo-

gurt or cottage cheese to peaches.

Include peaches in a fruit salad. Bake, grill, or broil peaches to serve as a side-dish to your favourite meat or fish main courses. For a light dessert, top angel-food cake with low-fat frozen yogurt and freshly-sliced peaches. Occasionally, splurge on a slice of fresh peach pie.

However you eat them, the nutrition found in peaches makes them a peachy keen choice for your healthy diet. Ones with red-coloured and orange-coloured flesh contain beta-carotene (a powerful antioxidant) which your body transforms into Vitamin A.

This Vitamin A maintains your skin, inside and out, while also protecting your eyes, building strong teeth and bones and healthy hair. Vitamin A has also been seen to reduce rates of cancer and heart disease.

Peaches also are an excellent source of Vitamin C, which boosts

the immune system, promotes healing, and helps prevent cancer, heart disease and stroke. A half-cup of canned peaches contains 8% of the Vitamin C needed in a day.

Although Vitamin E is usually associated with vegetable oils, nuts, seeds and wheat germ, peaches also contain a significant amount. Vitamin E protects you from heart disease and breast cancer. An Ohio State University study found that half a cup canned peaches can give you 24% of the Vitamin E you need daily.

Peaches are also high in potassium and a good source of carbohydrates, protein, and dietary fiber.

With less than 40 calories and no fat, salt or cholesterol, this fruit is just peachy for everyone's diet. □

— Karen Bowen is a professional health and nutrition consultant and she can be reached by e-mail at karen_bowen@yahoo.com.

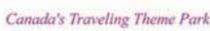


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It's tax planning season

In accounting, there's tax season and there's tax planning season. Tax season is that three-month rush before the April 30 deadline to file personal income tax returns. We work crazy hours and hammer out returns like Santa's elves before Christmas.

The priority is to help owner/operators get organized, find all possible deductions, and avoid late penalties and fees.

Now, on the other hand, is ideal for tax planning and tax estimates. You have at least three months before the books close on your year-end, plenty of time to weigh various tax-saving opportunities and decide how to act. You'll also get full value from your accountant, who will have the time to help you get a handle on your financial statements rather than just sorting through broker settlements and receipts days before a return is due.

Still, people put it off. Taxes are complicated, they're a blizzard of paperwork, and no one likes opening up their financial life to scrutiny (better me than a Canada Revenue Agency auditor, I always say). It's like going to the doctor: come in, close the door, and drop your pants.

I've been in this line of work for 20 years so chances are I've sorted through files more disorgan-

Tax Talk

Scott Taylor



ized than yours. I've seen owner/operators who haven't filed a tax return in years and need to get into compliance in a hurry. Most of my clients simply like the "trucking" part of the trucking business a lot more than the business side and want someone to guide them through it.

In any case, the first step is asking for help, preferably from an accountant who knows trucking. From there, you can talk about what's important to you – reducing taxes, setting a budget, planning for retirement, incorporating the business, and so on – and what you can do to act on that plan.

Getting organized

Organizing receipts and statements is the first step toward managing your business and critical to supporting expense claims. It's also one of the first things clients want to talk about. What records do I need to keep? For how long?

Ask your accountant for a checklist of items needed to pre-

pare your financial statements and tax returns. This should include all receipts, bank statements, credit card statements, and income statements; details about any big purchases; your log detailing use of a personal vehicle for business; and so on.

One vital record that many people (including general accountants) overlook: daily hours-of-service logs.

With the recent changes in meal-expense deduction limits, you can bet that CRA will be looking closely at meal-expense audits. If they're used to validate meal expense claims, your log-books are a tax document and must be kept for seven years.

Quarterly reviews

While April 30 is the deadline to file your personal income tax return, talk to your accountant about reviewing your financial statements four times a year-at the end of each quarter.

A financial review every three months can highlight gaps in information. I can't tell you how many times a client has found a major repair receipt under a truck seat months later, after a review of the last three months' financial statements clearly showed that a big expense item was missing.

This probably would have been overlooked with only an annual review.

In the heat of a tax deadline there's no time to plan, only to

plow through the receipts in the shoebox. If you use the shoebox system, answer me this: Did your accountant call while preparing your tax return and ask you any questions? I'll bet not. So what value and expertise do you think you received?

Once a mistake is made it may not be easy to fix. Owner/operators bring their tax returns to me all the time for analytical reviews. Sometimes the mistakes I find are obvious and corrected by submitting an adjustment letter to CRA.

However, mistakes in the "gray" areas always are cause of concern for adjustment as now you're sticking it under CRA's nose. Better to get it right the first time.

With quarterly reviews, you'll be in a better position to take advantage of deductions and tax-saving strategies before the year is over and it's too late.

You'll be able to accurately estimate your tax payments so you're not faced with a "surprise" tax bill that puts a squeeze on your cash flow. Better still, you'll gain a working knowledge of your finances and tax obligations. □

– Scott Taylor is vice-president of TFS Group, a Waterloo, Ont., company that provides accounting, fuel tax reporting, and other business services for truck fleets and owner/operators. For information, visit www.tfsgroup.com or call 800-461-5970.

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Getting that scratchy feeling: Sore throats

We all are familiar with the dry, scratchy feeling and painful swallowing that is associated with a sore throat.

In most cases, a sore throat is not a serious condition however, in rare instances it may be an indication of a more serious underlying health condition.

The medical term for a sore throat is pharyngitis, which simply means inflammation of the pharynx or throat.

Most of the time, sore throats occur as one of the symptoms of a viral infection such as a cold or flu.

As a result, it is very common to experience sore throats in conjunction with other symptoms such as sneezing, watery eyes, cough, fever and body aches. In many cases, a sore throat will be the first indication that you're getting sick.

In addition to viruses, bacterial infections can also cause sore throats.

The strep bacteria is most frequently the cause of bacterial sore throats. Both viruses and bacteria enter your body through your mouth or nose by breathing in particles after someone has sneezed or coughed or through hand contact with germs from things such as doorknobs or telephones.

Other less common causes of sore throats include allergies, dry

Back behind the wheel

Dr. Christopher Singh



air and pollution/irritants. The latter two causes directly apply to truck drivers due to the fact that the air in the cab of your truck tends to become very dry during the summer months when you are using your air conditioning.

Thus, it is advisable for you to open your windows every few hours to let in some fresh air. Truck drivers are also exposed to diesel fumes and other chemicals on a daily basis. It is very important to take the proper precautions when coming in contact with these chemicals. Finally, smoking or exposure to second-hand smoke can irritate the lining of your throat as well.

As mentioned earlier, most sore throats are not harmful or dangerous and usually go away without treatment within a week or so. However, in rare cases, a persistent and severe sore throat may indicate a more serious underlying condition. You should see your doctor if you experience any of the following:

- A severe sore throat that lasts more than one week;

- Severe difficulty swallowing or breathing;
- Blood in saliva;
- High fever;
- Skin rash.

The diagnosis of the cause of your sore throat will most often be made through a physical exam and throat culture. Your doctor will rub a sterile swab over the back of your throat and tonsils and then send it to a lab for processing.

Once your physician has determined the cause of your sore throat, he or she will treat it accordingly. Unfortunately, there is no known pharmaceutical drug that can treat sore throats caused by viral infection.

Your best course of action is to increase your fluid intake and get extra sleep to help your body fight the infection.

Try to drink fluids like water and juice instead of pop or other caffeinated drinks as they will dehydrate you more.

If your doctor determines that the cause of your sore throat is a bacterial infection, he or she will most likely prescribe a course of antibiotics.

It is important that you take the entire course of antibiotics even if you feel well as this will ensure that all of the bacteria have been eliminated.

There are a few home remedies

that may be effective in easing your symptoms. Gargling with salt water is very popular as it helps to soothe the pain and clear out mucus. Another common remedy is drinking warm water with honey and lemon.

This too will help to temporarily ease your pain. One commonly overlooked remedy is resting your voice as it helps to reduce the irritation of the throat.

Although it is not possible to prevent sore throats altogether, you can greatly reduce your chances by following a few basic guidelines.

First of all, hand washing is the simplest and most effective prevention technique.

You should wash your hands before eating and after using the bathroom as well as after being in crowded public places like truck stops.

If water and soap are not available, alcohol-based hand sanitizers are a great alternative.

In addition to washing your hands, avoid sharing eating utensils, cups, foods and towels. It is also a good idea to clean telephones, keyboards and remotes on a regular basis.

Keep in mind these simple tips next time you feel that tickle in the back of your throat. Until next month, drive safely! □

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– Dr. Chris Singh, B. Kin., D.C., runs Trans-Canada Chiropractic at 230 Truck Stop in Woodstock, Ont.

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ALTERNATIVE FUELS

7 Future fuels

Volvo says it's ready to roll out CO₂-neutral trucks in North America – when the fuels are available

By James Menzies
WASHINGTON, D.C. – Volvo Group stole the show at the Washington International Renewable Energy Conference (WIREC) held here this spring. The company dominated the trade

show floor, with a massive display that took up one entire wall. The highlight of the exhibit was the unveiling of seven alternative fuel-powered trucks that are completely carbon-neutral and adapted for use in North America.

The exhibit garnered the attention of US president George W. Bush, who took time to tour the display and speak with Volvo executives about their pursuit of carbon-neutral transport solutions.

Truck News first reported on the seven alternative fuels being pursued by Volvo Group from Brussels, Belgium last September (see the November, 2007 issues of *Truck News* or *Truck West* for the full report. Archives can be viewed online at www.trucknews.com).

But unlike the trucks first displayed in Belgium, the trucks showcased at the WIREC show were adapted for North American use. Volvo officials were also able to delve more deeply into each of the alternative fuels, highlighting the pros and cons of each. The fuels showcased by Volvo Group were evaluated based on a set of seven criteria: climate impact; energy efficiency; land use efficiency; fuel potential; vehicle adaptation; fuel cost; and fuel infrastructure.

Synthetic diesel

Synthetic diesel can be used today with no vehicle adaptation required, said Anthony Greszler, vice-president, advanced engineering with Volvo Powertrain North America. It can be used on its own or blended with traditional diesel.

Synthetic diesel meets existing fuel standards, with the exception of lubricity requirements which are inferior to those of regular diesel. Greszler said this can be easily corrected by using lubricity additives. The challenge will be to get the cost of synthetic diesel production in line with that of traditional diesel, Greszler noted.

On the plus side, synthetic diesel produces very little CO₂, offers improved performance over today's diesel (including an operating range that's equal to that of regular diesel) and there is no need for vehicle adaptation.

Biodiesel

The use of biodiesel is already prevalent in the trucking industry today. Greg Shank, co-ordinator lubricants, fuels and coolants technology with Volvo Powertrain said one of its greatest challenges is the

Continued on page 34 ■

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ALTERNATIVE FUELS

Availability of alternative fuels remains a challenge: Volvo Group

■ **Continued from page 32**
use of a wide variety of feedstocks during biodiesel production.

“All those different feedstocks can cause different problems,” said Shank.

Biodiesel also comes with a fuel economy degradation of 5-10%, Shank pointed out. And it has corrosive properties which can eat away at elastomers, causing fuel system problems. There are also some well-documented cold weather operability issues that have plagued early adopters of biodiesel.

Shank also pointed out biodiesel tends to become ineffective after as little as six to nine months in a storage tank. There’s also a popular school of thought that biodiesel increases NOx, a pollutant targeted by the US Environmental Protection Agency.

Having said all that, Shank pointed out that biodiesel is an attractive option because its cost premium can be offset through government incentives in some regions, it’s already available, it boasts an operational range nearly equal to traditional diesel and very little vehicle adaptation is required.

Methanol/Ethanol

Ethanol is the most common biofuel used in the world today, explained Greszler, but that doesn’t

mean it is without its issues. Ethanol has inherently low cetane levels, which must be offset with the use of additives. It also suffers a lack of energy density compared to traditional diesel.

“Ethanol’s operating range is reduced because it has less energy,” explained Greszler, noting ethanol reduces operating range by as much as 60%.

Ethanol and methanol are also difficult to ignite, so Volvo has added ignition additives as well. Volvo also added catalysts to its ethanol- and methanol-powered trucks to control high concentrations of hydrocarbons and carbon monoxide. Volvo engineers also contend that ethanol and methanol are more corrosive than traditional fuels.

Like each of the fuels being explored by Volvo, methanol and ethanol do have their redeeming qualities. Most notably, the fuels produce very little CO₂, particulate matter and NOx. However, when all criteria are evaluated, Shank said methanol and ethanol do not measure up well compared to other options when conducting a complete well-to-wheel analysis. These options score particularly poorly in the land use efficiency category.

Dimethylether (DME)

Of all the alternative fuels discussed by Volvo officials at a

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seminar on the subject, it was Dimethylether (DME) that excited them the most. Volvo's Greszler said "Volvo has been investigating DME for a few years."

DME is a gas that's handled in liquid form at low pressure, formed through the gasification of biomass (black liquor generated by the pulp industry is an ideal source). It's already being used in Asia, but Greszler admitted "Very little is heard about it here."

As with all other alternative fuels, there are significant sacrifices when using DME, most notably viscosity and lubricity, Greszler explained. He added DME will dissolve some rubber and plastic components. It also offers a greatly-reduced operating range compared to diesel – you'll only get about 55% as far down the road on a tank of DME compared to diesel.

"However, we do want to say DME is a fuel that can compete head-on with diesel in many areas," Greszler said. No changes are required to the base engine, but the fuel system must be upgraded with a special fuel pump and injector. And the tanks must be designed to liquid natural gas (LNG) standards.

But Greszler said that performance-wise, DME is equal to or better than today's diesel. He also noted no diesel particulate filter (DPF) is required and the engines and fuel will eventually cost about the same as today's.

Other benefits include: high torque at low engine speeds; low CO₂ emissions; reduced noise levels; and a simplified exhaust aftertreatment system, sans DPF. While Volvo is excited about the prospect of DME, Greszler admitted "It will take longer to build the infrastructure than it will take us to get the vehicles ready." In the short-term, it will likely only be suitable for local distribution applications where a truck can be fueled up at one central location.

Biogas

In addition to liquids, there are also gaseous options available for future CO₂-neutral transport, including biogas which can be extracted from sewage treatment plants and landfill sites. Gaseous options boast reduced engine noise and biogas has the added benefit of recycling man-made waste.

Biogas has a low cetane index, Greszler explained, meaning ignition must be triggered via a spark plug or a diesel pilot injection system. Unfortunately, biogas (and hydrogen for that matter) have low energy content. If used in a compressed gas state, the fuel suffers from a reduced operating range. When used in liquid form, it has the tendency to evaporate.

Biogas + Biodiesel

Biogas may have too many challenges to overcome on its own, but it can also be used in conjunction with biodiesel, according to Volvo officials. In this case, the two fuels are housed in separate tanks. A small percentage of biodiesel (10%) is used to achieve compression ignition.

Biogas options eliminate the need for a DPF and they offer good



READY AND WILLING: Volvo has already developed the trucks, now it needs the fuel to provide CO₂-neutral transport options, the company claims.

throttle response and low exhaust emissions, Greszler pointed out.

Hydrogen + Biogas

Biogas can also be mixed with hydrogen. In Volvo's case, an 8%

mixture of hydrogen is used. Pros include very low well-to-wheel CO₂ emissions, the elimination of particulates and smoke, good throttle response and as with other gaseous options, reduced engine

noise. This option is well-suited for urban applications, Greszler said.

As witnessed at WIREC, there are many options available to the trucking industry to achieve CO₂-neutral transport. Volvo has proceeded with developing trucks that can utilize each of the seven most promising alternatives, despite the fact there is currently no widespread availability of most of these fuels.

"Availability is crucial. That's certainly going to be limited for a number of years," Greszler admitted. "But we see a lot of potential for second generation biofuels."

In the short-term, Volvo officials said the most logical approach is to blend emerging alternative fuels with traditional fossil fuels.

"We can do that immediately and gain some immediate benefits," Greszler said. □

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ALTERNATIVE FUELS

Bio-Mess?

Challenges remain for biodiesel users

ORLANDO, Fla. – Biodiesel certainly sounds like a cleaner fuel. Who could argue against the idea of replacing “black gold” with an option made from “amber waves of grain”?

As clean as it sounds, however, biodiesel still presents a number of challenges for those who want to use it. Higher concentrations of this plant-matter-turned-power-supply happen to flow poorly in cold weather. And there is also a lack of standards governing the way any of the fuel is made.

“There’s too many feedstocks out there,” says Mark Louzon,

Technical Correspondent

John G. Smith



chief engineer at Volvo Powertrain.

Most biodiesel is made with a fatty acid methyl ester, which can be found in a variety of material including soybeans, rapeseed, palm oil and canola. But one of the biggest problems is that each type of plant matter will generate

a fuel with different performance properties, speakers said during a meeting of the Technology and Maintenance Council.

When compared to some of its counterparts, a formula made with palm oil is more likely to crystallize in cold weather, explained Tom Weyenberg of Lubrizol, which makes fuel additives. A fuel made from soybeans will flow better in cold weather, but its poor “oxidative stability” can leave a lacquer inside an engine’s injectors.

“A manufacturer can swing his plant from soybeans to tallow if the price of soybeans goes higher,” he added. Buyers will probably have no way of knowing which of the commodities was used.

The concentrations of the fuel can also make a big difference in the way the biodiesel performs. At the extreme end of the offerings, a B100 mixture – signifying that it is

100% biodiesel – contains 11% less energy than the same volume of ultra low-sulfur diesel (ULSD). The cloud point and cold filter plugging point will also rise along with any increase in the amount of biofuel.

“Flow improvers” may be able to address the latter challenge in mixtures up to a concentration of B10, but there are limitations in mixtures that are more concentrated than that, Weyenberg says.

Of course, any fuel requires additives. Today’s ULSD includes “lubricity improvers” to reclaim some of the lubricating properties that are lost when sulfur is removed from traditional diesel. A “conductivity improver” is also needed to ensure that static electricity is not a safety issue at fueling terminals. But Louzon warns fleets against selecting their own additives to address the different challenges.

“It’s really important that it’s done at the refineries or your fuel terminal, but not in your tanks,” he says.

Meanwhile, there are also challenges relating to the tanks that hold the fuel. Biodiesel may act as a great detergent, but that means it can also attract the water bottoms in a fuel tank, depositing all of these nasty contaminants into a fuel filter.

“You have the possibility of having three things that microbes like most: fuel, water and heat,” Weyenberg adds, referring to the conditions in some heated storage tanks. “The hygiene of the fuel storage system now becomes more important.”

“It has a short shelf life when compared to the diesel you’re used to,” Louzon adds, noting how a supply of B20 might last as little as six months.

Regardless, there is only so much biodiesel to go around in the short term. The 1.7 billion litres that were generated in 2007 still represents a mere 0.7% of the overall diesel supply in the US, Weyenberg says. “Nearly half of what was used as B100 and exported to Europe.”

He suggests that the future of such fuels will probably be found in the form of a “synthetic” diesel created with products including chicken fat, beaks and feet. (Tyson and ConocoPhillips have teamed up in a deal to produce this mixture). Unlike the biodiesel of today, it is almost identical to traditional diesel, and it is produced right at the refinery level, he says.

“In a decade, these might go from the research stage into the pilot stage.”

The research into potential standards also continues. Engine manufacturers are in the midst of creating tests for B20 fuels, to determine the fuel’s impact on piston deposits, valve train wear and piston cylinder wear. The ASTM has set standards of its own (see the article on the following page for details).

This continuing focus – and the political will behind it – suggests that biodiesel will live on as an alternative fuel supply for years to come. □

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Fuel quality, feedstock availability the main issues facing biodiesel

By James Menzies

ATLANTA, Ga. – Biodiesel is far from perfect, but its quality is improving. That was the message from Richard Nelson of the National Biodiesel Board at the National Truck Equipment Associations' Work Truck Show.

"We tell you the good, the bad and the ugly – I'm not hear to sugar-coat this," Nelson told delegates during the show's Hybrid Truck and Alternative Fuels Summit.

Nelson admitted that ensuring the quality of biodiesel remains the biggest challenge facing the expanding industry. Biodiesel demand in the US skyrocketed to 450 million gallons in 2007, nearly doubling from the 250 million gallons consumed the previous year, Nelson pointed out.

"We are expanding, we're more than a drop in the bucket," Nelson said. "But we're not going to replace all the diesel fuel, we don't have the

feedstocks to do that."

The National Biodiesel Board says the industry aims to produce volumes equal to 5% of on-road diesel fuel used in the US by 2015, which totals 1.85 billion gallons per year. In order to meet that target, Nelson said the industry must overcome two key challenges: fuel quality and feedstock availability.

"Simply put, B20 (or any other blend) will not be a factor if fuel quality can not be met on a consistent basis," admitted Nelson.

The industry has developed a B100 (100% biodiesel) standard called ASTM D 6751-07b which must be met by all producers in order to qualify for US tax credits and to become road-legal.

It includes limits for 18 different properties and is feedstock-neutral. The increased emphasis on quality appears to be working, Nelson said.

In 2006, tests showed that nearly 60% of biodiesel failed to meet the

spec'. However in 2007, 89.7% of biodiesel tested met the specification. Nelson admitted, however, that while 94% of large producers were on spec', only 28% of the volume produced by small producers met the standard.

"These guys are not investing capital to get the automatic control equipment," he said, adding that trucking companies should deal with a reputable biodiesel supplier.

He also suggested they request certificates of analysis from their suppliers, to determine which feedstocks were used.

"Each biodiesel feedstock varies by its free fatty acid content and the different proportions of fatty acids found in each feedstock influence some biodiesel fuel properties," Nelson pointed out. Cold flow properties and cetane levels are just two characteristics impacted by the feedstock.

While the ASTM standard for

B100 has helped improve biodiesel quality, there was no such standard for weaker blends such as the more commonly-used B20 when Nelson presented at the Work Truck Show. However, since then, a standard for B20 has been developed (see related story below for details).

The availability of feedstocks is another issue facing suppliers. Currently, about 80-85% of biodiesel is derived from soybean oil, Nelson pointed out. That (along with the conversion of soybean fields to corn fields to satisfy rising ethanol demands) has helped drive up the cost of soybeans from 24 cents/lb to 55 cents/lb.

It has also sent biodiesel prices skyrocketing. One delegate based in Atlanta said the cost was 14 cents/gallon higher than traditional diesel and Nelson admitted the premium is even higher in other regions. □

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Biodiesel industry welcomes new standards for blends

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The biodiesel industry is celebrating following the recent vote by the ASTM International D02 Main Committee to approve a trio of long-awaited specifications for biodiesel blends.

After more than five years of extensive research and subsequent balloting by the ASTM fuel experts in the blended fuel balloting process, ASTM has finally voted to approve three key sets of biodiesel specifications that industry insiders say should significantly bolster manufacturer support and consumer demand for biodiesel:

- Changes to the existing B100 biodiesel blend stock specification (ASTM D6751);
- Finished specifications to include up to 5% biodiesel (B5) in the conventional petrodiesel specification (ASTM D975); and
- A new specification for blends of between 6% biodiesel (B6) to 20% biodiesel (B20) for on- and off-road diesel.

Automakers and engine manufacturers have been requesting a finished blend specification for B20 biodiesel blends for several years,



BIODIESEL VICTORY: A new standard for blended biodiesel is being praised by producers and end-users.

with some citing the need for that spec' as the single greatest hurdle preventing their full-scale acceptance of B20 use in their diesel vehicles.

Steve Howell, chairman of the ASTM Biodiesel Task Force, said, "The new ASTM specifications for B6-B20 blends will aid engine manufacturers in their engine design and testing processes to optimize the performance of vehicles running on biodiesel. The new specifications will also help ensure that only the highest quality biodiesel blends are made available to consumers at the

retail pump."

John Gaydash, director of marketing for General Motors fleet and commercial operations, said "The new ASTM spec' for B6-B20 is a major building block in GM's efforts to elevate biodiesel as part of our overall energy diversity strategy. We are eager to work with the National Biodiesel Board on efforts to continue to ensure biodiesel fuel quality, as well as to increase our support for biodiesel use in our diesel vehicle lineup." Currently, GM accepts the use of B5 in all of its diesel vehicles, and offers B20 use as a Special

Equipment Option (SEO).

The approval of ASTM specifications for inclusion of up to 5% biodiesel (B5) in the regular diesel fuel pool also means that biodiesel could soon become more readily available at retail fuelling stations nationwide, the biodiesel industry hopes.

Biodiesel is a domestically-produced, renewable alternative to diesel fuel and can be made from plant oils, animal fats, recycled cooking oils or new sources such as algae.

Biodiesel must be properly processed to meet the approved ASTM specifications regardless of the feedstock used to produce it. Biodiesel blends up to B20 meeting ASTM specifications can be used in any diesel engine without modifications, and nearly all major automakers and engine manufacturers in the US currently accept the use of at least B5, including Caterpillar and Cummins, which are already accepting blends of B20 or higher.

Several more companies are expected to raise their approvals to B20 now that the final ASTM specifications for B6-B20 blends have been approved, the industry reports. □

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D.O.B.: April 28, 1979

When Last Seen:

Height: 5'9"

Weight: 160 lbs.

Eye Colour: Brown

Hair Colour: Auburn

Characteristics: Tattoo of a heart on her left shoulder, tattoo of a black spider on her ankle, and a tattoo with the word "Stefan" on the other ankle.



Photo age-enhanced to 23 years (2002)
Viellissement de photo jusqu'à 23 ans (2002)

Missing Since: October 15, 1997 **From:** Port Perry, Ontario

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Experts offer tips on wheel-end maintenance

By Lou Smyrlis
TORONTO, Ont. – Waiting til something goes wrong to check for issues with your trailer wheel-ends is about as smart as waiting til you're sick to visit the doctor, according to the experts at the Canadian Fleet Maintenance Seminars session on trailer wheel-ends.

"The options are narrowed down quite a bit at that point and it's the same with maintenance," pointed out Ron Gervais of the Freinmeister Group, part of the panel which also included Rob Monster from the Ontario Ministry of Transportation and Bill Ratliff from Timken.

In Ontario, according to Regulation 611 of the Highway Traffic Act, trailer wheel-ends must

be inspected annually "but just because the regulation says once a year, doesn't mean that's good enough for you operation," cautioned Monster. "You have to base it on your rate of wear."

For example, a bus fleet may need to be checked every two months. Vocational fleets may also need inspections that are more frequent than annual.

A proper inspection should include the following steps, according to Ratliff:

1. Get the wheel off the ground, spin it to check how smoothly it runs, and "listen to your wheel bearings." If there is any deterioration in the system, you will hear it. Too noisy in the shop to hear well? Ratliff suggested putting a two-foot piece of 1.5-inch hose to your ear with the other end applied against the hub cap to hear better. Or you can use a stethoscope.

2. Feel for excessive end play. Since that's a judgement call that can vary from mechanic to mechanic, use a dial indicator if you have any concerns. If the end play exceeds the maximum allowable for adjustable wheel-ends, do not simply adjust the wheel bearing. You must remove and inspect the system as under normal operating conditions end play should not increase.

3. Inspect the seals. If you are running oil or semi-fluid grease, you must inspect for any signs of leakage. If it's running on to the face of the hub, it's best to change the seal, Ratliff advised. Grease seals should be dry and dirty on inspection. If they are found to be leaking, it's likely too much grease was placed inside.

4. Check the condition of the oil. There are several things to consider: Is there enough oil inside; is there milky water contamination; does it smell when it gets hot; and is there any metal debris when you insert a magnet? If any one of those indicators are found, then you need to conduct a closer inspection.

During his many years in the maintenance business Gervais has seen his share of dangerous practices involving trailer wheel-end inspections, such as resorting to the cutters to solve the problem of trailer warning lights that stay on and S-cam bushings that "if I could shake them, would ring like a bell." And it's not just the fleets that make errors. He showed pictures of pushrods taken straight from a manufacturer's brochure that had an incorrect length. Although there is a long list of things to consider, some of his most pressing points included the importance of using a dial indicator. The dial in procedure calls for each automatic brake adjuster to be checked with the factory-supplied template to ensure the release angle of the adjuster meets the manufacturer's requirement.

"It is not an exact science but a simple check can help get this right."

Continued on page 40

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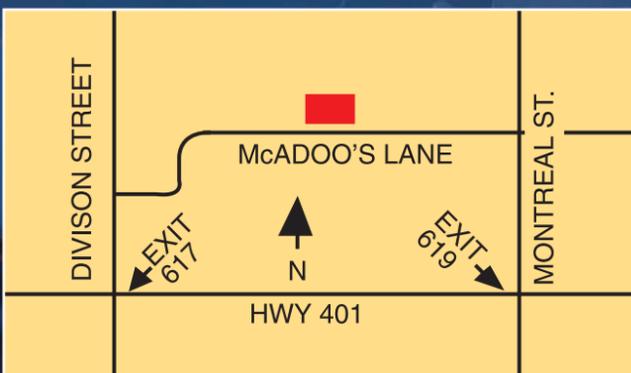
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MAINTENANCE

Axle alignment should not be overlooked

■ **Continued from page 38**
 Sometimes the correction is a few turns of the clevis yoke," he said. Ratliff added that in his experi-

ence only about half the shops he visits have a dial indicator and of those only about half actually use it. "That's pretty sad. Maybe it's be-

cause the system they have takes too long to set," he said, adding there are systems that can be set up in under a minute. Gervais also stressed the need to understand the importance of axle alignment to vehicle performance.

"Axle alignment is critical. If it is biased, your fuel mileage goes to hell, not to mention what will be happening to your tires. If it's making a noise, take it off and check. Failing to do so is just asking for trouble," he warned. □



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Steady as she goes

What to consider when maintaining trucks and trailers with stability systems

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – Stability systems are becoming a standard spec’ on many types of trucks and there’s pressure to legislate their use in some jurisdictions, including here in Canada. But Praxair Canada is one fleet that’s not waiting for government intervention. A brutal rollover in B.C. that claimed the life of one of its drivers was all the motivation the fleet needed to begin spec’ing stability systems on all new tractors and trailers.

The tanker fleet began tracking its rollovers in 2000 and noticed an increase over the next several years. Praxair’s tankers have a rollover threshold of just 0.23 Gs. That compares to a relatively high threshold of 1.3 G for passenger vehicles. A rollover typically costs Praxair between \$125,000-\$150,000. Even worse, there’s a high probability of a fatality when a rollover occurs.

In North America, Praxair now has 520 tractors and 125 trailers equipped with stability systems. In Canada, the number of rollovers experienced by Praxair has dropped from 45 in 2004 to only three in the first quarter of 07. The good news for drivers is that the systems have worked as advertised, and have dramatically reduced the number of rollovers. But have the systems created new headaches in the shop?

Not according to Praxair’s Tracy MacDonald, who insists that no additional maintenance has been required, except the need to recalibrate the sensors after a vehicle realignment.

There are several types of stability systems available. Tractor Roll Stability Systems (RSS) are useful in preventing rollovers, but don’t protect against a jackknife or other loss of control situations, explained Tom Weed, engineering supervisor, ESP and future systems with Bendix. Electronic Stability Programs (ESP) include additional sensors such as a steer angle sensor and yaw sensor which provide the added functionality of protecting against jackknifing and other slip-and-slide scenarios. Then there are trailer stability systems, which are fully-compatible with both types of tractor stability systems and are also effective on their own.

In an ideal world, every tractor-trailer combination would have both a tractor stability system and one on the trailer, MacDonald said.

The biggest responsibility for the technician who maintains this equipment, is to ensure the wiring is correct. Wires should be attached to hoses using approved clamps, not tie-wraps, noted Dave Engelbert, chief engineer, braking controls division with Haldex.

“Tie-wraps will cause you problems down the road,” he pointed out, explaining that they don’t allow enough room for the hoses to expand.

Recalibrating the sensors is simple, if you have the software provid-

ed by the manufacturer of the stability system you’re using, explained Weed. To calibrate the steer angle sensor of an ESP system, for instance, you just point the wheels straight ahead and click ‘Calibrate’ on your laptop.

Technicians are warned against swapping ECUs between trucks.

“With stability systems, you’re not able to swap ECUs from one vehicle to another,” Weed explained. “That’s because the ECU is tuned for that particular vehicle. Also, some ECUs are programmed with the VIN inside the ECU and if the VIN doesn’t match the VIN from the engine, the ECU will send a fault.”

Trailer stability systems are the only ones that can be retrofitted at this time. Tractor stability systems must be installed by the OEM. Trailer systems use the trailer’s existing ABS architecture, Engelbert explained. Additional components include: a lateral accelerometer; a brake apply; a port to connect to the air bags; and five pressure transducers. Haldex’s trailer stability system works with both air and spring suspensions.

While maintenance of a trailer stability system is fairly simple,

Engelbert warned that a good understanding of ABS is required.

“If you haven’t gotten your head around ABS, you’re probably not ready for trailer roll stability,” he said, noting the ABS platform is the backbone of the trailer stability system. Other maintenance requirements involve lightly greasing connections and also taking care of the gladhands when they’re not in use. Oh, and don’t be dumping alcohol into those gladhands in the winter, he added.

Matthew Williams, manager fleet sales and service with Meritor Wabco, added that while a little grease is good, a lot of grease isn’t necessarily better.

When a truck equipped with a stability system is started up, a lamp on the dash should light up momentarily before turning back off. If it remains on, the system needs to be serviced, Williams explained. If the stability system suffers a failure, the ABS will continue to function. Troubleshooting a stability system is similar to troubleshooting ABS – blink codes are used to communicate a problem. As long as the technician is competent in working with ABS systems, stability systems should not pose a problem, the panel agreed. But Williams did warn that a technician should be equally well-versed in tractor and trailer maintenance. □

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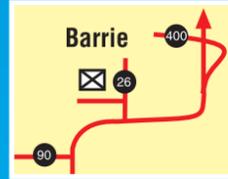
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PROFILE

APPS goes green for greenbacks

By Adam Ledlow

BRAMPTON, Ont. – The genesis of “going green” for APPS Transport Group was not something borne out of the post-Al Gore-induced panic about global warming, nor was it forced upon it by government decree. For the Brampton-based carrier, it wasn’t about saving the planet either – it was just good business sense.

“When saving money through using less natural resources became more in vogue and started to be called ‘green,’ speed limiting trucks came to light as more of a green issue than a sensible business issue,” says APPS president, Rob McDonald. APPS first decided to limit its trucks to 105 km/h about 10 years ago, well before any talk about the mandatory use of speed limiters. The move by APPS could well be used as a catalyst for future carriers to measure any success from limiting speed on their trucks. As for APPS, the company has reaped considerable rewards since limiting the speed of its fleet.

“(With) a single truck, over the course of a year, you can cut down on fuel and maintenance costs by going from 110km/h to 105 km/h by about \$7,000 a year,” he says.

McDonald said that while initially there was some grumbling from drivers about being speed limited, eventually he got them on-board.

“It took a while, but I think once they realized that it was profoundly a safety issue and a smart thing all around, they slowly came around,” he says. “Regardless of what other impact it (speed limiting) has, we’d rather have the fleet operating efficiently than blasting down the highway throwing money out the window.”

In recent years, since green practices have become almost trendy, the green initiatives already in place at APPS were just expanded on, which is all part of the carrier’s goal of becoming a zero-emission fleet by 2010. McDonald says the company hopes to achieve that goal through a variety of means.

For one, APPS is slowly converting its fleet to automated transmissions for better fuel efficiency and is also investing in alternative fuel forklifts.

As well, when APPS completed its last truck purchase two years ago, the company opted not to pre-buy ahead of the more expensive Environmental Protection Agency-approved engines, but instead decided to give the newer, cleaner technology a shot.

“As luck would have it, the trucks were marginally more expensive, but fuel economy was actually a little better and the drivers love them,” McDonald says.

His fleet has also been outfitted with a secondary oil filtering system by Puradyn. The system spins the oil in a housing, heats the oil, takes the moisture out of the oil, and

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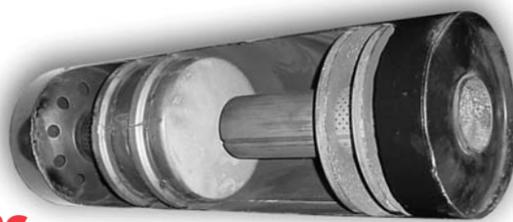
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eliminates virtually all the soot and particulate matter as well. Though not a new technology, APPS has reaped solid rewards from the system, to the tune of 7,000 to 10,000 fewer litres of oil used per year. This translates not only to less money spent on oil, but also less time and money spent on changing the oil, and less sludge produced during a change.

“It made a lot of sense from an environmental standpoint,” McDonald says.

Though APPS has a relatively small fleet with about 75 tractors, where possible, McDonald says the company tries to use intermodal instead of trucks. As freight forwarders by nature, the company doesn't put a lot of miles on its trucks either, meaning they last a lot longer, which has yet another environmental spin-off by sending less “junked” trucks to the scrap yard. “I think the biggest single contributor to our savings has been converting a lot of our service from road to rail,” McDonald says.

He notes that rail uses about 20% of the fossil fuels of a truck and having fewer trucks on the road also eliminates excess traffic.

“The concept there is – and this is something we've tried to impress on our customers as well – is that you're not only taking advantage of the benefits of being an intermodal user, you're also contributing to our environmental well-being as well,” he says, adding that APPS has been working in an intermodal capacity for about 10 years now.

APPS's in-house maintenance crews also work to keep trucks in top operating condition to reduce emissions. So while the company spends more on maintenance, it also saves on fuel consumption and, in turn, reduces pollution.

The company has also taken steps to reduce its fuel consumption through small components like aerodynamic wind deflectors which stop wind drag so the trucks burn less fuel.

In an effort to reduce idling time, APPS trucks have been equipped with an automatic shut-down device to avoid idling. According to the Canadian Centre for Pollution Prevention (CCPP), only about 7% of trucks in Canada use these types of anti-idling devices. In a recent study conducted by the CCPP, reducing idling time by 550 hours over a four-month period saves 2,201 litres of fuel, 6.16 tonnes of GHG emissions, and 1.64 kg of particulate matter.

When the next generation trucks come out in 2010, producing virtually zero NOx emissions, it should be enough to push APPS into the elite group of zero-emission fleets, McDonald says. Though not all of APPS's equipment will turn over by 2010, by 2015 the biggest part of the fleet will be converted and by 2017 the conversion will be complete.

McDonald has found ways to go green around the office as well, starting by managing the company's waste output.

“It's embarrassing to say (but) we used to put wood, plastic, metal and just whatever other garbage in our dumpster...and we were actually emptying it two, three, four

times a week.”

He says it's never a good idea to throw wood in the bin, because it takes up a lot of space and it isn't really “landfill material” anyway. In response to this discovery, APPS began a waste screening program and has reduced the weekly garbage pick-ups to one a week, which MacDonal says is “huge” for the company.

McDonald is currently working on a method to process things like scrap steel and aluminum, but hasn't come up with a solution yet.

The staff is also using re-usable consumables wherever possible – from re-using pallets and packing materials, to re-using photocopy paper, to working with clients that use totes for packing freight.

Air flush toilets are the norm around the office these days, and the thermostats on the docks have been set back to avoid heating the outside in the winter or cooling it in the summer. Even something as simple as getting staff to stop printing off e-mails and to store things electronically instead has had a big impact on the company's paper consumption.

“I don't think there's anything that you can do which is environmentally positive that isn't a good business decision,” McDonald says.

Though McDonald shies away from the term “ambassador” to describe the company's role in leading the green charge, the industry has certainly taken notice of its efforts. Earlier this year, APPS was named a finalist in the GLOBE Foundations annual Corporate Award for Environmental Excellence. The award recognizes shippers, carriers or other transportation service providers that have made an outstanding commitment to sustainable practices. The Ontario Trucking Association has also recognized APPS for its decision not to pre-buy ahead of the 2007 engine launch.

But even those awards, prestigious as they are, don't seem to have been an influence McDonald's green choices. He's un-

flinching in his stance that a good environmental decision will always have been made as a good business decision first. And ever the non-conformist, McDonald is quite content to save the planet quietly and on his own terms – without getting pressured to change just because it's popular.

“We sort of do our own thing here. I don't predicate a lot of our

business decisions on what other people are doing,” he says. “If we can convince other people to change the way they do business, to operate smarter and better, then that's great, but that isn't the plan. Overall, I think the whole world is saying, ‘Look, if we want to stay here, we'd better smarten up.’” □

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Fergus Truck Show on top of its game



FERGUS, Ont. – The Fergus Truck Show stayed true to its title as one of the best festivals in Ontario during its 23rd installment July 24-27.

Truck customizing enthusiasts turned out in droves to take part in the event's annual show'n'shine competition, which featured about 500 trucks pitted against each other in various categories (see opposite page for selected winners).

The event also attracted some big names in the music biz, with Canadian rockers April Wine and

Kim Mitchell, David Wilcox and country stars such as Aaron Pritchett among the many acts to grace the main stage.

About 200 participants competed for \$75,000 in prizes at the truck and tractor pull on Thursday, while revelers enjoyed the sights, sounds and smashes at Sunday's demolition derby.

Over 225 trade show exhibitors were present to display the latest equipment, technology and accessories throughout the weekend.

Truck News was on-site to present its annual Owner/Operator of the Year Award (see cover story), but also got out its video cameras to film a segment for its weekly WebTV show, Transportation Matters. To view the video, visit www.trucknews.com/Video/transportationmatters20.asp.

For full details on plans for next year's event, visit www.fergustruckshow.com. □



BLACK BEAUTY: Spectators at this year's show'n'shine were talking a blue streak about this truck by Mar-bo Farms of Belwood, Ont. Photo by Adam Ledlow



CHILD'S PLAY: A young boy (left) gets up close and personal with a Burmese python at the NAL booth, while other pint-sized revellers (right) get prepped for a free fall at the Fergus Family Fun Zone. Both events were sponsored as part of NAL's Trucking for Wishes charity fundraiser. Photos courtesy of NAL Insurance

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Trucking for Wishes raises \$30K at Fergus

FERGUS, Ont. – Trucking for Wishes raised more than \$30,000 at the Fergus Truck Show to make dreams come true for children with life-threatening illnesses.

Since 2007, Trucking for Wishes has raised more than \$75,000 for Make-A-Wish on behalf of the trucking industry.

"I would like to thank everyone who attended the Fergus Truck Show and all of our sponsors. Without the generous support of the trucking industry this would have never been possible," said event coordinator Aaron Lindsay of NAL Insurance.

Much of the money was raised through a charity draw at the NAL booth with prizes including a 42" Samsung flat screen TV, Napoleon BBQ, round-trip airfare for two to any WestJet destination in Canada and more.

Ticket holders are asked to visit www.truckingforwishes.com to see if they are a winner.

New this year, Trucking for

Wishes and NAL Insurance sponsored the Family Fun Zone at the Fergus Truck Show. The Family Fun Zone was expanded to over five acres of space and was filled with amusement rides and fun family games brought in by Robertson Amusements.

"This was a great attraction for kids. The family rides and games added a lot of excitement to the show," said Wayne Billings, chief operating officer of the Fergus Truck Show. A portion of the proceeds of the Family Fun Zone was donated to Make-A-Wish.

Also brand new this year, Kido TV will be filming all of the Trucking for Wishes major events. "The extra exposure on television will not only help Trucking for Wishes but it will also shed a positive light on the trucking industry as a whole," Lindsay says.

For more information or to become a sponsor, contact Lindsay at 800-265-1657 or info@truckingforwishes.com. □

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WEB-SLINGING WONDER: This spider-themed rig, owned by Vic Pannu of Pannu Transport (Diesel Truck Centre), doesn't really show its stuff until you turn the lights out. The truck's light show was good enough to take home second place in the Best Light Show Single category of the show n' shine. *Photo by Adam Ledlow*



COOL KENWORTH: Tom Ellis's cool red and blue Kenworth was a winner twice over in the show'n'shine competition, taking first place in the Best Tractor/Trailer - Tandem - Float, Flat or Curtain-side category and second place in the Best '00 to '03 O/O Working Tractor category. *Photo by Adam Ledlow*



FERGUS FIDO: This "Hooch" look-a-like pauses for a sloppy drink at Fergus. *Photo courtesy of NAL Insurance*

Fergus 2008 Show and Shine winners

Public Choice - Best Truck of the Show:
Shawn Bowles (Keena Truck Leasing and Transport)

Judge's Choice - Single:
Larry Josie

Best Mural Straight or Tractor-Trailer combination:
Doug and Kim Fisher (TransportNService)

Best Tractor/Trailer - Van:
Cliff King (Castle Rock Transportation)

Best Light Show Fleet:
Ontario Potato Dist. (Alliston)

Best Tractor/Trailer - Tanker:
Troy Bunney (Liquid Cargo Lines)

Best 2008 or new O/O Working Tractor:
Steve Joyce (Sleeman Brewery)

Best '89 to '99 Company Working Tractor:
Dan Prentice (WD Potato)

Best Pre 2007 Dump Truck:
Glenn Watts (Watts Haulage)

The above is just a sampling of some of the winners from the Fergus Truck Show show'n'shine. Space does not permit us to reprint the list of all winners here. For a complete list of winners, visit www.fergustruckshow.com.

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Putting the brakes on crime

Criminals hiding contraband inside legitimate loads, undercutting rates

By James Menzies
NIAGARA-ON-THE-LAKE, Ont.—Times are tough, and the temptation to run a load of contraband across the border may be greater than ever. Opportunities abound for truckers to make a few bucks on the side by concealing drugs, guns or dirty money inside a legitimate load. So how do you ensure your equipment and employees aren't being used for illegal purposes?

Const. Paul Webb of the Niagara Regional Police was on-hand at the Private Motor Truck Council's annual convention in June to offer some advice, and to solicit the assistance of the trucking industry in combating crime.

"No matter how contraband gets into this country, at one time or another it ends up in a motor vehicle," said Webb, adding police are often uncomfortable dealing with trucks. "When we go to police college, they don't teach us anything about trucks. We need your help. The more eyes and ears we have out there, the better the chance we're going to catch these bad guys."

Generally, the North American drug trade sees marijuana trucked into the US, where in some regions it has a street value comparable to cocaine. Weapons, money and cocaine are usually shipped back north into

Canada, Webb explained. In many cases, the contraband is concealed within legitimate loads, which are usually trucked at a discounted rate.

"They need a load – they need something to hide that in, so they'll lowball rates," Webb said. "The bad guys are screwing you guys out of money."

A recent increase in major busts involving tractor-trailers sends mixed messages. It could mean the police are doing a better job of detecting illegal loads. Or it could mean that more contraband is being transported by truck. One thing's for sure, the recent rash of busts has caused criminals to take more precautions, Webb pointed out, especially when it comes to concealment.

Webb said some people are making a living by installing hidden compartments in highway tractors and false walls and floors in trailers. A false wall can be installed in as little as six hours, he said.

He has also seen cases of criminals loading their tires with dope, attaching it to the rims with C-clamps. Each tire can hide 60-70 lbs of drugs, Webb pointed out, adding a tire that doesn't make the familiar 'ringing echo' when tapped with a hammer should trigger suspicion.

Fleet managers should periodically inspect their vehicles for any signs



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of modification, advised Webb. Owner/operators as well should be on the lookout for tell-tale signs of illegal activity, said Webb.

He recalled the story of one owner/op who was pulled over and found to have a hidden compartment in the sleeper. It was discovered that the truck had been involved in a drug bust and then was auctioned off soon after with the compartment still in place – the new owner never even knew the compartment was there.

One of the most common ways to transport contraband is to “pyramid” the load, according to Webb. This involves stacking the load to the roof at the front of the trailer with the bad stuff hidden underneath the legitimate freight. Webb also suggested checking the tops of cardboard boxes to see if they’ve been crushed. If so, that may indicate someone was crawling around on top of the load, which should be cause for further investigation.

“Your legitimate drivers can see this and we want to know about it,” Webb said. He said that about 25% of the time there’s a bust, the driver was not knowingly transporting the contraband. It’s fairly easy for criminals to have their illegal goods transported for them by law-abiding carriers, considering the constant trade-off of trailers within the industry. One trick criminals will use is to call a third-party carrier and ask them to complete the delivery of a load due to a tractor breakdown. That carrier may unwittingly transport the trailer across the border or to its destination without ever realizing there was contraband on-board. The bad guys will also occasionally steal a trailer, use it to make their delivery, and

then return it to the yard it was stolen from without its owner ever realizing it was missing.

Other suspicious signs may include: a lone driver travelling with the sleeper curtain closed; hockey bags in the bunk – but no hockey sticks; a cab with an overpowering scent of air fresheners; bobtailing long distances; and peculiar looking DoT numbers.

Drivers, fleet owners and shippers should also be wary of: illegible signatures on documents; unusual seals; vague destinations; and drivers who don’t know what they’re getting paid to deliver the load.

“It’s common sense,” said Webb. “You guys know your industry, you know what’s not the norm.”

Const. Paul Webb

“If you’re looking for Cheech and Chong, you’re only going to get user amounts of drugs.”

Webb urged attendees to dismiss their preconceived ideas of what a criminal will look like.

“If you’re looking for Cheech and Chong, you’re only going to get user amounts of drugs,” he explained, adding most big-time trafficking is done by more sophisticated criminals. Webb urged fleet managers in attendance to screen their drivers on a regular basis – but more importantly, to encourage them to report suspicious activities to Crimestoppers (or 911 if a crime is in progress).

“Empower your employees to air their concerns,” Webb suggested. “We need help. We can’t do everything on our own. We want to get the illegitimate drivers off the road who are taking money out of your pockets.”

Hopefully, with a little help from the industry, law enforcement can help ensure these criminals end up spending more time behind bars than behind steering wheels. □

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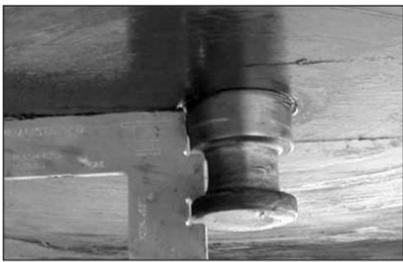
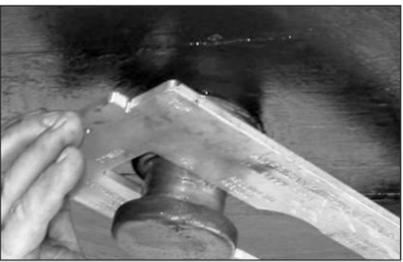

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Test driving the International 5600 SBA construction dump

BRANTFORD, Ont. – Driving dump truck is a completely different world from hauling freight, and I haven't done any of the former since the early 80s. Those trucks were noisy, rough and poorly insulated. Running empty half the time was a rattling experience and I should have worn a kidney belt. Driver comfort wasn't a major priority in that era.

So it's great to see the boys and girls of today driving something much better. Carrier Truck Centers of Brantford, Ont. fixed up *Truck News* editor James Menzies and myself with an International 5600 Set Back Axle (SBA) construction dump. This was similar to the 5900 SBA model introduced by Navistar in Las Vegas in November, 2007.

Skipping three gears at a time, we took Highway 403 towards Woodstock (I've always wanted to see Paris). According to the spec's, with 3.91 rear ends, this thing was geared to go 84.4 mph. We didn't go quite that fast but the speedometer had a tendency to creep upwards.

Power was supplied by a 485-horse Cummins ISX500V engine which puts out 1,850 lb.-ft. of torque at 1,200 RPM. But if you need more horses you can order it with a 565 Cummins. And if you're a Cat fancier, you can go with either the 475- or 550-horse engine.

One would expect good maneuverability with the set back axle, so I steered into the Lynden Park Mall parking lot. I'm happy to report that we didn't clip anything, even with those giant front tires. The turning radius was amazingly tight (42 feet, nine inches), seemingly able to turn concentric circles inside itself. A nice tool when you're working in close quarters at a cramped building site.

The front axle has been moved rearward about 18 inches. Besides the increased mobility, this is also advantageous for load distribution. The set-back axle makes it easier to get the weight transferred up on the front axle. With the load slightly for-

On-road Editor

Harry Rudolfs



ward of centre, a unit like this one, with 20,000-lb front end and 46,000 rears, and with the addition of a 20,000-lb air lift axle behind the cab, should always be able to draw full loads and run legal axle weights.

The 5600 is made to accommodate 20.5-foot or 21-foot boxes, either steel or aluminum. There's even a lightweight steel version that's less expensive than aluminum. Cement companies like this type of truck because it is easily adaptable. They can put a mixer on the back and run it as is, or add another steerable front axle for heavier applications.

I was surprised to hear that an 18-speed automatic is a common option on the 5600. But there was nothing automatic about the transmission I drove. It was a Fuller 18-speed manual with a double low and double overdrive. That's five deep reduction gears you can use when you're coming out of a hole. Lift the lever and you've got four more gears to split, plus five gears at the top which makes 18. Think of it as a nine-speed with two buttons, or a 13-speed with five deep reduction gears.

Regardless, there were plenty of gears and you'll need all of them when you're pulling a fully-loaded pup down the highway. The chassis comes with rear air and hydro hook-ups already in place for a pup trailer – and it's prepped to be easily equipped with a plate and pintle hook.

Three-axle pup trailers are popular for longer highway runs. You might as well haul as much weight as possible and that amounts to about 42 metric tonnes, with 22 on the lead unit and 20 on the pup (about 140,000 lbs, GVW).

Navistar stresses the severe-duty



ON A DIME: The author appreciated the tight turning radius, thanks to the set back front axle, a feature that will be welcomed in tight quarries.

aspects of this truck, including a double frame along its entire length: 12-inch frame rails reinforced by an outer frame of 12.5"x3.5"x0.25" rails, both rated at 110,000 psi yield, among the best in the field, according to Doug Hagan of Brantford Carrier Truck Centers. The tires are Michelins: 20 ply 425/65R22.5 XZYs on the front, and the rears were 14 ply 11R22.5s.

Cummins has tucked the exhaust gas sensors and particulate burner under the chassis away from the stack, out of harm's way. As well, the 5600 gets good marks for driver accessibility. The big nose is easy to tip and balanced so it's no problem even for a small driver. The set back front wheel also provides a little more room to service the engine.

Although our truck hadn't been fitted with a box or mixer yet, the ride was smooth and quiet, as you'd expect in an air ride cab with pneumatic rear suspension. The National air seat supplies lots of back and seat-fitting position, and a heated seat is even available as an option.

With half a dozen toggle switches on the dash, you've got lots of wiring options when you want to add lights or axles. Electronic cruise control is included with this model, and I liked the instantaneous fuel mileage read-out. The 5600 also came with a three-level Cummins engine brake which I left in the third position with

the switch off. Otherwise, the component was so effective, you could hear it activating between shifts.

The cab interior was outfitted in the deluxe Eagle package, wood grain and burgundy trim and a leather-wrapped steering wheel. You might as well have a nice looking office because you're going to be spending a lot of time in it.

Typically, a dump truck will put on over 100,000 km per year, working around quarries, cement and asphalt plants, and construction sites. It could be drawing gravel, or winter salt, or snow, or rubble, or muck soil, top soil, or even environmentally-unfriendly soil.

And those trucks pulling pups along the 401, drawing aggregates from the Milton area, might log more than 150,000 km per year. International has been making trucks for over a century. And although these may be tough economic times, their trucks have historically outlasted the up and down cycles of the industry.

After all, you're buying a truck that will make money for years to come. According to Hagan, longevity is what these International trucks are all about. "Some of these cement trucks are 20-25 years old," he says. "That's what you get with a severe-duty truck." □

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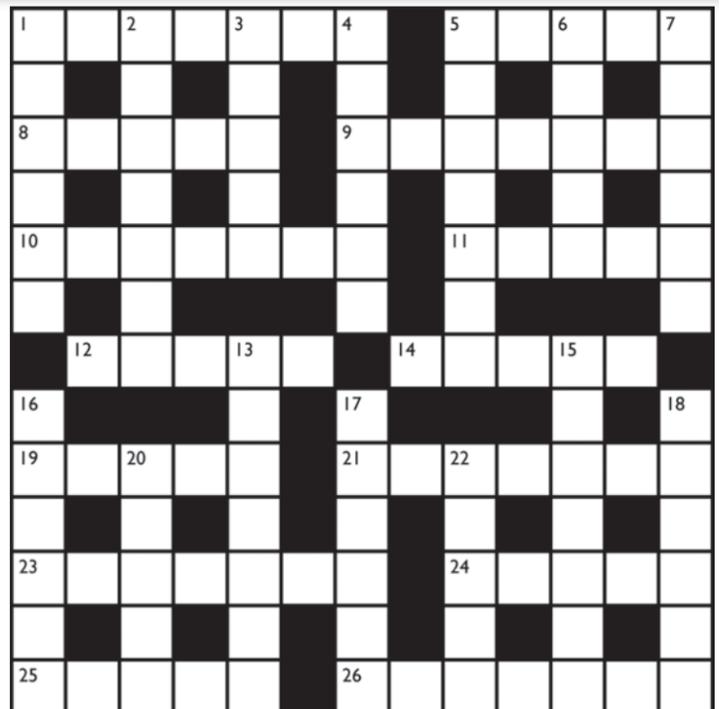
THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE

Across

1. Easy-engine-access design (4,3)
8. Put the _____ to the metal!
9. An International tractor
10. Obeyed a triangular sign
11. International tractor, debuted in '07
13. Word on RI and NS plates
15. Piston's lower section
18. Road-map compendium
19. Van-body portion above cab
21. International vocational model
23. Allied, for example (3, 4)
24. Up, on a road map
25. Obeys an octagonal sign
26. Houses trucked to building sites

Down

1. Temporary traffi delays (3,3)
2. The daily diary
3. Top of the hill
4. Truck-dealer's quest
5. Coach company with Sainte-Claire HQ
6. '45-'68 Power Wagon brand
7. Bill of _____ cargo document
13. Western Mountains
15. Medium-duty Sterling model
16. Tarp material
17. Ongoing truck maintenance
18. McDonald's golden emblem
20. Radio code for T
22. Truck line with Saskatoon head office



Answers on page 64

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The Sterling Bullet punches above its weight class

By Harry Rudolfs

TORONTO, Ont. – There’s a new light-middleweight in town punching above its weight class. The Sterling Bullet has just entered the arena and announced itself as a contender in the Class 4/5 division. This newcomer fills the hole in Sterling’s lineup and gives it a full range of truck models from Class 3 to 8.

The CONV 5500 Bullet I drove was equipped with a “landscape” package: low-sided tipper box running on an aggressive set of Goodyear rear duals.

Lots of snow on the ground in February and my ride had no problem tearing through the snow drifts in Mississauga parking lots. It was equally as comfortable and responsive on the highway, enhanced by the throaty Cummins 6.7-litre engine. This is a workhorse diesel that delivers 610 ft.-lb. torque at 1,600 RPM, and runs on ultra low-sulfur diesel, or B5 biodiesel.

The 305 horses should provide plenty of muscle for most applications. Standard equipment includes an ultra-low gear to help launch heavy loads – and an engine brake to help stop those heavy loads.

The CONV 5500 grosses 19,500 lb (a payload of about six tonnes), and can haul a trailer with a combined GVW of 26,000 lbs. The Class 4 CONV 4500 has a slightly lighter rear axle.

Just stepping into the Bullet on its 19.5-inch wheels, you know you’re getting into something serious. The front-end may resemble a pick-up truck but it’s more than that. It’s a formidable chassis-cab on a durable 50,000-psi frame, with the lines and components running along the underside making up-fitting fairly simple.

Sterling claims that the all-around disc brakes inside the big wheels will “increase braking power (and) extend lining life.” As well, the exhaust brake (supplied by Jacob) should also result in less wear on the brake parts.

The Bullet rolls off the same line as the Dodge Ram 4500 and 5500 series, in Saltillo, Mexico. But the difference is more than just a swapped grille and different insignia.

The Bullet comes with a standard PTO package which can drive a medley of tools from a generator to a pump to a jackhammer, either remotely, stationary or on the move. And the landscape unit I drove could easily be adapted seasonally by adding a plow or sander.

My Bullet had an automatic Aisin six-speed transmission and ran on a 4.88 rear end. The automatic transmission was fine, but if I were doing some off-road stuff I’d prefer the standard-issue Mercedes-Benz manual six-speed.

The Bullet is offered as a regular cab in four wheelbases or as a Quad cab in two wheelbases. It also can be had in two- and four-wheel drive packages with optional plow and towing attachments.

Was it a luxurious cab? No, this is not an SUV. But it has a decent-sized fold-out two-cup holder (very im-



NEW CONTENDER: The Bullet is a functional work truck that offers a comfortable ride and ample power.

portant) And the basic comfort level is sufficient: a tilt steering wheel and two bucket seats in the front with six-way adjustment and a fold-down seat between them. Some storage space is available under the rear seat in the Quad cab. Mine came with the complete power package: windows, mirrors, keyless entry. But if you want to go nuts you can order one Bluetooth-enabled with navigation radio and GPS. The CD/MP3 player and electric plug-in is standard.

The instrument layout is not fancy, but the six dials are well-positioned. The cruise control switches are mounted on the steering wheel.

The engine brake is a nice touch, another feature that makes you feel like you’re riding in a big truck. The Sterling Bullet also comes with a seven-way tow plug. A 16-foot box can easily be mounted on the rails for light P&D work.

Otherwise, it’s fully-adaptable to anything from a tow truck to small crane to service truck to emergency services vehicle.

With the landscape box, I could easily see a contractor picking up a load of patio brick and a few skids of sod, along with four workers, and delivering them to the job-site.

A tree cutter, on the other hand, might use it to tow a chipper and load up the logs from the dead oak he’s just felled, then deliver the firewood to a customer across town. Later, he can take the wife and kids out grocery shopping and still fit through a fast-food drive-through.

But perhaps the best reason to go with a Sterling is more peace of mind. You’re buying a Class 4/5 truck so you might as well buy it from a truck dealer.

Getting your service done by Sterling people means you’re more likely to find a mechanic and parts specialist in your corner who knows diesels and Cummins.

And a commercial truck dealer’s service department stays open later and should be more sensitive to the needs of a truck owner with a business to run.

The light- and medium-duty truck market is an important commercial sector. Up to now the light-middleweight division has been dominated by Ford, GM and even some imports.

But the Bullet has just entered the ring, and although it’s too early for a decision, it looks like this is one prizefighter who will have long career and win many championships. □

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Big Freight Systems celebrates 60th anniversary

STEINBACH, Man. – Big Freight Systems is celebrating its 60th anniversary.

The company has been in operation since 1948, initially as South East Transfer, and has grown under the guidance of Seaton 'Red' Coleman and his father George. The company has evolved into a leader specializing in open deck long-haul transportation, most notably hauling glass products, which require special care.

Today the company is still family-run, with Gary Coleman serving as CEO and his brother Earl as president. This year, Earl is also serving as president of the Manitoba Trucking Association.

"Big Freight is committed to providing the best service and we are always looking to the future in anticipation of value-based opportunities," Earl recently told Big Freight staff.

"Red built the foundation of



ALL IN THE FAMILY: Gary, 'Red' and Earl Coleman (L-R) have kept Big Freight pointed in the right direction for 60 years now.

the company based on his belief that sticking to the basics of on-time pick-ups and deliveries for a fair price is a critical factor to success," the company said in a

release. "Through the leadership of Earl and Gary, the company evolved, all the while responding to the ever-increasing demands of the marketplace." □

Highland revisits contract with O/Os

MARKHAM, Ont. – Negotiations between Highland Transport's parent company, TransForce, and the Steelworkers Local 1976 are ongoing, with a membership vote scheduled for late August, a union official told *Truck News* at press time. The union was not willing to discuss intimate details of the talks until the vote is determined. The main issue is a "new proposal" and a substantial concession in favour of Highland. TransForce wants to cut the union's negotiated per-mile rate, and eliminate the cap on fuel, although the existing contract doesn't expire until Dec. 31 according to a union official.

"They've asked us to negotiate early," Dave McCutcheon, the union steward, for the 270-member United Steelworkers 1976, told *Truck News*. "They needed the contract to be opened earlier," added McCutcheon, who wouldn't elaborate on why the union wasn't insisting TransForce abide by the existing contract.

"There are extenuating circumstances," he explained. "The members of the Local are well aware of the extenuating circumstances: the reasons why we cannot maintain the status quo."

McCutcheon has been with Highland for 23 years, a working arrangement that he has been very satisfied with.

"They've always been a pretty good company," he said.

McCutcheon indicated that existing economic pressures on trucking have been difficult for everyone.

"The industry itself is changing and certainly Highland is changing with it. The industry itself is not changing for the better: not for an owner/operator or a driver," he said. "The current economic conditions, we're going to ride them out. We've ridden them out before, and we'll do it again."

For its part, TransForce did not respond to requests for an interview. □

Al's Cartage calls it quits

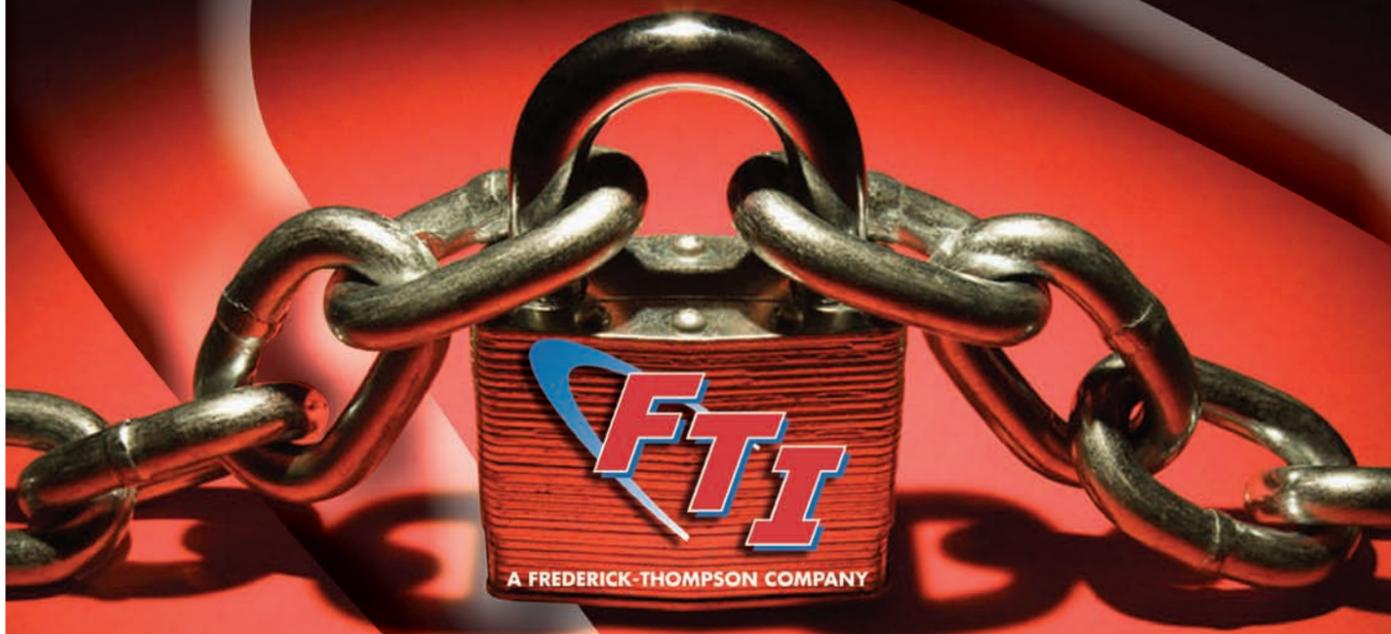
KITCHENER, Ont. – Al's Cartage, a family-owned fleet that once employed 230 people, has ceased operations due to rising fuel costs and a sluggish economy. Randy Frohlich, vice-president of operations for the 80-plus-year-old company, told the *Kitchener-Waterloo Record* that it decided to close shop after its fuel supplier cut it off.

"We got squeezed out," he told the paper. "There's too many trucks out there and not enough freight."

The company was heavily-reliant on the auto parts industry. The fleet had already trimmed its size from its peak of 230 workers down to 50.

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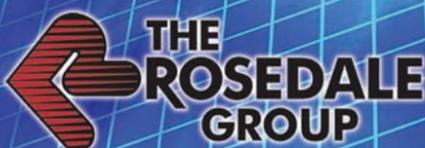
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SUMMER CELEBRATION: Quick Truck Lube hosted its third annual truck show July 28, featuring a barbecue lunch, blue skies and numerous vendors from the area. Also on-hand was the Shell Rotella Road Show tractor-trailer. Free truck grease was given to drivers and those who brought their truck in for an oil change received a free gallon of Rotella T heavy-duty engine oil. Special guest Harinder Takhar (pictured), Minister of Small Business and Consumer Services was on-hand to help launch Quick Truck Lube's new Web site: www.quicktrucklube.com. Quick Truck Lube's Gurjinder Johal, said "Great weather, great food and great people made for the perfect day." □



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**Alberta Freightliner
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CALGARY, Alta. – Calgary Freightliner and Freightliner of Lethbridge has a new owner, effective June 1.

The two entities have been purchased by Greg Stahl, who has renamed the dual franchise, under one title: New West Freightliner.

The new owner/president has been a part of the trucking industry for the majority of his life, including working in a family-owned Cummins Distributorship in Alberta from an early age, and continuing to work with Cummins in Columbus, Ind. through to 2002. He joined the Freightliner family in 2002 and worked with the company in Los Angeles, Portland and Morris Plains, N.J., a career that specialized in marketing, sales and service.

Stahl is looking forward to serving the many customers that he's previously gotten to know personally and professionally, as well as new Freightliner customers, as he moves into this business.

"It is my goal and commitment to provide excellent sales, parts, and shop service in a winning team atmosphere," he says.

"As you know, Doug and Carole Goodwin have been the Freightliner dealers in this trade area for many years. They have done a great job building a strong, customer-oriented business, and have constructed an excellent team at the dealership."

Stahl views the Freightliner franchise in Southern Alberta as a tremendous opportunity for the Freightliner team.

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Michelin makes the case for wide-base singles

By James Menzies

WATERLOO, Ont. – Spend a dime, save a buck? It's a pretty intriguing value proposition, touted by Michelin when discussing its wide-base single tire, the X-One. A couple of factors have developed recently, which have led the tire company to adopt the new tag line.

For one, wide-base tires are now more widely accepted in Canada. A Memorandum of Understanding inked by the Council of Ministers Responsible for Transportation and Highway Safety in July has paved the way for the more widespread use of the tires. They can now be used to haul US-legal weights from coast-to-coast in Canada, albeit with a few regional exceptions.

At the same time, the unprecedented cost of fuel has also changed the value proposition for wide-base tires. For every dollar spent on tires, a fleet or owner/operator spends about \$25 on fuel. The X-One has proven to deliver a 4% fuel mileage improvement in most applications, according to Michelin, hence its latest slogan – spend a dime, save a buck. (The X-One costs about 10% more up-front than a set of duals).

The current high cost of fuel, combined with the MoU which lifted prohibitive weight restrictions on wide-base singles, meant the time was right for Michelin to hit the road and spread the word about its wide single tires.

The *Go Wide, Save Green* demonstration event was held throughout North America this summer, with a stop in Waterloo where fleets and owner/operators were invited to compare the ride in identically-spec'd trucks – one with traditional duals and another with the X-One on the drive and trailer axles.

The improvement in stability was obvious, both visually and from inside the cab. An evasive maneuver routinely caused the trailer wheels to lift on the unit equipped with duals, while the tractor-trailer with the X-Ones barely swayed.

But while stability improvements are a nice bonus when using wide-base tires, the real question on the minds of fleet managers and owner/operators who attended the demo was how a switch to the fat tires would impact their bottom line.

According to Francois Beauchamp, special projects coordinator with Michelin, "The economic structure has changed over the last four years," when Michelin first began promoting its X-One. He said a wholesale shift to wide-base tires in Canada could save the industry about 920 million litres of diesel per year.

"There used to be a tire budget and a fuel budget," he added. "Now there's only one budget there, and tires can become an integral part in saving fuel. We want our customers to make tires an integral part of their fuel strategy."

Of the fuel consumed by a tractor-trailer as it moves down the road, 35% is a result of rolling resistance.

This is where tires can play a major role in affecting fuel economy. For every 3% reduction in rolling resistance, a 1% improvement in fuel mileage is achieved,

Beauchamp explained.

Michelin says there are several factors that reduce the X-One's rolling resistance compared to traditional duals. They include: tread depth; tread design; rubber compound; and casing architecture. With all those factors taken into the equation, Beauchamp said the X-One trailer and drive tires measure 73 and 92 respectively on the company's Rolling Resistance Index, which uses the XZA-1+ as a benchmark. The lower the rolling resistance, the better the fuel mileage, and by comparison the XDA3 measured 115 and the XDA Energy measured 104, making the X-One more efficient than any other Michelin dual.

But while the fuel savings are difficult to dispute (especially in light of the well-documented Energotest conducted last year, an independent test which showed the X-One demonstrated a 9.7% fuel mileage improvement over duals), the real

measure of value is total cost of ownership. Beauchamp admitted the X-One tends to have a slightly shorter life span than traditional duals. Even so, Beauchamp said when the fuel savings and reduced maintenance costs (fewer tires should result in less maintenance) are taken into account, a savings of \$5,086 per truck can be achieved. Over a five-year lifecycle, that can amount to about \$25,000 per truck, he noted.

The X-One can also result in higher payloads in some applications, he added, since converting from steel wheels and duals to aluminum rims with X-Ones can save 1,290 lbs if the steer, drive and trailer wheels are all converted. (You can save about 660 lbs if you're already on aluminum wheels, Beauchamp pointed out).

A common concern about wide-base singles is availability in the event of a blow-out. However, Beauchamp said Michelin is in the process of ensuring each of its



dealers will have a ready supply of X-Ones available.

Other concerns involve reliability, but Beauchamp said fleets are experiencing fewer failures with the X-One, because it's usually the oft-neglected inside tire on a set of duals that expires on the highway. And while it's true that you can't limp home if you blow a wide-base tire, Beauchamp countered that it's a bad idea even on a set of duals as you risk damaging the casing on the remaining tires.

For more information on the potential benefits of wide-base singles, visit www.gowidesavegreen.com. □

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Bendix white paper furthers push for 'full-stability' systems

By James Menzies

ELYRIA, Ohio – Not all stability systems are created equal. That's the message contained in a comprehensive white paper on the subject, recently published by Bendix. The parts and component manufacturer has long been a vocal proponent of 'full-stability' or Electronic Stability Control (ESC) systems which protect against more out-of-control situations than just rollovers.

However, the company became alarmed when its own surveys suggested that while 81% of its dealer sales reps claimed to be familiar with stability systems, only 28% knew the difference between 'full-stability' and what Bendix calls 'roll-only' stability systems. Fred Andersky, director of marketing for controls with Bendix, said the same seemed to ring true with government officials and regulators, which prompted the company to publish



SETTING IT STRAIGHT: Bendix has published a white paper outlining differences between various stability systems.

the white paper.

"We're really trying to take this information and help educate the market to understand first of all,

that there are a couple systems out there, and that there are significant differences in those systems," Andersky said during a conference

call with media.

Roll Stability Control (RSC) systems utilize a lateral acceleration sensor to determine if a vehicle is travelling too fast to safely negotiate a corner. When a rollover is imminent, the system takes action to de-throttle the engine and apply the necessary brakes to prevent the truck from tipping over.

However, Andersky said roll-only systems have limited effectiveness, pointing to a study commissioned for the National Tank Truck Carriers that showed 53.2% of rollovers occurred on a straight road.

"Rollovers aren't just rollovers," explained Andersky. "It's not the situation of a truck going around a turn too fast and flipping over. A lot of rollovers actually start with a loss-of-control type event."

ESC systems include additional sensors to measure factors such as yaw rate and steer angle, so they not only read what the truck is doing, but also what the driver is attempting to make the truck do, Andersky explained.

"ESC includes a lateral acceleration sensor plus a vehicle yaw sensor and also adds sensors to measure driver input, specifically his steering input," explained Rick Conklin, product manager for Bendix ESC. "It's very important that full-stability systems understand what the driver wants the vehicle to do."

In testing both ESC and RSC, Bendix engineers have used the term 'Stability Margin' (basically a driver's margin of error) to measure the effectiveness of each type of stability system.

Since ESC can detect more than just potential rollovers, Bendix claims it can react more quickly and precisely, thus increasing a driver's margin for error. In fact, Andersky said ESC provides a stability margin 2.5 times greater than RSC.

"If you only have the lateral acceleration sensor, braking is limited, they cannot achieve the same level of deceleration and the end result is they're not as effective," insisted Conklin.

To back its claim, Bendix examined the results of the US Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's Large Truck Crash Causation Study. The study provided details of nearly 1,000 truck accidents.

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While Bendix found about 130 of the 275 accidents where the trucker was at fault could have been mitigated or avoided by a stability system, 68% of those could only have been mitigated by ESC while RSC would only have changed the outcome in just 29% of the accidents.

By extension, Andersky reasoned that ESC has the potential to save nearly twice as many lives as RSC.

However, there's still a significant price point differential between the two types of systems. While OEMs ultimately set the price, Andersky admitted ESC generally runs about US\$1,600-\$1,900 per truck while RSC can cost about half that.

"There are always going to be fleets out there that are going to be taking a look at the bottom line," he admitted. "It really shouldn't be a price decision, it should be a performance decision."

He noted the price of ESC is less than 1% of the cost of a new truck and similar to the cost of a chrome bumper. Bendix has developed a value calculator fleets can use to measure a payback period.

Bendix engineers also acknowledged that even ESC has its limits, and won't completely eliminate heavy truck accidents.

"(ESC) isn't the end-all in and of itself," said Conklin. "It's not going to prevent every incident – the laws of physics still apply. We're not going to make a bad driver a good driver, our intent is to make a good driver avoid a bad situation."

Andersky added the system is designed to bail out the decent driver who makes a mistake. When an intervention occurs, it will "let him know he almost screwed up big-time, but he's keeping the shiny side up and he's going home for dinner that night."

The timing of Bendix's latest push for full-stability coincides with discussions that stability systems may be mandated on commercial vehicles. In the US, all passenger vehicles must be equipped with stability systems as of 2009.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration administrator Nicole Nason has noted that only seatbelts have greater potential than stability systems in terms of saving lives and reducing injuries on the roads.

Andersky pointed out it stands to reason stability systems will be forced upon the commercial vehicle sector, where "large trucks are heavier, less stable and more prone to these types of situations." NHTSA is currently evaluating both RSC and ESC to determine which, if any, type of system will be mandated.

Here in Canada, the Canadian Trucking Alliance is pushing for regulators to mandate the use of stability systems on all new trucks.

While Bendix has said it would prefer to see the industry adopt stability systems without government mandates, Andersky added "If we are going to mandate, let's mandate the technology that's going to help us today as well as tomorrow."

The white paper, entitled *Road Map for the Future: Making the Case for Full-Stability* is now available at www.bendix.com. □

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Daimler makes UltraShift available on medium-duty models

CLEVELAND, Ohio – Eaton has announced its UltraShift Highway Value automated transmission is now being offered on medium-duty Freightliner and Sterling trucks.

The transmission will be available on 2009 Freightliner M2 and Sterling Acterra models with Cummins engines and GVW ratings of up to 33,000 lbs, the company announced.

"Daimler Trucks North America, which manufactures Freightliner, Sterling and Western Star trucks, has selected the UltraShift HV so that they could offer their customers the fuel-saving features of an automated transmission," said Dontia M. Warren, NAFTA medium-duty market development and strategy manager for Eaton's truck business. "Their familiarity and success with other Roadranger products and the people who represent those products were also contributing factors."

Eaton says independent testing

has shown the UltraShift HV transmission can deliver a 6-19% fuel economy improvement over traditional manual gearboxes, depending on duty cycle.

"The UltraShift transmission is without question the most efficient, cost-effective way for medium-duty customers to improve fuel economy," said Jeff Bowen, general sales manager, Dallas Freightliner – Western Star.

"Not only is the transmission more efficient than comparable automatics, it can be serviced in most cases by the selling dealer instead of a local distributor. Customers experiencing transmission problems will no longer need to guess between a distributor and a dealer. In some cases what was thought to be a transmission problem can actually be a truck problem. When that happens someone has to get the truck where it needs to be and it's usually the customer. These reasons alone make the Eaton



NOW AVAILABLE: The UltraShift HV is available on Daimler's MD trucks.

UltraShift transmission a strong consideration."

Eaton officials also point out the UltraShift is "lubed for life" and doesn't require lube and filter changes. The UltraShift HV is compatible on Class 6 and 7 trucks with diesel engines ranging from 195-260 hp. It can handle torque capacities up to 660 lb.-ft. and loads of up to 33,000 lbs gross. For more information on the transmission, visit www.roadranger.com or call 800-826-4357. □

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Sterling sleeper rounds out diverse product lineup

By James Menzies

NAPA VALLEY, Cal. – Sterling Trucks has re-entered the sleeper market, with the introduction of a mid-sized integrated sleeper cab.

The NightShift sleeper cab will be offered in a 60-inch mid-roof configuration on the Sterling Set-Back 113 and Set-Back 122 models. It's targeted towards LTL, distribution and leasing markets and is ideal for drivers who spend several nights per week on the road. It's not intended for long-haul, over-the-road applications, Sterling officials said during the launch. It also shouldn't be confused as a resurrection of the SilverStar – the NightShift is much lighter and more functional, specially designed for drivers in LTL and

distribution segments, where Sterling already has a strong presence. The sleeper was designed specifically with Sterling customers in mind, and represents a two-year, US\$20 million investment, the company says. There's no upper bunk and no high-roof option will be available, however the NightShift boasts an 80-inch floor-to-ceiling height allowing a driver over 6'4" to stand upright, as is.

"Our customers have asked for a sleeper configuration and we listened," said Richard Shearing, manager of product strategy for Sterling Trucks. "We have developed a working class sleeper that provides outstanding comfort and storage."

The sleeper features a comfort-



INSIDE LOOK: The NightShift boasts a functional interior with plenty of storage (above) and on the outside, a stylish appearance with several windows (below).

able eight-inch coil spring mattress, which is double the depth of the industry standard four-inch foam mattress. Shearing said it's the thickest mattress in the industry.

In speaking to drivers, Sterling officials found the most important thing they wanted out of a sleeper was a comfortable bed. Not far behind was ample storage space.



"Drivers often noted that there wasn't much room in their sleepers and the room they did have was inefficient," said Shearing. "We therefore incorporated useful storage in every possible area."

Sterling officials say the NightShift offers more storage than any other mid-sized sleeper. Overhead storage bins have lips along the bottom to prevent stuff from falling out and the bed lifts up to reveal additional storage space underneath. Also under the bed is what Sterling dubbed a "coolbox" – a 32-litre pullout drawer that can be used as either a fridge or freezer.

Drivers can simply flick a switch to convert the coolbox from fridge to freezer. Or, if it's not required, customers can instead opt for additional storage space underneath the bed. The NightShift sleeper provides ample light, thanks to a 36"x10" rear window, which is also helpful when backing up and maneuvering the vehicle. Side windows let in additional light, as well as provide ventilation.

A control panel by the head of the bed allows the driver to adjust the temperature and control an integrated reading light. Despite its compact size, the NightShift can still accommodate a TV and microwave.

On the outside, the sleeper features a right-hand access door with a sliding window as well as a left-hand window. A left-hand luggage door and rear work lights also come standard. If aerodynamics are important, optional side and roof fairings are available. The NightShift comes standard with Sterling's noise control package, which the company says reduces interior noise by as much as 25%. The package consists of new door and engine cover seals, shifter and steering boot material; a new door weather seal for improved surface contact and improved sealing at joints. Sterling's NightShift rounds out a complete line of Class 3-8 vehicles offered by the company.

"With the addition of the NightShift to our family, we now offer the broadest product line in the Class 3-8 market," said Shearing. The NightShift will be available to order in December. Sterling expects to initially sell 500-800 units a year, ramping up to 1,000-1,200 units thereafter. □



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Pete, Delphi test new APU technology

DENTON, Texas – Delphi and Peterbilt recently demonstrated a solid oxide fuel cell APU, which was able to successfully power a Peterbilt 386's electrical system while providing air-conditioning without depleting the truck's batteries or requiring it to idle.

The test took place at Peterbilt's Denton headquarters and was supported by the US Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) and Fossil Energy Solid State Energy's Conversion Alliance (SECA) program.

The Delphi system converts chemical energy in conventional fuels into useful electrical power without combustion, the company explained in a release. It claims its system runs quietly and more efficiently than APUs with traditional combustion engines.

Delphi says its solid oxide fuel cell APU will be able to run off natural gas, diesel, biodiesel, propane, gasoline, coal-derived fuel and military logistics fuel. It is also compact in size, the company says.

The test was conducted to reflect a trucker's typical day. The APU was brought to temperature during the course of on-road driving. Once it reached temperature, the Pete 386 was shut down to sim-

ulate the beginning of a rest period. During the rest period, the solid oxide fuel cell APU provided electrical power to the cab, running the air-conditioner, radio, CB radio and lights while also charging the truck's battery.

The test ran for 10 hours to cover an entire off-duty period. Delphi and Peterbilt said the system provided an average of 800 watts of electricity throughout the test.

"The Delphi SOFC passed this test, standing up to the demands of a typical truck driver's day," said Mary Gustanski, Delphi Powertrain Systems director of engineering. "We are encouraged by the performance of the demonstration, especially given the 95 F Texas heat. Additionally, we thank everyone at Peterbilt for participating in this evaluation and for echoing our enthusiasm for the further development of eco-friendly solutions."

"The SOFC system provides a

technologically-advanced solution to meet anti-idle requirements while surpassing expectations for reduced emissions, noise and fuel consumption," added Landon Sproull, Peterbilt's chief

engineer. "This system has the potential to revolutionize future APUs by setting new benchmarks for performance and ease of operation with no adverse effects on the environment." □



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First MaxxForce big bore delivered

NORTH MANKATO, Minn. – The first International MaxxForce big bore engine is now in the hands of a customer in the US.

The company delivered its first MaxxForce 13 production unit, fitted in a TranStar truck, to Wayne Viessman of Minnesota-based Cliff Viessman Inc.

"Viessman has been a good customer of ours," said Steve Hatlestad of local dealer, North Central International. "They helped us with our field testing and we're proud to be supplying them with TranStars. The addition of the MaxxForce engine is the next step in providing great products for our great customers."

"We're very happy with what we've been seeing with results," added Viessman. "We're a very weight-conscious company and with the new MaxxForce engine, we probably are about 325 to 350 pounds lighter than we were with the engine we were using before."

The International MaxxForce was designed in partnership with European engine manufacturer MAN and exclusively for use in International ProStar, TranStar and WorkStar trucks. The engine is available in six ratings from 330-475 hp and 1,250-1,700 lb.-ft. of torque. It has been noted for its low noise levels, light weight, strong torque response and fuel efficiency. For more information on the engine, visit www.maxxforce.com. □



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NEW PRODUCTS

Detroit Diesel expands engine family with launch of DD13

By James Menzies

NAPA VALLEY, Cal. – Detroit Diesel's popular DD15 engine has a new little brother.

The 12.8-litre DD13 was introduced to unsuspecting trade press editors at a Sterling Trucks event here in early August. The six-cylinder, in-line engine will be well-suited to applications where Sterling has a strong presence, namely LTL, regional distribution and vocational markets.

The engine, which will replace the MBE4000, will be available with 350 to 450 hp and 1,350 to 1,650 lb.-ft. of torque.

The DD13 was built with reliability in mind, and has a B50 rating of one million miles, meaning 50% of the engines will last a million miles. By comparison, the Series 60 had a B50 rating of 750,000 miles, Detroit Diesel officials announced.

The DD13 is expected to provide 5% better fuel mileage than the MBE4000, thanks to an efficient Amplified Common Rail Fuel System (ACRS).

"The DD13 is the only engine in its class to offer ACRS," said Admir Kreso, director HDEP engineering with Detroit Diesel.

David Siler, director of marketing with Detroit Diesel, added ACRS "delivers fuel with higher pressure and with more flexible and precise measurements," which results in "lower engine-out emissions without the customary fuel economy penalty."



NEW ADDITION: The DD13 will be targeted towards LTL, regional distribution and vocational applications, Detroit Diesel officials announced.

The fuel system features a relatively low fuel pressure to reduce the potential for leaks at connection points, Siler explained, but in the injector itself the fuel pressures is boosted to up to 32,000 psi.

Unlike the DD15, the newest member of the family will not use turbo-compounding, because Detroit Diesel engineers wanted to allow for rear-PTO capabilities.

"The PTO capabilities of the DD13 will be as diverse and universal as any that Detroit Diesel has offered before," said Siler, noting the types of applications

best suited for the DD13 won't benefit as much from turbo-compounding as line-haul does.

The DD13 shares 65% of its parts with its bigger brother, simplifying maintenance and repairs for fleets using both engines.

"Many of the most commonly replaced items, such as filters and belts, are already in stock at dealers and distributors and we're still several months before the start of production," Siler said.

The DD13 weighs about 400 lbs less than the DD15, albeit it's slightly heavier than the MBE4000. Siler said the engine

boasts a wide sweet spot and pulls strong down to 1,100 RPM. Its peak torque band is 500 RPM wide, Siler said.

"We all know getting into higher gears sooner and staying there longer, reduces fuel consumption," he reasoned.

The new engine also features an enhanced cooling system that prefers to run hotter, minimizing fan-on time.

"For every moment the fan is cycling on, that's up to 50 hp of parasitic load," Siler pointed out.

Another benefit of the DD13 is its extended service intervals. The engine can go up to 50,000 miles before requiring routine maintenance such as oil and filter replacements – nearly double the length of some competitive engines, Detroit Diesel claims. When it does come time to perform routine maintenance, upright, easily-accessible filter cartridges make the job easier and tidier, Siler noted.

Another feature to be enjoyed by drivers is a quiet, lightweight Jake Brake capable of up to 546 braking horsepower by shutting down two, four or six cylinders.

The DD13 will initially be available in Sterling and Freightliner trucks beginning in 2009. Western Star will receive the engine in 2010. The engine was designed to be compatible with a Selective Catalytic Reduction system in 2010. □

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NEW PRODUCTS

A natural solution

Natural gas-powered Sterling trucks offer significant fuel-saving opportunities

By James Menzies

NAPA VALLEY, Cal. – Earlier this year, Sterling Trucks announced the availability of its liquid natural gas (LNG)-powered Set-Back 113 tractor designed for US West Coast port operations.

The truck was made available to the trade media for the first time at a recent ride-and-drive, where it lived up to claims of quiet operation and diesel-like performance.

The Set-Back 113 with LNG, however, won't likely be coming to a highway near you anytime soon. Instead, a compressed natural gas (CNG) version is under development, which will be more practical in

Canada where CNG is much more widely available. CNG has several benefits over LNG, said Robert Carrick, general manager, western region with Sterling Trucks. For starters, drivers can fill up their own trucks – a special licence and protective clothing are required to handle the natural gas in its cryogenic liquid form. There's also already a CNG filling station infrastructure in place.

"We're hoping that in the late first quarter or early second quarter of next year, we'll start with some CNG products," Carrick said during an interview.

He said the fuel apparatus will be similar to the LNG truck that was on



FUELING CHANGE: Natural gas is less expensive than diesel, resulting in savings of up to US\$6,000 per year, according to Sterling Trucks.

display, with "a different tank configuration and controls."

The initial natural gas-powered Sterling trucks used LNG because the ports of California and Long Beach wanted to maximize the distance the vehicles could travel, Carrick explained.

"LNG allows more fuel to be put in a more compact space. In a tractor

application, they wanted to use LNG for greater range."

But outside the ports, the vast majority of natural gas is available in compressed form, even in the US. The performance characteristics of both types of natural gas are the same, Carrick said. "The engine doesn't know the difference."

In Canada, Sterling trucks operating off CNG will be a fit for "any application where they utilize about 60 gallons of diesel fuel per day or less and where they have access to CNG fueling and if they can get the amount of fuel they need on their chassis," said Carrick. Frame rail space is an issue on some types of chassis and in some applications.

But where feasible, the natural gas-powered Sterling trucks will certainly be an attractive option as fuel prices continue to rise. Sterling officials said fuel savings of about US\$6,000 per year can be achieved by opting for natural gas versions of their vehicles. In the US, tax incentives make natural gas even more appealing. Better yet, while diesel prices aren't expected to decrease anytime soon, there's already enough natural gas available in North America to meet the continent's needs for 120 years, said Richard Shearing, manager, product strategy with Sterling Trucks

"The timing is right," Shearing said at the ride-and-drive. "Over the last five years, there has been more legislation with alternative fuels than the last 30 years combined."

He noted that 4% of the vehicles in California already use alternatives fuels, adding "where California goes, others will follow."

Sterling already plans to deliver 400 LNG-powered trucks this year alone. The Sterling Set-Back 113 with LNG is powered by a Cummins Westport ISL G engine with ratings up to 320 hp. It's already EPA2010-compliant and a well-to-wheel analysis shows the technology produces 5-20% less greenhouse gas emissions than a 2010-complaint diesel, Shearing explained. An Allison automatic transmission is standard. LNG runs about \$3.15/gallon in California compared to diesel which is about \$5/gallon, but natural gas does have less energy content. The Sterling Set-Back 113 with natural gas has a range of about 275 miles per 119-gallon tank (the equivalent of a 65-gallon diesel tank). A second tank is optional.

"Natural gas technology has come a long way...these next generation NG powertrains have more power because less air is needed for combustion," Shearing said. □

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SECAUCUS, N.J. – A fully-capable personal computer would be a handy piece of equipment for any mobile field worker, especially those who are limited to handheld devices that offer one-dimensional capability. To that end, Panasonic has tried to fulfill that need with its Toughbook series of mobile personal computers. A handheld PC has not been available until now, according to the company.

Panasonic recently launched the Toughbook U1 – what it considers to be the first ultra-mobile PC (UMPC) with Windows XP and Vista operating systems, which gives field workers remote access to unlimited software versatility.

“I think it will have a pretty big impact on the trucking industry overall,” says Bill Presler, the senior business development manager for Panasonic.

“This new device is combining the functionality of many (other handheld) products, into something that literally goes into the palm of your hand. Just to boil it down to its bare essence, in simplified terms: we are giving you Windows in the palm of your hand.”

The UMPC has been designed to thrive in an environment as diverse as construction sites, mining operations, oil and gas refineries, manufacturing facilities, railroad yards, and storage warehouses, according to Panasonic.

“The form and functionality is a direct result of more than two years of feedback we solicited from an array of government and commercial organizations seeking to address the needs of a broad range of mobile users,” says Kyp Walls, director of product management for Panasonic.

“We’ve responded with a highly portable and durable device that offers completely integrated features such as an LCD touch screen, solid state drive, as well as an optional fingerprint scanner for user authentication and 1D and 2D barcode readers, and 2MP digital camera for data capture. The U1 offers full-shift battery life, a daylight readable screen and seamless connectivity with Wi-Fi, Bluetooth and 3G mobile broadband Internet connectivity all within an extremely rugged package for maximum reliability.”

Panasonic indicates that workers will now be able to connect to critical information and various applications on the job, improving organizational efficiency, increasing information accuracy, and enabling field-based decision-making. The U1 features a “thumb-friendly and backlit QWERTY” keyboard, that is intended to make data input fast and easy. As well the new UMPC offers an all-weather design that allows for use in inclement weather; a “fanless” system that reduces noise, weight and “eliminates points of failure.”

The Panasonic Toughbook U1 UMPC was released worldwide in August. The base U1 model is expected to be available at an estimated retail price of US\$2,499, from authorized Panasonic resellers and distributors. □

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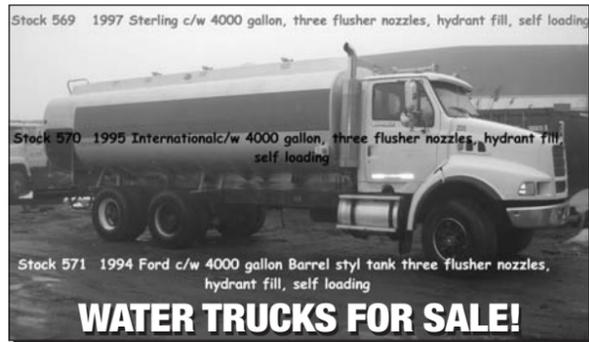
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PEOPLE

Steve Meagher has been named the new vice-president of sales for Peterson Manufacturing Company.

He succeeds Art Richardson, a well-known industry figure who is retiring after more than 41 years with the company.

No effective date has been announced for the move, as Meagher will be transitioning into his new role over the next several months. Richardson will stay on during this period to ensure a smooth transition of duties, the company announced.

"Steve brings a world of knowledge and experience to his new position," said Don Armacost Jr., Peterson's president and CEO. "With his dedication and proven management skills in all marketing and merchandising areas, we're confident that Steve will guide the Peterson sales team for continued great success."

Reimer Express Lines has awarded the 2008 Reimer Express Scholarship to **Monica Cella** of Westbank, B.C.

The Reimer Express scholarship has a value of \$5,000 annually for a maximum of four consecutive years, up to a total of \$20,000.

The scholarship is open to dependants of Reimer Express employees. Cella is the daughter of Claudio Cella, who is in his 25th year with Reimer Express and currently serves as the sales and operations supervisor at the Kelowna service centre.

Cella is the seventh recipient of the award and earned the scholarship through academic achievement, community involvement and participation in many extracurricular activities. Cella will attend the University of British Columbia in Kelowna this fall, seeking a bachelor of science degree.

She intends to pursue studies in ecology and microbiology and hopes to one day earn her master's and doctorate degrees in these fields. □

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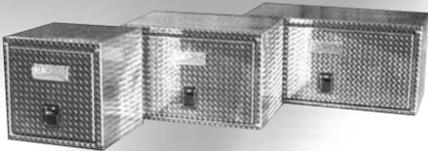


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Dalton and the Bandit

By Edo van Belkom

The story so far...

After a long day on the road, Mark turns in for the night. Since it's cold that evening, he turns on his auxiliary power unit to keep his cab warm. In the morning, he finds his fuel tanks empty and realizes he'd been robbed during the night. To comfort himself, Mark has a breakfast of chocolate chip pancakes and spends some time watching "stupid trucker" videos on YouTube, then he heads back out on the road.

The next night, Mark goes to bed without the assistance of his APU. Nevertheless he wakes up in the night to the sound of something humming nearby. He checks it out and discovers a huge, tattooed biker type pumping fuel from his tanks. Rather than confront the man, Mark captures his image on his cell phone, then makes some noise inside the cab to scare the bandit away.

Two days later Mark spots the bandit's truck at a stop. After ordering a bite to eat, Mark spends some time on a computer at the stop's Internet cafe sending off dozens of e-mails. Then, on his way out, he considers putting sugar in the bandit's tank, but decides on another tactic when he sees the truck stop also sells coloured diesel for use in agricultural vehicles. Once his dirty work is done, all that's left to do is wait...

Mark continued his journey west, but now he was constantly on the lookout for the bandit and his green and yellow Dobb and Ithaca trailer. Mark slowed as he neared each truck stop and rest station along the Trans-Canada, but by the end of the day there had been no sign of him. While Mark would have liked to have caught sight of the bandit, he took solace in the fact that his fuel was safe in his tanks because the man wasn't around. Sure Mark was down on fuel, but that was because he'd been putting miles under his wheels – the way it was supposed to be.

Of course, there was a chance the bandit had veered off and headed north to Edmonton or south across the border to Spokane or Butte. If that were the case, Mark could only hope that there was a border guard on either side of the line that was sharp enough to recognize the bandit for what he was and arrest him for what he'd done. Realistically though, the chances that the bandit would be crossing the border in the Midwest was slim. If the guy had driven this far west, odds were good he was heading for a port, like Vancouver, or Prince Rupert, or maybe even Seattle.

Still, north into Canada, south to the US, or into some international port, it didn't matter because the bandit wouldn't be getting very far. Not with such powerful tools as the Internet and e-mail

working against him.

All Mark had to do was be patient and the rest would take care of itself.

As it turned out Mark only had to wait one more day.

He was approaching the weigh stations outside Kamloops when he caught sight of the distinctive Dobb and Ithaca Trucking trailer parked in the lot past the scales.

The lights in front of Mark were green and he wasn't being called into the scales, but he decided to slow down and pull off the highway anyway, just to see what was going on.

Then, as he neared the scales Mark slowed down – almost to a crawl – just so he could drink in the wonderful sight. The bandit's green and blue rig was parked in the lot surrounded by what looked like a half-dozen smokies, mostly RCMP and maybe a municipal copper or two. The bandit himself was leaning up against his trailer, his hands cuffed behind his back while two officers talked to him. The officer on the left was holding the bandit's briefcase in one hand, and pulling out one of its hoses with the other. Meanwhile, the officer on the right was busy writing in his notebook, laughing and shaking his head with each stroke of his pen.

Mark rolled down the passenger side window and shouted, "That's what you get when you steal from Mark Dalton!"

The bandit and most of the smokies stopped what they were doing and looked over in Mark's direction, but not for long. At this distance they probably hadn't heard a word Mark had said and thought he was just some crazy trucker passing through.

But as satisfying as all this was, Mark hadn't had his fill.

That's because after he'd captured the footage of the bandit stealing fuel from his truck, Mark had downloaded the file onto YouTube and then given the clip subject words like "Stupid Trucker" "Thief" and "Bandit" which were sure to attract plenty of viewers from the trucking industry who logged onto YouTube on a regular basis.

But that wasn't all.

He had also spent time searching for

addresses and when he had them all, he'd sent the file to every law enforcement agency between Winnipeg and Vancouver, letting them know that the bandit was heading west through their jurisdiction. So in addition to the RCMP, all sorts of municipal police forces, and both border agencies had been warned to look out for a Dobb and Ithaca Trucking trailer with a tattooed biker type behind the wheel.

Then, once he was done with the Internet, Mark had gone one step further.

Through the scales now, Mark turned

tinct red dye that set it apart from the regular, road-going variety.

And so, as Mark inched past the scene, he could see one of the smokies standing over the bandit's tank scooping out a sample of the fuel inside it. A moment later, there it was...a cup of fuel emanating a distinct red glow as the officer held it up to the light of day.

Seeing the red fuel that had come out of his tank, the bandit was incredulous, stomping his feet and shaking his head while making wild gestures with his arms that said he had no idea how that fuel got into his tanks.

Which of course, was true.

Mark laughed out loud imaging the bandit's conversation with the officers. After all, what could the man say? "I never bought any coloured diesel... Someone else must have bought it and I stole it from them." That was a Catch-22 situation if there ever was one. And even if the bandit had known the coloured fuel was in his tank, he wouldn't have been able to do anything about it. The dye wasn't easy to get rid of, taking as many as five tankfuls of clean fuel to get rid of the taint. Sure Mark could have poured sugar into the man's tanks until his rig

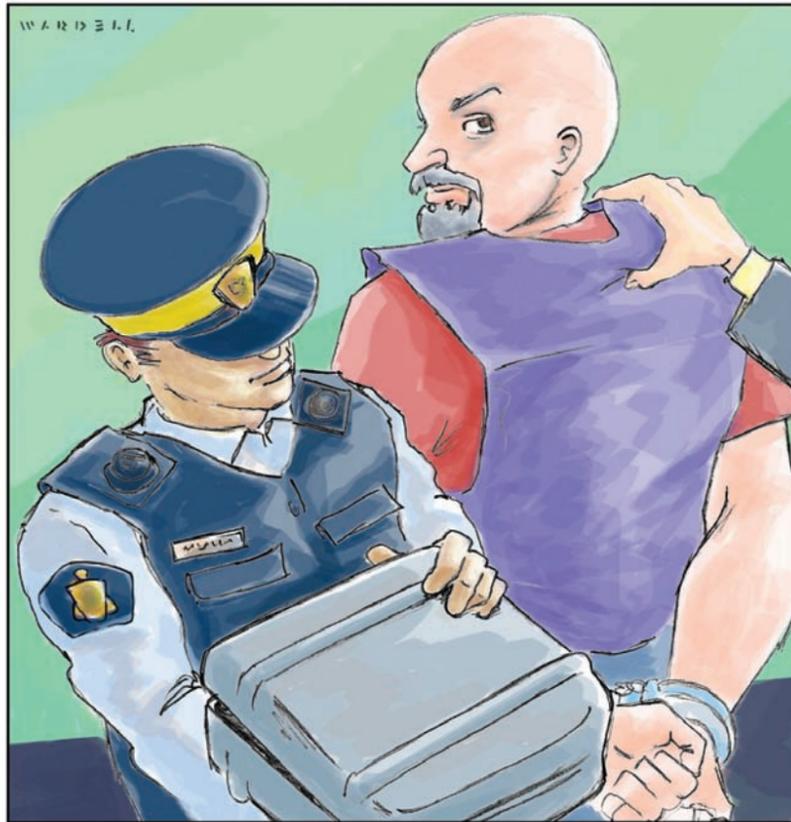
ground to a halt somewhere down the road, but that was boring. This way, the bandit was going to be charged with several counts of theft AND faced thousands of dollars in fines for using the wrong fuel.

That made it feel like real justice for Mark because it was just so ironic. The bandit, for all his thievery, had probably never stolen any coloured diesel in his life. Instead, it had been given to him, at no charge...a sort of gesture of goodwill from one trucker to another.

"No need to thank me!" Mark shouted through the open window after he'd completed his loop through the lot and was driving back through the scales once more. "My pleasure!"

With that, Mark rolled up his window and continued on his way west. □

- Mark Dalton returns next month in another exciting adventure.



The continuing adventures of Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator
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Congrats to our 2008 Owner/Operator of the Year

Congratulations Marty Gardner! Marty is this year's recipient of the Owner/Operator of the Year Award.

Presented during this year's edition of the Fergus Truck Show, we facilitate this award annually on behalf of Freightliner Canada, Markel Insurance and Goodyear Canada.

It has been our custom for the past 15 years to take the winner out for a nice dinner after the ceremony. This year was no different. After the formal proceedings, 14 of us made our way to a small Japanese restaurant located adjacent to our hotel. Two of our staff had recommended the food and with our only other option being chicken wings and nachos at the local Country and Western bar (nobody wanted the responsibility

Publisher's Comment

Rob Wilkins



of driving, so it had to be nearby) we decided it would be a wiser and healthier choice.

Don't get me wrong, chicken wings and nachos were my staple for many years but the majority ruled on this one.

Part of this dinner gang included two high-ranking executives from FedEx (Marty's carrier).

The vice-president had made the trip from its US headquarters located in Pennsylvania (a nice show of support) and the Canadian line-haul manager was

in attendance as well.

We entered the tiny restaurant and were ushered into one of two small dining areas. How small were they? I think the table in our room was supposed to hold a maximum of 10. At 14, it made for a "cozy" experience giving us the opportunity to really get to know each other.

Cozy quickly became crowded as the temperature hovered around 90 degrees. It seems we had picked the only restaurant in southern Ontario that didn't have A/C.

With third-degree burns to my melon from way too many UV rays during the day, I felt like I was in a Japanese steam bath. I'm sure my pulsating red and purple head gave off more light than the pot lights.

In order to sit at this table we had to take off our shoes (nice...especially after a long hot day in a dusty fairground) and crawl around on our hands and knees to get to our seats.

It certainly was unique. So was running out of beer...and glasses...and knives. It seemed that every time there was an order, the poor waitress had to report back that they didn't have it.

In the end, it really didn't matter. It turned out to be a great night. The food really was good and the company even better.

Winners of this award never cease to amaze me. They are the type of people we should all aspire to be and this year's recipient was no exception! □

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- Rob Wilkins is the publisher of Truck News and he can be reached at 416-510-5123.



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BOWMANVILLE, Ont. – With so many issues facing the trucking industry, many wonder how this year's Roadcheck Safety Blitz returned such successful results.

The Roadcheck Safety blitz is an annual event, with this year producing the best results and the fewest drivers put out-of-service in its 21-year history. During the first week of June, CVSA- and FMCSA-certified inspectors at 1,683 locations across North America randomly pulled over trucks and buses for a North American Standard Level 1 inspection. Of the 67,931 trucks and buses pulled over, an astounding 94.7% passed the evaluation, proving that today's trucks and drivers are safer than they have ever been.

But what is at the cause of this extreme commitment to safety? *Truck News* stopped by the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Bowmanville, Ont. to find out what is making the industry the safest it has ever been.



Truck Stop Question

Jared Lindzon
Special to Truck News



Dale Johnstone

Dale Johnstone, who drives for Barry Direct, argues that safety regulations are being enforced

What's behind the great results of Roadcheck 2008?

beyond necessity.

"There's a big emphasis on road safety right now, and it's normal for truck drivers to make sure their trucks are driving safely and are road-safe before they hit the highways," Johnstone said. "Everyone's safe before we go. Everyone has to do their road checks and their annual safety checks before they can even start their truck up so it's normal procedure. I think that trucks are even safer today than they need to be."

Richard Solomen, who works for



Richard Solomen

the Ministry of Correctional Services in Milton, Ont. argues that it just makes sense to keep your truck up to safety standards.

"Well, it gets pretty expensive to take a truck off the road, and with the time involved, it's better to invest the time making sure you have a safe truck so you don't have to go through all of that," Solomen explains.

"Trucks are absolutely safer today than they ever have been. I've noticed a lot less trucks off the side of the road, a lot less breakdowns and that type of thing."

Joe Dignard, who retired from Canadian Kenworth in 2002, offers his opinion based on his 42 years behind the wheel.

"They're forcing the drivers and the companies, not just the drivers, to bring their trucks up to standard, suspension-wise and fuel-wise, right down the line, brakes, tires, everything," Dignard said. "There are much fewer wheels coming off the trucks now. They're forcing them to maintain things a lot better than before. I also find the drivers are a little more conscious of what they're doing. I think drivers have to know more about their trucks now than ever before. They have to. They're forcing them to with the A/Z licence and all that, they've got to be more knowledgeable."



Bill Martinusen

Bill Martinusen, who drives for Roadex Services in Saskatoon, Sask., believes that road safety is the key to survival in this industry.

"There are less trucks on the road in general, there are less old trucks on the road, and because of enforcement, people are forced to keep their trucks in better shape," Martinusen said.

"I think it's just a cost benefit to have your truck in better shape than in poor shape. If your truck's sitting on the side of the road broke down, it doesn't make you any money. If your truck's in good shape you can keep running down the road and make money. It's that simple." □

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– Jared Lindzon is enrolled in media studies at the University of Western Ontario and will be working as a summer intern at Business Information Group. He can be reached at jlindzon@bizinfogroup.ca.

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Load restrictions on single tires vary by province. Consult the provincial departments of transportation for details.
*Comparing the 445/50R22.5 X One® XDA and the X One® XTA to the 275/80R22.5 XDA Energy and XT-1.

X One[®]

