

TRUCK NEWS

February 2011 Volume 31, Issue 2

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



Photo by Shawn Jeffords – Sun Media

Truck drivers offer shelter, warmth during blizzard

By James Menzies

SARNIA, Ont. – A major winter snowstorm hammered south-western Ontario in mid-December, stranding more than 300 motorists overnight in frigid, blustery conditions and leaving one truck driver dead.

Many professional drivers who were stuck in the storm opened their doors to other motorists, sharing the warmth and amenities of their truck cabs and living up to their reputations as Knights of the Road.

David Virgin, a 40-year driving veteran with D&J Transportation was running empty to Sarnia when he got caught in the storm near Exit 57 on Hwy. 402. Virgin, who often runs northern B.C., is no stranger to snow, but he said conditions deteriorated rapidly as visibility was reduced.

“We were three or four wide on a two-lane highway, going the same way,” he recalled. “Nobody could see nothing. It was bad.”

Soon, traffic came to a dead stop and the waiting began. As

the day dragged on, it became clear traffic wouldn't be moving any time soon. That's when Virgin heard a knock at the door. It was a young couple with a baby, who were travelling by car and were quickly running low on gas.

“I told them to shut the car off and to get in here,” Virgin said. The grateful young couple thanked him for his offer and said they'd try to stick it out in their car for the time being. But at around 8 p.m. when the pros-

Continued on page 16

Give us a break!

US trucking industry says HoS changes are too restrictive

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Proposed changes to the US hours-of-service rules announced Dec. 23 may have been less drastic than many in the industry had feared, but they still met with much criticism.

The rules, which may – or may not – reduce driving time to 10 hours per day (the FMCSA expressed its preference for the reduction, but said it would first consult with the public), add stipulations to the 34-hour restart and allow extensions to the 14-hour workday in some situations, sparked mixed reaction. But the American Trucking Associations (ATA), which had been sounding warnings of a potential loss of driving time, reacted strongly to the announcement.

“When viewed against trucking's sterling safety record,” said ATA president Bill Graves, “it's plain that the Obama Administration's willingness to break something that's not broken likely has everything to do with politics and little or nothing to do with highway safety or driver health.”

Highway safety records would seem to bear truth to that contention. Since the current hours-of-

Continued on page 10

Road Test: Navistar's newest Star

See pg. 40



Inside This Issue...

- **Road test:** Much has been made about International's EPA2010 solution. We got our hands on a production model unit and put it through its paces. Page 30
- **Snow removal solution:** We visit Erb Group in Baden, Ont. to check out a clever homemade solution for trailer top snow and ice removal. Page 60
- **Exec view:** Fred Zweep of Vedder Transport outlines the fleet's ambitious plan to transition to liquefied natural gas. Page 66
- **Eye for an eye:** When Mark Dalton learns of an innocent driver getting jumped, he decides to investigate. Page 68

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CLASS 8 TRUCK SALES TRENDS

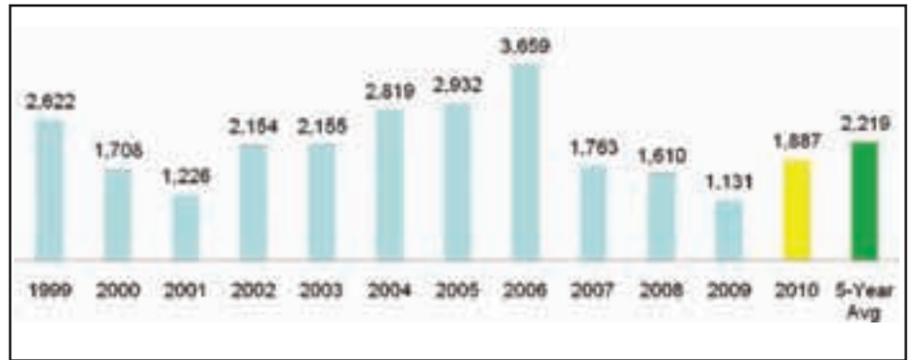
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There were 1,887 Class 8 trucks sold in November, making it one of the best months of the year when compared to the same month in previous years. It continued the pattern of considerable sales increases over dismal 2009. The figure was also higher than the October totals back in 2008, 2007, 2001 and 2000. It is perhaps indicative of truck buyers being optimistic of a real turnaround at some point in 2011. However, the sales total is still below the five-year average for Class 8 truck sales.

Monthly Class 8 Sales - Nov 10

OEM	This Month	Last Year
Freightliner	488	205
International	466	276
Kenworth	278	250
Mack	148	77
Peterbilt	194	165
Sterling	0	22
Volvo	206	74
Western Star	107	62
TOTALS	1887	1131

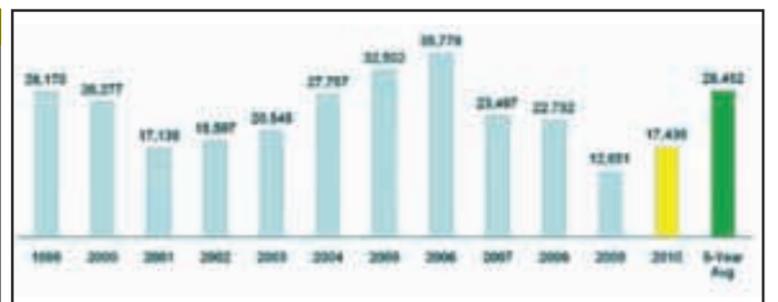
Historical Comparison - Nov 10 Sales



Class 8 Sales (YTD Nov 10) by Province and OEM

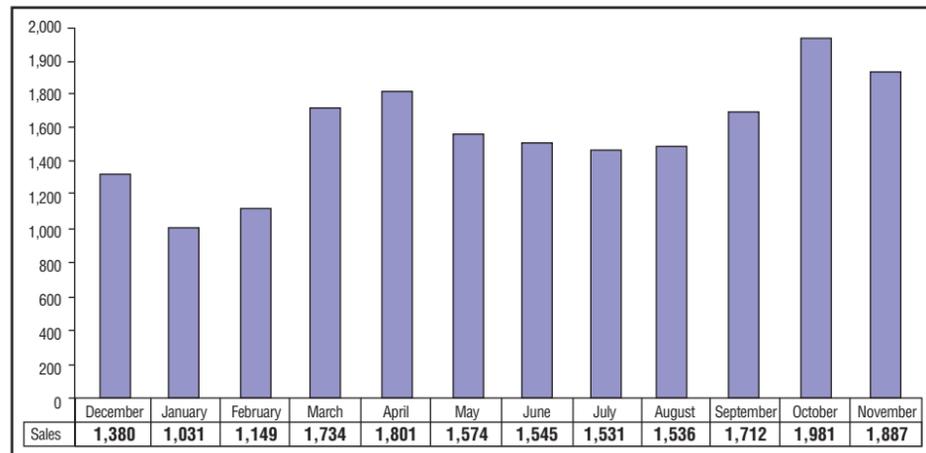
OEM	BC	ALTA	SASK	MAN	ONT	QUE	NB	NS	PEI	NF	CDA
Freightliner	227	330	175	204	1,869	601	279	154	9	20	3,868
Kenworth	325	1,040	151	177	684	860	115	0	0	0	3,352
Mack	63	79	95	51	550	156	47	20	0	1	1,062
International	218	496	73	178	1,876	1,031	181	108	11	94	4,266
Peterbilt	168	524	142	191	298	476	89	38	0	0	1,926
Sterling	23	42	15	2	8	43	0	0	0	0	133
Volvo	69	100	77	114	852	406	92	41	0	11	1,762
Western Star	165	307	45	26	204	167	56	81	1	15	1,067
TOTALS	1,258	2,918	773	943	6,341	3,740	859	442	21	141	17,436

Historical Comparison - YTD Nov 10



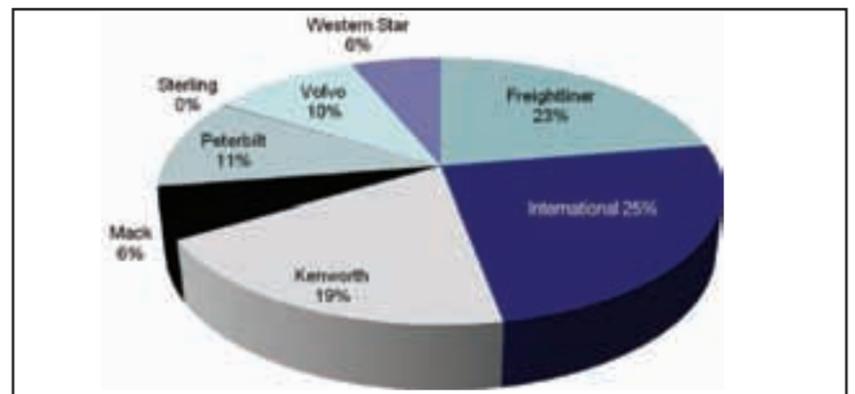
During the first 10 months of 2010, there were 17,436 trucks sold in the Canadian market. That's a considerable improvement over last year and, thanks to a strong November, slightly above the sales totals for 2001. In 2009, truck sales fell 44% from the previous year. So far, sales are up 38% from that. As Daimler North America's Martin Daum told the media during a briefing at the American Trucking Associations conference, "We would not be smiling if we didn't have 2009 to match against." Sales figures now are more than 11,000 units below the seven-year average.

12 - Month Sales Trends



After dropping for three consecutive months, Class 8 sales rebounded by ever so slight a margin in August with sales for the month coming in just a handful of units above the sales posted in July. September saw a much more robust increase and October came in with a similarly sized increase. November did drop slightly from October's totals but still came in as the second strongest month of 2010. Sixty percent of fleet owners and 27% of owner/operators responding to our annual Equipment Buying Trends Survey indicated they would be purchasing new iron this year.

Market Share Class 8 - Nov YTD



International, the only truck manufacturer not to adopt SCR engine technology, continues to drop in market share as the year draws to a close, but it remains the market share leader. Both Freightliner and Kenworth posted higher sales for August and September and Freightliner did so for October as well. International captured the market share crown in the Canadian Class 8 market in 2009, ending up with a commanding 29% share of the market. It remains the market leader this year with a 25% share. Kenworth has been the story of the year so far in 2010 and now enjoys a 19% market share, just behind second place Freightliner.

Source: Canadian Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Association

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(3) 2009 WABASH 53' DURAPLATE VANS

53', Hendrickson Air Ride, 22.5 Michelin Tires, Quik-Draw Slider Pins, Swing Doors, Aluminum Roof, Side Skylights, Side Rub Rails, Vents, Automatic Greasing Systems, 101" Inside Width. Excellent Condition.



(10) 2000 STOUGHTON 53' DRY VANS

53', Tandem Air Ride, 22.5 Tires, Swing Rear Doors, Silver Aluminum Sides, Logistic Post Interior, Aluminum Roof lined with plywood, Hardwood Scuff Liner, Certified or As Is.



(5) 2003 MANAC 48' QUAD AXLE VANS

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53', Tridem Air Ride Suspension, 11 R 22.5 Tires, Stainless Steel Front & Rear, Black Sides, Newer Rear Doors, Aluminum Duct Floor, Thermo King SB-III reefer unit.



(2) 2001 GREAT DANE 53' COMPOSITE VANS

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Trucking: An industry that solves its own problems

When people – outsiders, of course – ask me how it is I don't get bored covering the trucking industry, I'm never short for an answer. Of course, there's the usual rant about how the industry is constantly evolving, my fascination with the equipment that keeps the freight moving and the always-approachable people who make the industry hum. But in addition to all that, it's the resourcefulness of the people in this business that is one of the industry's most compelling and endearing traits.

You would be hard pressed to find another industry in which people work as hard for every dollar they make as they do in trucking. Margins are thin, competition is fierce and companies are constantly swimming upstream against some formidable forces, often regulatory. Yet when the people in this industry face a problem, they are remarkably adept at going out and solving it. Let me share a few examples:

Last year, Greer Hunt, owner of Hunt's Transport with terminals in Hamilton, Ont. and Mount Pearl, Nfld. grew tired of Marine Atlantic's unreliable ferry service. So he went out and leased a barge, on which he transports his trailers – 50 at a time – from Hamilton, along the St. Lawrence right through to Newfoundland. Marine Atlantic, who needs ya?

On page 60 of this issue, you can read about an ingenious solution to an



age-old problem: how to safely remove snow and ice from trailer roofs. This is an issue that's getting a lot of attention these days, with New Jersey doling out hefty fines to truckers who do not clear off their vehicles. The system is basically a catwalk fabricated within the walls of a decommissioned reef-er trailer. The driver pulls alongside, climbs the stairs and uses a specially designed tool (a piece of hockey board on the end of a stick) to remove snow and ice from the trailer top. I'm told Robert Transport has a very similar system at its terminal.

Another example covered in this issue is Vedder Transport's ambitious plan to build liquefied natural gas commercial cardlocks on its property in Abbotsford, B.C. and eventually along the route between the Lower Mainland and Alberta and then in other strategic locations within Alberta. Why? So the company can transition much of its fleet from diesel to natural gas, making it possibly the 'greenest' agricultural fleet in the world and shielding itself from wild and unpredictable diesel price fluctuations.

We all know there are advantages

to fueling trucks with LNG. It's more abundant than oil, it's produced right here in Canada and it has always been considerably less expensive than diesel. Furthermore, a Canadian company, Westport, has developed a robust, mature fuel system that is up to the rigors of heavy Class 8 applications (Vedder's LNG trucks will gross 140,000 lbs). All that's holding the industry back from the more widespread adoption of LNG is the cost of the vehicles (funding is available, in some instances) and the availability of the fuel.

Vedder struck up a deal with gas supplier Terasen to not only offset the higher purchase price of LNG tractors but has taken it a step further and partnered to develop a fueling infrastructure that will eventually extend right across Canada's two westernmost provinces.

In my interview with Vedder Transport president Fred Zweep, he said "There are a number of great fleets throughout Canada that have phenomenal entrepreneurs and interesting engineering minds

who at one time or another have taken a leap of faith from a trailer perspective or tractor perspective."

You, sir, are one of them. So I tip my hat to Fred, to Greer, to the folks at Erb and Robert and to every one of you who are not deterred by the many obstacles that are erected in your paths, but instead wake up each morning with a hunger to overcome them. You keep the wheels turning and the industry interesting to cover. □

– James Menzies can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6896 or by e-mail at jmenzies@trucknews.com. You can also follow him on Twitter at [Twitter.com/JamesMenzies](https://twitter.com/JamesMenzies).



Is FMCSA cooking the numbers?

If you haul into the US no doubt the firestorm of debate raging right now over the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration's (FMCSA) new proposed hours-of-service rules for trucking has captured your interest. And possibly left you scratching your head too.

You can read all about the proposed changes and the industry's reaction in this issue. What I'm concerned about are the motives behind what the stakeholders are saying.

The American Trucking Association has come out all guns blasting, basically accusing the FMCSA of cooking the numbers on fatigue-related truck crashes in making its case for stricter hours-of-service. Now, I have to tell you, over the years I've learned to take what the ATA says with a grain of salt. Previous warnings of the industry's demise because of some legislative change or other have proved rather exaggerated. And, let's be honest, the ATA's politics are distinctly



Republican flavoured (its president Bill Graves is a former Republican Governor). If you've attended any of ATA's national get-togethers, I think you would agree with me. The ATA is naturally disposed towards not agreeing with any legislation brought in by a Democratic government.

But that in itself doesn't mean that the ATA's criticism of the proposed hours-of-service rules should be dismissed as merely bipartisan bickering.

To place the need for such legislation in perspective, since the current hours-of-service rules were introduced in 2004, the trucking industry in the US has seen crash-related fatalities decline 33% from 2003 levels while

both fatality and injury crash rates have reached historic lows.

Is the FMCSA attempting to fix something that isn't broken, as the ATA charges, and cooking the numbers to make the situation look worse than it really is? The ATA has certainly made some accusations that I would love to see the FMCSA respond to.

The ATA says that in the legislative proposal's cost-benefit justification, the FMCSA inflated its estimation of the percentage of fatigue-related crashes in two ways. First it overstated the percentage of single-vehicle truck crashes (which are more likely to be fatigue-related) compared to multi-vehicle crashes. In fact, the FMCSA doubled the weight given to single-vehicle truck crashes in its large truck crash causation study.

Second, the ATA charges that FMCSA is treating any crash in which fatigue is listed as an "associated factor" as a fatigue-related crash. Yet that contradicts the FMCSA's own report to Congress, in which it stated "No judgement is made as to whether any factor is related to a particular crash,

just whether it was present."

Changing the way it looks at the data, the FMCSA has been able to nearly double the number of truck-involved crashes caused by fatigue. Back in 2008, the FMCSA believed about 7% of truck crashes involved fatigue (even though the best data on fatigue showed only a 2.2% relationship, according to the ATA.) Now, however, the FMCSA has upped that figure to 13% – hence making it look like there is a need to revisit hours-of-service regulations.

Both safety and efficiency must be taken into consideration when drafting hours-of-service legislation and, within reason, safety must trump efficiency. But when it does it must be based on solid science. Unless the FMCSA has solid answers to ATA's accusations, its numbers, and hence its motives, appear suspect. □

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Did you know?

Shipper freight volume projections and capacity concerns

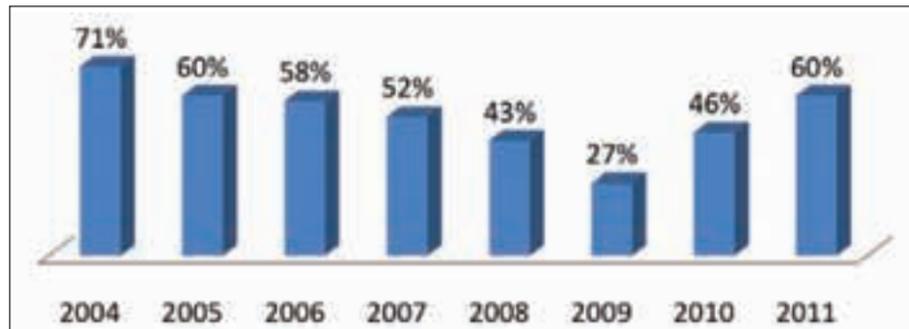
From 2004 to 2006, Canadian transportation experienced a capacity crunch that dramatically drove up pricing across virtually all modes. Subsequently, the eventual boosting of capacity and the dramatic drop in freight volumes during the recession created a capacity overhang that resulted in significant downward pressure on pricing. Carriers have shrunk their capacity over the past two years; are we about to experience another swing towards tighter capacity and

Shipper expectations for freight rates in 2011 by mode

	Increase	Decrease	Stay about the same
LTL Trucking	52%	4%	43%
TL Trucking	48%	6%	46%
Courier	47%	4%	50%
Rail	38%	4%	58%
Marine	47%	10%	42%
Air	49%	4%	47%
Intermodal	44%	3%	53%

higher pricing? Our annual *Transportation Buying Trends Survey*, conducted in partnership with CITA and CITT, shows that six in 10 shippers expect higher shipment volumes in 2011. Forty three percent of Canadian shippers expect to use more LTL

Annual comparison of shippers indicating shipment level increases to previous years



transportation services in 2011 while 48% expect to use more TL services and 47% expect to use more courier services. Their perception about available capacity is that it is getting close to balanced in the TL sector while LTL trucking and courier services are still considered to have a fair amount of excess capacity. More than 40%

of shippers expect their transportation rates to increase in 2011, according to our research, although the majority expect the increases to be kept under 4% (excluding surcharges). □



TRUCK NEWS

Question of the month

Should Canada reduce daily driving time?
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Mark Dalton in...

An eye for an eye Part 1



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departments



NEW PRODUCTS: Driving International's newest Star. **Pages 40-42**

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IN BRIEF

See, there's good reason to fill out those surveys we send you!

TORONTO, Ont. – Peter McAleer of Maple Leaf Foods has won an iPad, thanks to his participation in groundbreaking new research conducted by sister publication *Motortruck Fleet Executive* in partnership with the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada.

McAleer completed the first ever Private Fleet 'Best Practices' Research survey in 2010, the results of which will be available within the next few weeks.

As part of the study, private fleet managers shared their feedback on topics such as: fuel purchasing practices; evolving technologies; driver wages and benefits; and safety programs. The results will allow Canadian private fleet managers to compare their own operational practices with those of other private fleets and the findings will be available from the PMTC and *Motortruck Fleet Executive*. McAleer's name was drawn from among all the respondents. □

Cat offering free trip to truck launch in Vegas

PEORIA, Ill. – Caterpillar is holding an online sweepstakes as part of the launch of the Cat CT660, the first model in its new line of vocational trucks.

The grand prize winner will receive: two VIP access passes to attend the invitation-only unveiling event hosted by Caterpillar in Las Vegas at Conexpo/ConAgg on March 20; roundtrip airfare for two to Las Vegas to attend the VIP event; accommodations for five nights at a select Las Vegas hotel; five days of rental car use; \$750 and two tickets to attend Conexpo/ConAgg.

Entries can be submitted at www.DriveCat.com now through Feb. 22. The site also contains detailed information about the sweepstakes, including the official rules. The winning entry will be selected in a random drawing on Feb. 24. □

PM taps Prud'homme for advice on red tape

OTTAWA, Ont. – Prime Minister Stephen Harper has tapped former trucker Denis Prud'homme as one of six business leaders to help him find ways to reduce red tape.

Prud'homme, past president of the Saskatchewan Trucking Association and former owner of Prud'homme Trucking is now an organic farmer and still offers consulting in the

transport industry.

"Denis's extensive background and leadership in the truck transport sector will certainly offer a perspective on the amount of red tape facing our industry daily," said STA president, Glen Ertell. "Hopefully the Commission will be able to get a handle on the tangle of regulatory requirements facing business in Canada." □

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BORDER

US considers capping truck speeds at 68 mph

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The US National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) has said it will issue a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking that could pave the way for legislation that would mechanically cap truck speeds at 68 mph. Ontario and Quebec already require the mandatory use of speed limiters. The Owner-Operators Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA), which actively lobbied against the Canadian speed limiter laws, was quick to condemn the impending proposal.

“Speed limiting a truck at 68 mph, or at any other speed, will not improve highway safety,” said Todd Spencer, executive vice-president of the OOIDA. “All credible highway research shows that highways are safest when all vehicles travel at the same speed and that different speeds for cars and trucks actually increase the likelihood of accidents.”

OOIDA pointed to a University of Arkansas study that showed speed differentials create more dangerous interactions between cars and trucks and a study by the University of Michigan Transportation Research Institute that showed speed-limited trucks are overrepresented in rear-end fatalities involving large trucks. That study, OOIDA said, indicated only 4% of trucks in the study were speed-limited, yet they accounted for half of the rear-end fatalities involving trucks.

In a press release, OOIDA repeated its Canadian argument that a speed-limiter law is politically motivated and doesn't address the real issues about highway safety, such as the adequate training of drivers.

“Hiring the most experienced drivers and paying them professional wages isn't a priority for most large motor carriers and it's cheaper to just govern the engine,” Spencer said. “This isn't a safety measure NHTSA is proposing. It's a permission slip for big trucking companies to remain unaccountable.” □

Peace Bridge border gets new truck lane

FORT ERIE, Ont. – Improvements to the Peace Bridge Plaza, including construction of a new primary inspection lane and booth for Canada-bound commercial vehicles, have been completed.

The occasion was marked recently by local and national dignitaries.

“The Peace Bridge is the third busiest Canada-US commercial truck crossing and a key component for international trade with the United States,” said MP Rob Nicholson. “These improvements will enhance the efficiency and security of this important trade corridor, while contributing to Canada's long-term economic prosperity.”

In addition to the new commercial vehicle inspection lane and booth, the upgrades also included a designated Vehicle and Cargo Inspection System (VACIS) area. The \$2-million project was cost-shared between the feds and the Buffalo and Fort Erie Public Bridge Authority. □

CTA interested in US-Canada perimeter strategy scuttlebutt

OTTAWA, Ont. – The Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) is intrigued by reports the feds are working with the US to pursue a Canada-US security perimeter strategy.

Recently, media reports were circulating that pointed towards a perimeter security agreement being worked on with the US.

The CTA says it has been involved in discussions on the subject since 9/11 and is now hopeful there may be progress towards a perimeter option that focuses on the supply chain. The organization also says any perimeter strategy should continue to provide benefits to carriers that are involved in existing border security programs.

“CTA has supported in theory the perimeter strategy. The historical concern for the Alliance has been that a perimeter strategy implies harmonized laws and regulations as well as the outright – at least in some scenarios – elimination of the Canada-US border,” said CTA vice-president of Customs, Jennifer Fox.

“Since 9/11 a number of programs have been put in place at the Canada-US border to identify low-risk goods, carriers and drivers and we encourage alignment between the Canadian and US border programs. Given that the development and implementation investments made by governments and the supply chain amount to billions of dollars, we don't envision such programs disappearing over the short to medium term. As such CTA would like to see in any upcoming announcement regarding a perimeter strategy consideration of extended benefits for existing trade security participants.” □

Maine pilot project receives lifeline

BANGOR, Me. – As a pilot project in Maine allowing gross vehicle weights of 100,000 lbs on interstate highways was set to expire, US Senator Susan Collins announced she successfully convinced her colleagues on an Appropriations Committee to support a one year extension of the program. The project has been added to a federal funding bill at the eleventh hour, which is currently being drafted in the Senate, Collins announced.

“Changing the federal law to allow the heaviest trucks to stay on the federal interstates, rather than diverting them to secondary roads and downtowns has always been one of my top priorities in the Senate,” Collins said. The project was initially set to expire Dec. 17, despite the economic benefits the program has yielded. The Senate still needs to pass the bill and then it will be taken up by the House of Representatives. □

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BORDER

FMCSA favours shortening driving day to 10 hours

Continued from page 1

service rules were introduced in 2004, the trucking industry in the US has seen crash-related fatalities decline 33% from 2003 levels while both fatality and injury crash rates have reached historic lows.

Graves said the proposed rules will do nothing to improve highway safety, and are “overly complex, chock full of unnecessary restrictions on professional truck drivers and, at its core, would substantially reduce trucking’s productivity.”

The ATA warned the proposed changes “will be enormously expensive for trucking and the economy.” The association pointed out the FMCSA itself estimated, just two years ago, costs of over \$2.2 billion if the daily drive time was reduced by one hour and the restart provision was significantly changed. ATA also contended that just two years ago, FMCSA concluded “eliminating the eleventh hour is unlikely to be cost effective under any reasonable set of circumstances.”

“This proposal includes even more restrictions than what FMCSA previously considered,” said Graves.

While the ATA is naturally opposed to the reduction in daily allowable driving time, it also takes issue with the fact the new rules would reduce maximum daily working time by an hour (drivers will have to complete all work-related activities within 13 hours to allow for a one-hour break) and would revise the 34-hour restart, requiring two consecutive off-duty periods from midnight to 6 a.m.

In a strongly worded news release, the ATA accused the FMCSA of contradicting itself.

“Especially troubling is this Administration’s disregard for the negative safety impacts the proposed changes would have – impacts expressly recognized by FMCSA in the past,” the ATA said. “For example, FMCSA previously found that the eleventh hour of driving time does not increase driver weekly hours; is used for flexibility purposes; does not increase driver-fatigue risks; and that eliminating it would promote more aggressive driving (to meet time constraints) and lead to placing tens of thousands of less experienced drivers on the road who would pose greater crash risks. With respect to the 34-hour restart, FMCSA has correctly found in the past that requiring two nights of sleep would disrupt drivers’ circadian cycle and add to more daytime driving in congested periods, again increasing crashes. FMCSA’s reversal on these crucial matters is hard to explain in other than political terms.”

The ATA later accused the FMCSA of misrepresenting its own safety data to indicate fatigue is a factor in more truck crashes than it actually is.

The ATA officially unveiled a Web site it had prepared to counter some

of the arguments against the current HoS at www.SafeDriverHours.com.

In Canada, the Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA), said the rules were “not as bad as thought.” As far as the prospect of a 10-hour driving day is concerned, CTA chief David Bradley said “The science of fatigue suggests that it is not the amount of time a person works or drives that is the determinative factor for driver fatigue – it’s whether the driver is getting the appropriate opportunity for rest, and then uses those opportunities effectively.”

Bradley was pleased to see the reset provision remain, in some form, and was seemingly less apocalyptic about the proposed revisions than his American counterparts.

“Clearly, the FMCSA wants to try and ensure that a driver gets two consecutive night-time sleeps before he or she can reset their clock,” he reasoned. “That may create some logistical complexities; we’ll have to take a closer look.”

Bradley also noted that shippers will need to understand and appreciate the fact all work-related duties will have to be completed within 13 hours.

“We have fixed working windows now,” says Bradley. “They are difficult to manage and can put added pressures on drivers to drive when they might otherwise rest to make sure they get their work done. Shippers and consignees are going to have to pay much more attention to this to avoid delays for loading/unloading.”

He commended the FMCSA for introducing an option to extend a driver’s daily shift from 14 hours to 16 twice a week when issues such as loading/unloading delays occur.

“Clearly, FMCSA is sensitive to the fact that drivers can be delayed for reasons beyond their control and are attempting to address it,” he said.

Bradley said he has received no indication from regulators that Canada would move to match the new US rules.

“Things could change, but I just don’t sense that the provinces or Transport Canada want to open that can of worms again – at least not right now,” he said.

The Owner-Operator Independent Drivers Association (OOIDA) did not rush to judge the proposed changes.

“We have been anxiously awaiting the public release of the proposed new rules,” said OOIDA executive vice-president Todd Spencer. “We are carefully analyzing the proposal, but I can tell you that to make additional safety gains, the next hours-of-service rule must be more flexible to allow drivers to sleep when tired and to work when rested. The rules must encourage truck drivers to get off the road when they are tired and must not penalize them for doing so.”

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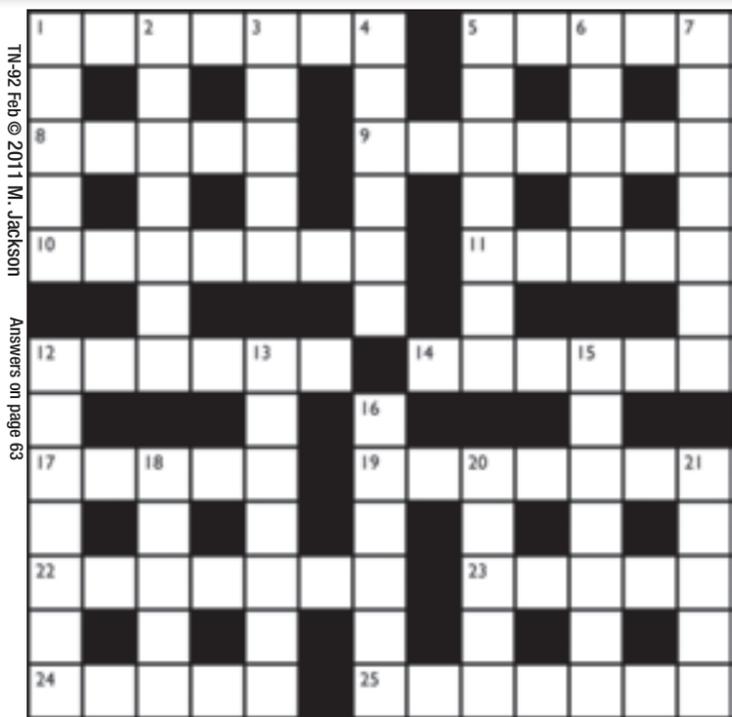
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6. Wheel-nut cover design
7. CB radios, slangily (3,4)
12. The P in PACCAR, originally
13. Goods in excess of Bill of Lading
15. Border agency, informally
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18. Ohio's "Rubber City"
20. Hippie van bumper-sticker word
21. Carhops' cargo, in days past

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espouse that hours-of-service regulations are not the be all and end all when it comes to truck safety on the highways.

“We want the motoring public to know that it’s not just about how long a truck driver spends behind the wheel that affects the safe-

ty of everyone on the highways,” said Spencer. “Many truck drivers spend between 30-40 hours per week waiting at loading docks. Everyone involved in transportation, from shippers to receivers, has a responsibility for its role in keeping highways safe. And we won’t

have optimum safety until others in the supply chain truly act responsibly.”

The FMCSA has posted the proposed rules online at www.fmcsa.dot.gov/hos. If the rules are put into place, violations will result in penalties of up to US\$2,750 for

each offense. Carriers that allow drivers to violate the rules will face fines of up to US\$11,000 for each offense. The FMCSA is now accepting public comments on the proposed changes. For information on how to file comments, visit www.SafeDriverHours.com. □



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Beware the WRECKHOUSE winds



Photo by Wayne Osmond

By James Menzies

CAPE RAY, Nfld. – Electronic warning signs, installed at both ends of a notorious stretch of Newfoundland highway in the Wreckhouse region of the province, seem to have done little to prevent truck rollovers.

Already this winter, several trucks have been blown onto their sides by the fierce Wreckhouse winds that whip down the Long Range Mountains through the Codroy Valley, reaching a velocity of over 150 km/h. Calvin Churchill, St. John's terminal manager for Armour Transport, says the region has had "more trucks flip over in the last eight to 10 weeks than we've had in a long time, because we've been getting long stretches of wind, which takes the trucks out of service and then the guys get anxious to move. A lot of guys want to put it in gear and go."

Truck rollovers have become so common in the area that Cape Ray resident Wayne Osmond says the local media rarely reports on them. The photography enthusiast, in fact, has taken to photographing flipped over transport trucks with the same zeal others might photograph, say, wildlife.

Osmond says the Wreckhouse winds blow trucks off the road every year – sometimes as many as

15 in a year – and his treks along the road following a windstorm often reveal three or four tractor-trailers with the dirty side up.

That's what prompted the province to invest \$100,000 in new electronic warning signs aimed at deterring truckers from making a run for it when the winds are high. But the signs are only effective when the warnings are heeded. In mid-December, a convoy of trucks ignored the warnings and set out along the notorious stretch of the Trans-Canada Hwy. When one blew over, the remaining truckers sought help from the Department of Transportation, which advised them to travel three wide with the heaviest truck on the windward side to provide protection from the wind.

This did not impress motorist Tiffany Ford, who was on the highway at the time and quite startled when she rounded a corner to see the trucks travelling in her direction three abreast and occupying all the available road space.

"If I'd been going the speed limit that day, I'd have run right into those trucks," she later told CBC television. "I was scared and very angry. I thought, 'what are they doing?' There should be repercussions for their actions."

The truckers were charged by the RCMP but later had their tickets rescinded when it was discovered they were acting on the advice of the Transport Department. Gord Peddle, operations manager for Atlantica Diversified Transportation Systems, cut his teeth trucking in Newfoundland and says using a loaded truck to shield an empty one from the wind is not that uncommon.

"The three trucks running side by side, that's not new to us," he says. "That's usually orchestrated by the officials, either the DoT or the RCMP. Typically, what they will do is close off the road on both ends and let trucks go through with the heavier one on the outside and the lighter one on the inside."

Although Peddle wondered how Ford got onto the highway if it was closed, he downplayed the risks of a head-on collision.

"You can't picture three trucks barreling down the road at 90 mph," he said. "They were probably coming through at 10 km/h."

So while Ford may well have been furious, the truckers who found themselves pattering down the Trans-Canada three wide may have been more concerned about facing the wrath of their bosses. Peddle's driving days are behind him, but as a co-owner of Atlantica, he foots the repair bills when a rig is overturned.

"The last one I paid for, the guy made a judgment call," Peddle recalls of a Wreckhouse rollover that occurred two years ago. "Unfortunately, not everyone makes perfect judgment calls."

Atlantica's policy is to let drivers decide whether or not the winds are too high to safely travel through the Wreckhouse region.



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“My guys have strict instructions that if you go there and they’re making an advisory or you’re not comfortable – don’t go. Pull out,” Peddle says. He says even with the advisories, the winds can be unpredictable.

“Once that gust funnels through that mountain, it is very unpredictable,” he explains. “It’s not a steady wind and it will change

pretty fast. You could be going through there and the wind may be measured at 50 km/h, which is not too bad, so you could leave the Chignick Lodge and by the time you move five kilometres, the winds can be 100 km/h.”

Armour Transport has a similar policy. The company trusts its drivers to make the right call and will never force a driver to make

a run for it against their better judgment.

“The driver is in control,” Churchill says. “If he’s there three or four days, we’ll send them to a motel if they can get to a motel. At Armour, it’s strictly up to the driver and we will never tell the driver to go. We may tell them to stop, but we’ll never tell them to go until they decide it’s safe.”

The well-placed Chignick Lodge burnt down several years ago, but the property is still used as a staging area for trucks and trailers. Churchill remembers getting a call from a local shop owner one morning, informing him one of his trailers was found nose down in the ditch in front of the lodge. After making some

Continued on page 14

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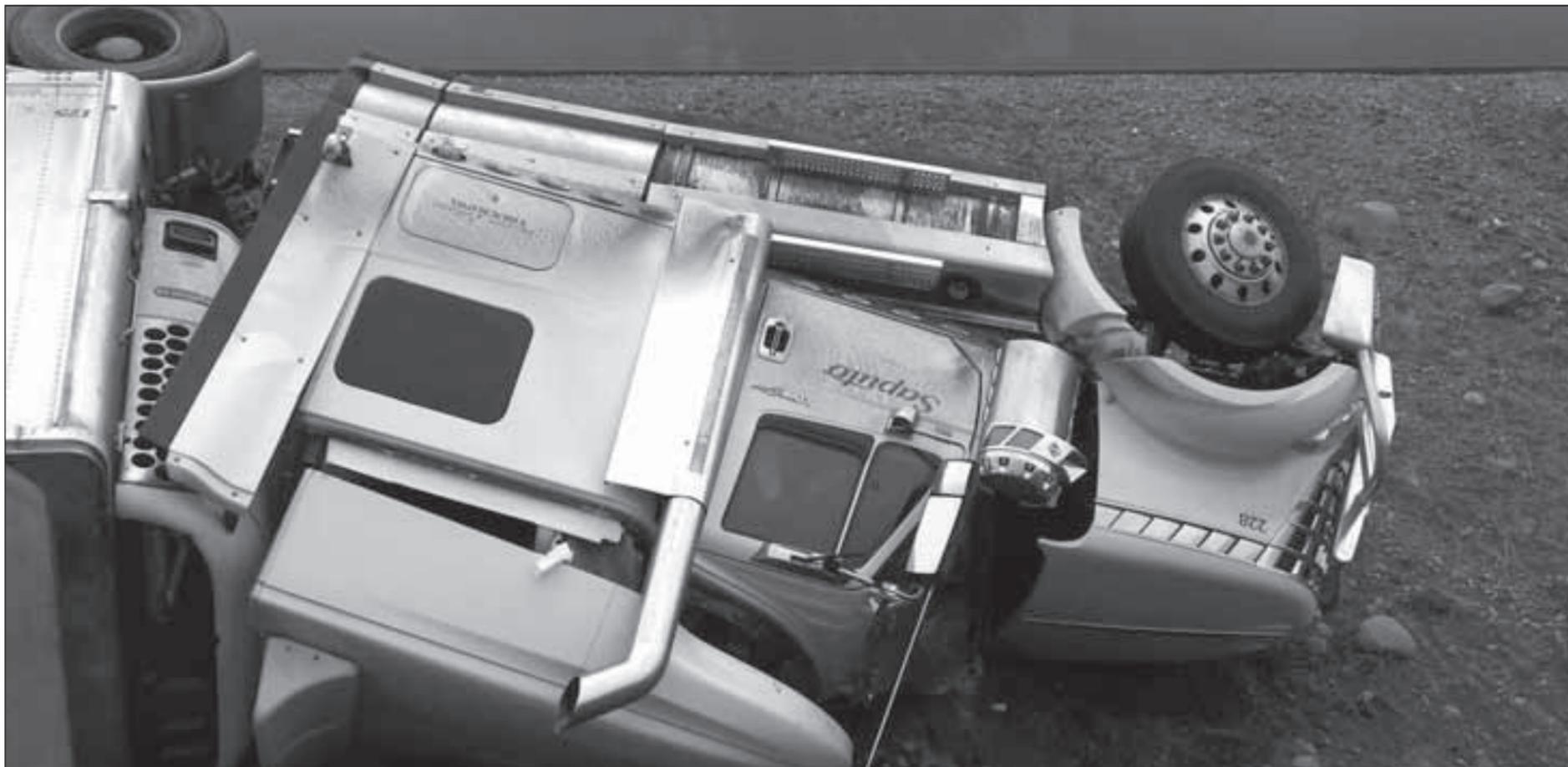
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EAST



FALLEN STAR: This International LoneStar was barely broken in when the Wreckhouse winds got the better of it.

Photo by Wayne Osmond

Photographer collects images of Wreckhouse rollovers

Continued from page 13
calls, Churchill learned his driver dropped the trailer 400 feet from the road, near the motel, but it skidded along the parking lot overnight as the Wreckhouse winds howled.

“Some people in the Chignick

Lodge saw the trailer blowing across the parking lot all night long,” he recalled. “They thought it was going to go skate right across the Trans-Canada Highway, but the landing gear went down into a hole and it tipped forward. That’s a scary thought

when you can park 400 feet back (from the road) and it skids along like that.”

Who’s to blame?

Osmond, who grew up in the region, developed a knack for photographing truck rollovers initially

out of frustration. He would see tractor-trailers flipped onto their sides and grow angry over the recklessness and the fact the costs ultimately are passed onto the consumer. He began posting his pictures online in hopes of raising awareness about both the dangers and the carelessness of some truckers. Osmond’s blog Tablemountains.blogspot.com contains an embarrassing photo collection of Wreckhouse victims. If you like trucks, seeing finely polished rigs reduced to crumpled heaps of metal is hard to look at. Osmond says he has noticed certain similarities between each of the rollovers.

“It’s the same procedure every time,” he says. “Usually it’s the empty ones that blow over. The window is kicked out on the passenger side.”

The winds can flare up at any time of the year, but Osmond says the most treacherous winds always blow from the southeast. He says many of the trucks he’s photographed are plated from outside Newfoundland, and believes drivers who aren’t familiar with the region take too many chances. His advice to visitors? “Don’t run the gauntlet,” he warns. And ask the locals for advice. “Just ask somebody locally when you get off the (Marine Atlantic) boat. The local people – we know.” Environment Canada also posts wind advisories for the region on its Web site.

Churchill agrees truckers from other parts of Canada and the US don’t give the Wreckhouse winds the respect they deserve.

“We’ve had guys up from the States with their chests blown out saying ‘We’re used to driving in the wind, it’s windy in Texas,’ and they think it’s impossible for the wind to blow trucks over,” he says. “Little do they know that not too long ago, before Newfoundland lost the railway, it was blowing 200,000-lb rail cars off the tracks.”

But while Osmond and Churchill

Continued on page 35

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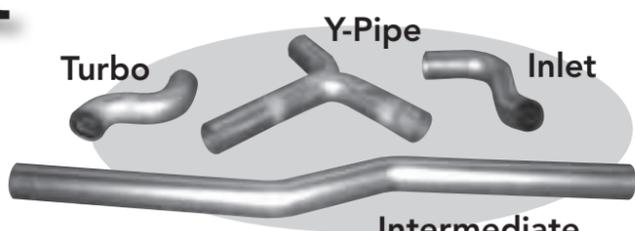
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QUEBEC

Government giving greenbacks for greenhouse gas reductions

Quebec has \$27 million for trucking companies

By Carroll McCormick
QUEBEC CITY, Que. – Determined to reduce greenhouse gases (GHG), Quebec is busy putting its money where its mouth is: \$27 million dollars is up for grabs for Quebec-registered trucking companies that install approved equipment that reduces fuel consumption.

Here's the deal: if a trucking company will invest in such equipment, Transports Quebec will pay one-third of the cost. By the end of November 2010, over 700 companies had submitted 720 requests for subsidies, 500 of those requests had been assessed and 441 files, worth \$1.8 million in subsidies, had been approved. Only 40 requests have been refused.

Transport Gilmyr, located 80 kilometres east of Quebec City, got a \$55,545 subsidy to help purchase 95 on-board computers. They allow Gilmyr to compare drivers and examine the driving behaviour of the best ones.

The computers collect data on variables such as idling time and fuel consumption, idling time in traffic, miles per gallon, acceleration and braking, progressive shifting and excessive speed. "We closely follow the behaviour of our drivers. With the information from the computers we have pushed our drivers more and more to lower consumption; for example, reduce idling," explains Claude Boucher, director general, Gilmyr.

Gilmyr is also using the computers to determine whether drivers are taking the shortest routes. The data collected from the drivers with the best techniques are also guiding Gilmyr in educating drivers to good and bad driving practices that affect fuel consumption.

Transports Quebec is committed to spending the whole pot, according to Benoit Cayouette, director of the freight motor carrier division.

"The objective is to give the money to guys and reduce greenhouse gases. All my staff have instructions to help carriers fill out the form. Put the toll-free number in your article."

(Okay, Benoit. Dial 877-635-8239. See also Programmes d'aide/Assistance programs on the Transport Quebec Web site).

The program is called "Programme d'aide gouvernementale à l'amélioration de l'efficacité énergétique dans le transport des marchandises" (PEETM), or Government Assistance Program for Improving Energy Efficiency in Freight Transportation. It is part of a massive plan Quebec developed to reduce GHG to 6% below 1990 levels, or by 14.6 megatonnes by 2012.

"The private sector wants to save fuel and the government wants to cut GHG," Cayouette says.

PEETM was launched back in June 2009, so clearly, trucking companies need to shake a leg and get with the program. Cayouette insists that it is an easy-terms process designed to make it easy for companies to qualify. Restrictions are few: companies have to be registered in Quebec and they must have a satisfactory rating with the Societe de l'assurance automobile du Quebec.

PEETM has a helpful list of approved equipment, manufacturers and models, all of which has been demonstrated to lower fuel burn by at least 3%. The first category is on-board computers: 27 models from 19 manufacturers. "We were hesitant about helping carriers with electronic on-board recorders, but we decided that if we didn't help, no-one would," Cayouette says.

The second category is heating systems: 33 models from 12 manufacturers. Category three is auxiliary power units: 22-plus models from 14 manufacturers. The last category is trailer skirts, with six approved manufacturers.

So there's plenty of pretty colours to choose from and all the products have been blessed by FPInnovations for their fuel-saving ability. Before PEETM was launched, Transports Quebec contracted FPInnovations to test about 100 products; Transports Quebec recognizes Energotest as a third-party tester.

Transports Quebec is also cau-



FREE MONEY: If you're based in Quebec, on-board computers, APUs, heaters and aerodynamic gear qualify for generous subsidies.

Photo by Carroll McCormick

tiously keen to help roll more diesel-electric hybrids onto the roads, but first it wants to find out whether these expensive creatures are worth the stiff premium. So, PEETM gave FPInnovations two \$50,000 grants: The first is to compare the fuel consumption of a hybrid delivery truck with its diesel equivalent. The second is to uncover the most effective driver techniques so that owners can take full advantage of hybrid technology. Transports Quebec expects FPInnovations to deliver its first report this February.

In return for subsidies, carriers

have to help Transports Quebec learn whether the equipment is working for them.

"Transports Quebec will take samples from some carriers," Cayouette explains. "We have some numbers, such as hours per week of reduced idling due to the installation of a heater. If a carrier refuses to give us the numbers, we can take back the subsidy. Carriers have to keep data; for example trailer mileage. They just have to tell us how many kilometres the trailer did last year. We will use Energotest data to get an estimate of fuel savings." □



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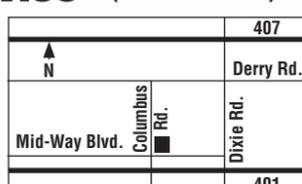
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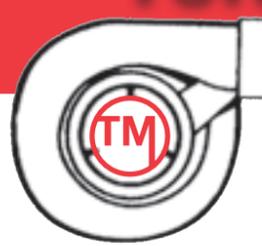
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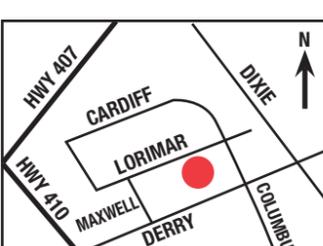
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ONTARIO

Selfless acts of generosity emerge following Ontario blizzard

Continued from page 1

pect of a night in their vehicle had sunk in, they returned to his truck and took him up on his earlier offer. Virgin offered the young family his bunk, closed the curtains and slept in the front seat.

“That’s all I could do,” he said. “I think anybody would’ve done the same thing.”

The wind rocked the truck all night long, Virgin recalled, but when the sun came up and the skies cleared, houses became visible not far from the highway.

“It was so windy (the day before), you couldn’t see. We thought we were in the country,” Virgin said.

While stranded motorists waited for the roads to be re-opened, nearby residents invited them in for coffee and a warm breakfast. That’s when Virgin parted ways

‘We don’t rule Mother Nature, so you just have to take what comes.’

Bill Justice

with the young family, but he got a phone call from the woman’s mother later in the day to thank him for his hospitality.

“They were very grateful,” he said. “Her mother called me the next day and thanked me, so that was very nice.”

Bill Justice was also driving west along Hwy. 402 at Exit 34 on Monday, Dec. 13 when “everything came to a complete halt.”

About an hour later, an Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officer came by on a snowmobile and told him the roads were closed and

that they couldn’t keep up with all the accident calls.

A driver for Cintas, the uniform company, came by and said he was running low on gas and asked if he could join Justice in his cab to warm up. Justice had about 140 gallons of fuel on-board as well as an APU that burns just one litre an hour, so he was in no danger of running out of fuel. Justice invited the driver in and was happy to have the company.

Asked how they passed the time, Justice said “Just shooting the breeze, making sure the peo-

ple around us were okay. We had some seniors in front of us, but as long as they were moving around we knew they were alright.”

The next morning, the daylight revealed snow drifts three to four feet deep all around the vehicles. Soon a helicopter landed near the truck to rescue some women and children.

While Virgin didn’t see any emergency response officials during his ordeal, police and fire crews were able to make it to the vehicles around Justice’s truck with much-needed sandwiches and bottles of water.

With the women and children evacuated, Justice sat tight until school buses were able to reach the scene via the eastbound lanes, which had finally been plowed. Justice was taken to a warming centre in nearby Wyoming, Ont. where he joined another 190 or so drivers who’d also been stranded overnight.

Not one to sit around, Justice soon found himself volunteering to make food runs to the local grocery store and helping others. Justice spent Tuesday night at the Legion and was finally allowed to return to his truck Wednesday morning.

“I’ve seen worse snowstorms,” he told *Truck News*. “The problem was there were so many accidents, the OPP couldn’t keep up with all of them, so they closed down all the roads. It was blowing pretty good though. The stuff that was already on the ground was blowing good and you couldn’t see very far.”

But despite the unplanned two-day delay, Justice wasn’t upset.

“It was interesting,” he said. “I met some good people. There’s nothing you can do. We don’t rule Mother Nature, so you just have to take what comes.”

As truck drivers were helping out their snowed-in brethren, the goodwill went both ways.

A truck driver with the YouTube profile Giljagsir posted a stunning video that showed just how bad the blowing snow was. He posted the video from his truck and wrote: “In snowstorm since Monday Dec. 13, 2010 (almost 30 hours). Still there. We are so thankful for the corner home owner who took all truck drivers to their own home and gave everyone breakfast.” In another comment, he wrote that a local homeowner invited about 14 truck drivers in for breakfast.

You can find the video, which has been viewed more than 326,000 times, by doing a YouTube search for Giljagsir.

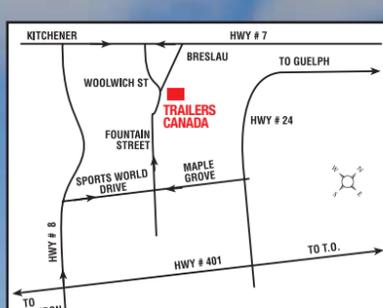
But while most of the professional drivers caught in the blizzard passed the time by shooting videos, helping others, meeting new friends and just making the best of the experience, the storm did prove deadly.

According to local media reports, Damion Pietrzyk, 52 years of age and also a truck driver, died when he left his rig after a day with little food and water, slipped on the ice and hit his head. □



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ONTARIO

No ordinary beer run



READY TO ROLL: The beer vat convoy sits on Trafalgar Rd., south of the 401 on Jan. 5.

Photos by Adam Ledlow

By James Menzies
TORONTO, Ont. – It was a colossal move, by any standards. And due to some savvy marketing, both Challenger Motor Freight and Molson-Coors enjoyed a lot of attention as six massive beer vats were transported by road from the Port of Hamilton to Molson's brewery in the north end of Toronto this month.

The six beer vats, each measuring 150-ft. in length and towering 27-ft. off the ground – on their sides, no less – were each large enough to contain 1.4 million bottles of beer. Purchased from a manufacturer in Germany, Molson-Coors called upon Challenger to handle the Canadian portion of the trip with the goal of ramping up beer production in time for patio season. Because of the height of the vats, Challenger required utility crews to remove power lines as the slow-moving convoy wormed its way from Hamilton to Toronto over the course of 10 nights. All the work was done between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m., to avoid traffic and minimize disruptions, explained Frank DeVries, energy transportation manager for Challenger.

The move took twice as long as originally planned, due to a snow day that kept the trucks idle and some frigid weather that made work difficult for utility crews. When asked what posed the greatest difficulty during the move, DeVries said "I would say the weather."

However, despite the delays, DeVries rated the move a perfect 10 when the vats arrived at their destination.

"I don't have any disappointments, let's put it that way," he told *Truck News*. And neither did Molson-Coors, which enjoyed an incredible amount of fanfare over its investment. Challenger publicized the move via a special Web site and a Twitter account was created to keep the public up to date on the convoy's whereabouts. By the end of the move on Jan. 17, the Twitter account @ChallengerMF had more than 1,500 followers. The move also caught the attention of the mainstream media, with daily updates published in major newspapers and on local TV news channels.

The six oversized beer vats were hauled aboard hydraulic platform trailers with as many as 16 axles, DeVries said. Even when parked, the convoy attracted curious onlookers who were fascinated by the sheer size of the vats and the specialized equipment used to transport them.

Looking back on the project, just hours after the vats were delivered to the brewery, a tired DeVries said "It was a pretty uneventful trip. It did take longer than anyone had anticipated but it all arrived safely and with no damage. That's the most important thing."

He also had some kind words for the utility workers, police officers, drivers, steermen and everyone else who pitched in. "Everybody really pulled together well," he said. □



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WEST

Relics of trucking industry's past may soon be homeless

By Jim Bray

PORT COQUITLAM, B.C. – If you've built it, there's a historical society that just might want to come – especially if you make them an offer

they can't refuse.

The group, the Teamsters Freight Museum & Archives Society, is hoping a white knight will ride to their rescue and provide a new home for their vin-

tage displays of transportation memorabilia. The reason, according to curator Norm Lynch, is that the owners of the Port Coquitlam warehouse the museum called home for several years

decided they wanted the rent paid in cash only, instead of partially in cash and partially via a charitable tax receipt as had been the status quo. That change, and the additional burden of the Harmonized Sales Tax, means the society can no longer afford to keep its doors open.



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“That HST kills us,” says Lynch, who’s been involved in the museum since before it was a museum. The extra taxes and the additional cash “would amount to doubling the dollar output, about another \$500 a month,” he says.

All of which means the organization is scrambling to find another empty warehouse – in vain, as of this writing.

The society was originally scheduled to be out of the Port Coquitlam location by the end of October 2010, but managed to get some extra wiggle room to allow it to find a new place.

“We have an extension for January and probably February,” Lynch says. They’re looking at quite a few places, including one in Pitt Meadows and another in Delta, but so far nothing has been agreed upon.

Port Alberni has also been mentioned as a potential landing site for the museum, and there have indeed been talks between the society and its opposite number in Port Alberni, the Alberni District Museum and Historical Society. The Vancouver Island group is the driving force behind the Alberni Valley Museum, where old trucks, logging equipment and trains are repaired and put on display. And while that might seem like a good match, Port Alberni Mayor Ken McRae doesn’t think anything will come of the discussions.

“The thing is, we don’t have any money,” McRae says. “We’re like a lot of organizations that way. Besides, there’s no way we could take the whole exhibit and put it in our place; we’re crammed up as it is because they actually work on the equipment there – they’re always restoring something.”

Lynch hopes the entire museum collection, including the 20 trucks they have currently as well as the other displays and related items, can be relocated intact.

“We’re trying to keep the whole thing together and keep it as the Teamster’s Museum,” he says, “but I don’t know for sure what’s going to happen.”

Teamsters Joint Council 36 president Don McGill hopes the publicity that the museum’s plight has generated can help them dig up new digs.

“Otherwise,” he says, “we’ll be selling equipment.”

The 7,200 sq.-ft. of space the Teamsters Museum is vacating not only contains classic trucks, it also has display areas for antique tools and truck models, as well as meeting space and photographs. McGill says that, to him, the tools are just as important as the trucks.

“You don’t even see these things around anymore,” he says. “Most people would throw them in a scrap heap because they don’t even recognize them.”

Curator Lynch, who retired from driving in 1992 after a stroke, says the museum was founded after the then-president of Teamsters Local 31 asked him if he could find a 1936 model year vehicle for the Local’s 60th anniversary celebration.

“I asked him how soon he needed it and he said in a couple of weeks,” Lynch recalls. “I said it was going to take a little while to find such a truck, so he asked if I could find some memorabilia. We set up something really beautiful with all kinds pictures – it was really well done.”

The rest, no pun intended, was his-

tory. Lynch says the display impressed the heck out of the Teamsters boss, “So I suggested we set up a museum with lots of photos and a few trucks and they told me to see what I could come up with.”

And come up with trucks he did. Lynch learned of a collection that was stored in Chilliwack and which had once belonged to an earlier museum in Cloverdale.

“The Cloverdale museum was quite a bit bigger,” he says, “and when it was shut down many of the units there were sold.” But not all. “We had some meetings (with the government) in Victoria,” he says, “and finally they said they’d loan us the trucks for two years and see what we’d do with them – if they were happy then they’d transfer them over to us.”

The trucks were rolled out of Chilliwack in the spring of 1997, Lynch says, at which time they went to a location in Vancouver. “And after two years the government decided we’d done a fantastic job and they signed them over to us for a dollar. We’ve added trucks since then, of course.”

Some of the trucks on display were once owned by Bob King, a trucking magnate who Lynch says virtually controlled the industry in Vancouver until the late 1950s, at which time he locked his trucks away in a warehouse after a quarrel with the Teamsters. “It was a metal warehouse full of condensation and they were getting in bad shape,” he remembers.

Other trucks came from a variety of places. Lynch recounts the story of finding one in Elko, B.C., on the Southern Trans-Canada Highway a short distance west of Fernie.

“A man had a 1935 Maple Leaf parked in his yard and we decided to go and get it,” he says. “It had been parked so long that two trees had grown up behind and the only way we could get it out was to cut those trees down.”

Lynch says the donor’s neighbours arrived with chain saws and cut down the trees, after which the truck was towed out and brought back to the museum to be restored. “If you saw it today you wouldn’t believe it,” he says proudly. The oldest truck in the collection is a 1914 FWD; the newest is a 1951 three-quarter tonne, five window Chevrolet pick-up that belonged to B.C. Tel.

“It was redone for the B.C. Centennial,” Lynch says, “and after that they didn’t know what to do with it so they phoned us up and asked if we were interested.”

Lynch is also proud of the miniature trucks in the collection. “One of them we had to put a mirror under because it was so well done underneath, with the transmission and driveline.”

That particular truck, he says, is currently back with the person who donated it “Because we didn’t want it to get lost or broken in the move. He said he’d bring it back if we get settled somewhere again.”

They also have many metal replicas of trucks that no longer exist, including some Consolidated Freightways and Canadian Freightways units that were donated. All of these displays have been packed away, however, pending the move to new quarters. “All the showcases are empty and we’re ready to move,” Lynch says. “We just need a place to go.” □

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CANADA

CTHRC introduces new online labour information database for fleets

OTTAWA, Ont. – The Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (CTHRC) has introduced a new section on its Web site that provides data on economic indicators and labour trends for truck fleets.

The new Labour Information Highway Demand Data Tools incorporate data and projections spanning from 1987 to 2016.

Users of the online tools can access the information with drop-down menus, generating results that can be sorted nationally, regionally, provincially or by occupation.

“This is the first time in the history of the Canadian trucking industry that all of this data has been available through a single source,” says Sandy Lewis, the CTHRC’s manager of projects.

The Labour Information Highway – Basic tool, which can be accessed for free, provides Gross

Domestic Product (GDP) data and the labour demand for nine key occupations, including truck drivers; truck-transport mechanics; truck-trailer technicians; parts technicians; shunt drivers; cargo workers; dispatchers; freight claims, safety and loss prevention specialists; and foremen, supervisors and managers.

The Labour Information Highway – Advanced tool offers users access to a much wider array of key economic indicators.

In addition to the GDP and labour demands for the nine key occupations, the advanced tool incorporates unemployment rates, details about shipments, weights, distances travelled, revenue, truck numbers, vehicle-kilometres travelled, the Consumer Price Index and population figures.

Its labour data includes the size of the labour force, participation

rate, incomes, wages and salaries. Details about the industry’s profitability and productivity include the weight, distance and revenue per shipment, in addition to overall revenue and tonne-kilometres travelled.

Cross-border information incorporates the Canada-US exchange rate, export and import data, Canadian trucks returning from the US, the total number of trucks entering Canada, and US trucks entering Canada.

Annual subscriptions to this version of the tool are available at a cost of \$350 per trucking company, association or provincial sector council, the CTHRC has announced.

Officials say all of these results can be used to generate graphs and populate spreadsheets with figures for further analysis. To access both tools, visit www.cthrc.com. □

CTA says report supports its calls for LNG incentives

OTTAWA, Ont. – The Canadian Trucking Alliance (CTA) says its belief that the trucking industry needs tax incentives to fully benefit from liquefied natural gas (LNG) has been supported by a new government report.

Released by the federal Department of Natural Resources, *Natural Gas Use in Transportation Deployment Roadmap*, suggests that without significant government incentives, it will be difficult for trucking companies to absorb the cost of the higher purchase price of LNG-powered trucks, which can cost twice as much as traditional trucks.

Meanwhile, the fueling network is still in an embryonic state and needs further development.

“LNG has the potential to serve as an important niche in the trucking marketplace,” said CTA chief David Bradley.

“It won’t be suitable for every type of operation given the limitations on its distribution and the costs of purchasing LNG tractors. It will be of most interest to carriers with dedicated return-to-destination routes. But as part of a broad, comprehensive strategy for reducing GHG emissions from trucking, it definitely has a role to play. It is certainly of more potential benefit than biodiesel, for example.”

The report surmised that: “Trucking fleets tend to be conservative in adopting new technology, and natural gas (particularly LNG) is unfamiliar and unavailable to most fleets. The uncertainty about fuel availability and prices, combined with the high incremental vehicle prices, limited marketing and lack of financial incentives for natural gas trucks, explains the low level of uptake. The potential for market growth for natural gas vehicles will not be realized unless the attitudes, knowledge and key concerns of end-users are understood and addressed.”

The report urged government to provide measures to help carriers offset the costs of buying and operating LNG-fueled trucks – a point that the trucking industry agrees with.

“We’d much rather that the federal government focused on these real solutions than trying to push things like biodiesel down the industry’s throat,” said Bradley.

You can download the report from the Office of Energy Efficiency’s Web site by visiting <http://oee.nrcan.gc.ca>.

Or, for a printed copy of the report, you can e-mail alternativfuels@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca. □

– See pg. 66 for an interview with a fleet that has made a major commitment to LNG.

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CANADA

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – The casualness with which employees are hired and fired in this business is enough to make a contract lawyer cringe. Even those carriers that do have employment agreements often have flaws in them that make them unenforceable, or as the saying goes, not worth the paper they're written on.

Carole McAfee Wallace of WeirFoulds LLP estimates about 60% of employment agreements are improperly written and may not stand up in court.

"I had a client who used a lawyer to draft an employment agreement, so all is good, but then this client decided to change some terms in the employment agreement," Wallace recalled during a Driving for Profit seminar that covered legal issues. "That employment relationship ended and the employee sued, and when I looked at the employment agreement the changes that the client had made without legal advice had rendered the contract unenforceable."

In this instance, the change made by the client offered less than the minimum required by the Employment Standards Act, rendering the contract null and void, Wallace said.

"Here was a client who had done the right thing and got a lawyer involved in drafting the agreement, but then took it upon himself to change the terms of the agreement," Wallace recalled with some frustration.

Changing an agreement is just

It's in the contract

...or is it?

one pitfall to avoid when managing employee relations. An equally egregious mistake is to simply not have an employment agreement in the first place.

"Companies, the middle management, really avoid paper at all costs," said Miriam Eisenberg, who also presented on the panel. "You can't avoid paper...try and protect yourself with drivers and everybody else. I am talking about the people that work the computers and the people that do dispatch – everybody should have, at the minimum, a one-page contract."

So what exactly should go into an employment agreement? Among the most important elements are details surrounding future termination.

For a federally regulated company, they must at least be as generous as those laid out by the Canada Labour Code while in Ontario, provincially regulated companies must meet the minimum requirements found in the Employment Standards Act.

"It is always open to an employ-

er to offer better than the minimum standards," Wallace said. "An employer can never contract out of those minimum standards, so whatever your agreement says, you have to make sure that it never offers less than what the legislation provides."

The employment agreement should also detail: the position and responsibilities; compensation; a policy handbook (which should be attached); confidentiality (to ensure the employee does not share sensitive information about your company); and in some cases, vacation entitlement. The agreement should also refer to the governing law (ie. the law of Ontario) and should also include an invitation for the employee to have the agreement reviewed by their legal advisor.

"You want to give the employee the opportunity to seek his or her independent advice on signing this contract," Wallace suggested. "Whether they seek that legal advice or not is not your problem."

Drawing up an owner/operator

'Everybody should have, at the minimum, a one-page contract.'

Miriam Eisenberg

agreement is even dicier, since it's important not to blur the lines between independent contractor and employee.

"The overriding theme to owner/operator contracts is that you are working with these folks as independent contractors and you want that contract to be supportive of an independent contractor relationship and not to start to look more like an employment relationship," Wallace pointed out. "Because once it starts to look like an employment relationship, you may then be on the hook for things like WSIB and termination pay at the end of the relationship."

It's also important to note the contract must be spelled out in "clear language" that an owner/operator would be expected to understand, not legal mumble jumble. Wallace said she's involved in one case where an owner/operator was not fluent in English and is now arguing he didn't understand the contract very well when he signed it.

"If there are any ambiguities in a contract, one of the golden rules of contract interpretation is any ambiguity is usually interpreted in favour of the party who did not draft it," Wallace warned.

In addition to employees and owner/operators, there's a third category of driver, which Eisenberg refers to as "grey employees." These include drivers – either incorporated or otherwise – who are paid on a percentage of gross revenue basis.

"A lot of these (drivers) go from company to company and they say 'I don't want deductions, I don't want to be an employee and I'm not a contractor because I don't own my own equipment. I just want to be paid gross.' That is honky dory as long as everybody's happy. What happens is, if there is ever a problem, you've got a really big problem."

Eisenberg warned that this type of employment arrangement is on Canada Revenue Agency's radar in a big way.

"What ends up happening is it is a very major burden if you get in trouble," she said. "If you take nothing else out of here today, please, if you have any 'grey' employees, convert them. Either make them a true employee or at least incorporate them."

Companies that don't have an employment agreement should create one, the Driving for Profit panelists agreed. Wallace said applying its terms to existing employees after their hiring "may cause problems with enforceability," however it will at least be useful for new hires going forward.

While in some cases a contract may be as simple as a single page, Wallace had this advice for companies that are drafting an agreement: "This is going to sound self-serving, but you need to talk to a lawyer. I have drafted some that are 14 pages long and I appreciate that that is not realistic or even necessary in a lot of circumstances. But you want to have something in writing because, in the absence of something that fits the requirements of a formal agreement, it is unenforceable. You are a business person and you need to protect your business and not leave yourself open to potential costs and lawsuits when the relationship comes to an unhappy end." □

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OVER THE ROAD

Working for a good carrier makes it easier to overcome life's challenges

Carrier has important role to play in helping drivers achieve work-life balance

As the new year gets underway, we drivers are faced with a host of issues to cope with. The list gets longer with each passing year. Hours-of-service, CSA (Compliance, Safety, Accountability), electronic on-board recorders, speed limiters, driver shortages, distracted driving, the economy, engine emissions, and so on.

It is only recently that quality of life issues are being raised and recognized as having merit. Why is it that a driver's mental and physical well-being is not the number one priority in an industry where a company's success hinges on the performance of each individual driver?

I believe there are a large number of organizations in our industry that only pay lip service to the health and safety of the driver. I continue to be shocked by the lack of concern that is shown for the mental and emotional health of individual drivers.

You don't need to spend your life on the road to be aware of this. Spend some time surfing the Internet and you can read any number of trucking blogs written by drivers detailing their experiences. There are a number of bottom feeders out there that prey primarily on the new and the inexperienced by making grandiose promises of training, compensation, and home time.

I'd like to believe that the majority of drivers share a positive and productive relationship with their carrier, as I do with mine; a relationship that is win/win. Here is an example of the treatment I receive from my carrier:

By the time this column is published, my father's 89th birthday will be just around the corner. Sadly, his health is failing and it became very important that I pay a visit over the Christmas and New Year break.

Until recently I did open board work and was in Vancouver quite frequently, which enabled me to visit my Dad.

This past fall I started to do a weekly run between southwestern Ontario and Winnipeg, which provides me with more home time but keeps me away from the west coast and my Dad. As soon as I told the good folks in dispatch about my situation, a trip was arranged for me to Vancouver and I was told to "take whatever time you need with your Dad."

Now many of you reading this may think that's nothing special, but in fact for me, and for the majority of drivers, this level of empathy and understanding has a huge positive impact on your morale and state of mind.

I believe the way in which we are treated and the way we treat others is the path to our long-term happiness, peace of mind, ease of mind and success. The carriers we work for are one of the primary gateways to that path.

The freedom and independence we experience as truck drivers



Over the Road

AL GOODHALL

does not come without costs. Most of us have travelled down the road in isolation thinking about a loved one sick at home, a missed birthday, a family reunion you're not sure you will make it to, an event you planned and now will miss due to a breakdown, poor weather, cancelled load or dock delay.

Truck driving separates you from your support network of family and friends while at the same time providing you with countless hours to think about

that separation.

Many truck drivers deal with incredibly strong feelings of angst as a result. It's a job hazard we all must cope with but it can be eased by the actions of the carrier we choose to work for.

As I finish off this column I am sitting in Golden, B.C. I arrived at three o'clock this morning in the snow. It's now almost one in the afternoon, it's still snowing and the ride today will be challenging, that's just fine with me. There are new hours-of-service rules pending south of the border and that's just fine with me.

There is a speed limiter on my truck and I'm still learning how to manage my electronic on-board recorder and that's fine with me too. There are a host of issues to clutter my life throwing up roadblocks at every turn and that's fine too.

I was able to spend the last five days with the man that has shaped me, inspired me, trusted me, taught me, and loved me over the course of my whole life. I know that I may not see my Dad again in this world but he will live in my heart and mind for the rest of my life. I'm happy, content and at ease.

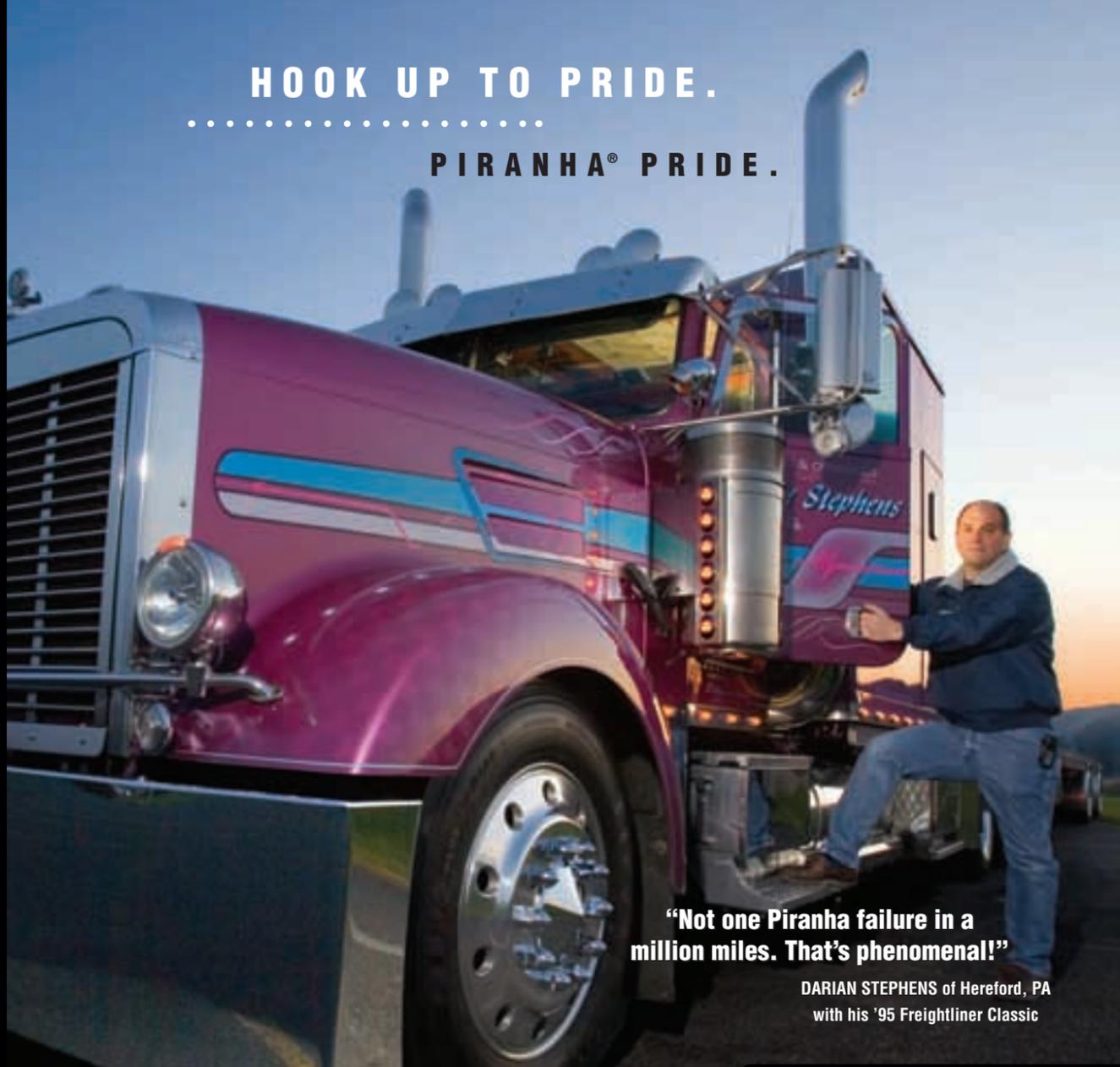
The bottom line is I can count on my carrier, I trust them, and they feel the same way about me. That leaves the rest of those big trucking issues just fluff to deal with in the course of a normal day. □

- Al Goodhall has been a professional long-haul driver since 1998. He shares his experiences via his 'Over the Road' blog at <http://truckingacrosscanada.blogspot.com>. You can also follow him on Twitter at [Twitter.com/AlGoodhall](https://twitter.com/AlGoodhall).

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TAX TALK

Will Canada Pension Plan changes affect your retirement plans?

New Canada Pension Plan (CPP) rules took effect on Jan. 1, kicking off a series of graduated changes over the next five years that may make you think twice about drawing your government pension before you turn 65.

Most people in Canada between the ages of 18 and 70 who earn more than \$3,500 a year contribute to CPP (except in Quebec, where the Quebec Pension Plan provides benefits). Like an insurance plan, CPP is designed to provide a monthly retirement or disability benefit or, if you die, a survivor benefit to your spouse and children.

In retirement, the amount you receive depends on how much you've earned, how many contributions you've made, and your age when you stop working. The normal age for receiving a CPP retirement pension is 65. If you



Tax Talk

SCOTT TAYLOR

start your CPP retirement pension then, you'll get the full pension amount you're eligible to receive. For 2011, the maximum amount is \$934.17 per month.

You can, however, start drawing a retirement pension as early as 60 (at a discount) or wait until as late as 70 (and get a premium). Among the recent changes to CPP, two of the biggest involve these discount and premium rates.

Taking CPP early

You can begin to draw your CPP retirement pension at age 60. Starting in 2012, however, your pension amount will decrease by a

larger percentage for every month you take it before age 65.

Currently, your CPP retirement pension is reduced by 0.5% for each month before age 65 that you begin receiving it. This means that, if you started receiving your CPP pension at 60, your pension amount is 30% less than it would have been if you had waited to take it at 65.

From 2012 to 2016, the early pension reduction will gradually change from 0.5% to 0.6% per month. So by 2016, if you start receiving your CPP pension at the age of 60, your pension amount will be 36% less than it would have been if you had taken it at 65.

Retiring later

Starting this year, after age 65 your monthly CPP retirement pension amount will increase by a larger percentage for every month you

delay taking CPP, from 0.5% per month (6% per year) to 0.7% per month (8.4% per year) by 2013. At that point, if you start receiving your CPP pension at the age of 70, your pension amount will be 42% more than it would have been if you had taken it at 65.

A cash flow hit?

If you're age 65 to 70 and work while drawing your CPP retirement pension, you can choose to make CPP contributions if you want to. If you decide to contribute, your employer will have to do as well.

Starting in 2012, if you're under 65 and work while receiving your pension, you and your employer must make CPP contributions.

This will be a big cash flow hit for some. Many people choose to start their CPP at 60 even though they plan to continue working. This way they have an increased income from CPP but also less money going out as they no longer have to contribute.

Say you're in this magic bracket, 60 to 65 years old, collecting your CPP retirement pension, still working as an owner/operator, and making \$40,000 with your truck. Starting in 2012, you'll have to pay \$3,613.50 a year into CPP that you're not paying now. Ouch!

Welcome change

One new rule makes it easier for Canadians to – what's that phrase Ottawa is using? – “transition to retirement.”

Starting in 2012, you can begin receiving your CPP retirement pension before age 65 without any work interruption.

Today, if you want to take your pension early, you have to either stop working or significantly reduce your earnings for at least two months.

CPP isn't intended to supplement your earnings from a regular job. It's a retirement pension. But these days, the rule just encourages people to skirt it.

The age when you start to take your CPP retirement pension depends on your savings, debt, job satisfaction, health, family, the lifestyle you lead, and other factors. Ask your accountant or financial advisor about the new CPP rules and how they'll affect you personally, especially if you're counting on tapping into your government pension before you turn 65.

Visit servicecanada.gc.ca to view or print a copy of your CPP statement. It will show the total amount of your CPP contributions by year and your pensionable earnings on which they are based. It will also estimate what your pension or benefit would be if you were eligible to receive it now. □

– 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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ROAD TEST

Taking it to the Maxx

One of the much-anticipated EPA2010 International MaxxForce engines fell into our hands. So we put it through its paces.

TORONTO, Ont. – By chance, I landed a week-long city run with a leased International ProStar+ paired with a production model EPA2010-compliant MaxxForce 13 engine.

I've been anxious to try this engine because there's quite a bit of buzz about it but as far as I know, no-one has reviewed the production version that's dialled down to 0.5 g NOx.

This is Navistar's answer to the 2010 EPA regulations, and if you don't want to be slinging around buckets of diesel exhaust fluid (DEF), the MaxxForce might be the only alternative to going SCR like the rest of the herd.

Navistar calls this a big bore engine, and with 430 horses it was overqualified to make half a dozen pick-ups per day, and zip up and down the 427 and the 410 a bunch of times. The motor provides up to 1,700 lb.-ft. torque and was impressively mated with an Eaton Fuller 13-speed transmission. I was able to give it a decent workout as I had it for almost 45 hours and five duty cycles.

The truck was just broken in with 4,000 kms on the odometer – very quick off the line with lots of surplus power. I swung through the lower gears as fast as I could depress the accelerator, skipping a few.

The high end split shifting was just for fun as I didn't need the extra gears for these loads, and the engine never sputtered even under moderate stress. Response was very quick in high range, too. The ProStar sat on 3.55 rear ends. At 100 km/h, the MaxxForce 13 was churning at 1,350 rpm (1,300@60 mph).

I paid close attention to the regeneration cycle after the first day. The yellow engine warning light came on a couple of times but the performance was never compromised.

Apparently the motor needed a regeneration but took care of the problem by itself those two times.

From then on I noticed that the motor liked to regen when first started every day.

It would idle for a couple of minutes at 700 rpm and then jump up to around 1,300 and burn off the accumulated soot for 10-15 minutes, gradually reducing the revs as it purged itself.

Since I work for a fast-paced courier company, I'm always nervous some other driver will take my empty.

So I'd kick down the throttle and start working if I couldn't wait. The motor would finish the process the next time I left it idling.

Compared to the Cummins ISX engine with EGR, the MaxxForce enhanced EGR system regenerated more frequently. Both the



On-Road Editor

HARRY RUDOLFS

engine and tractor are amazingly quiet so it was difficult to notice when the MaxxForce was in regen mode on the highway. The fan would usually come on and it sounded a little like a tap running.

The truck was at its best running along the highway, but getting stuck in traffic snarls would sometimes cause the yellow engine light to come on and the motor welcomed a regeneration at the next stop. The idle shut-off was set at two minutes, so if it idled longer than that I knew it was doing a burn-off.

The MaxxForce attempts to provide an "in-cylinder" solution to tightening EPA2010 standards which mandate engine emissions of no more than 0.2 g/bhp-hr of nitrogen oxide and almost zero particulate discharge.

At present, the engine emits 0.5 grams of NOx but Navistar is allowed to sell the engines using banked emissions credits from its medium- and light-duty vehicles. The manufacturer is in the process of certifying a more advanced EGR model which it expects to meet the 0.2 benchmark before its credits are used up.

Navistar developed this engine in partnership with MAN in Germany.

The first MaxxForces were made overseas but the North American models are being produced at Navistar's engine plant in Huntsville, Alabama.

The CGI block itself is a technological breakthrough comprised of compacted graphite and iron molecules cast together by a special process. The block is said to be lighter, stronger and more durable.

Since Navistar dropped the SCR option, they no longer use Cummins power and currently don't have a 15-litre engine in their repertoire. However, a new 15-litre model is being developed in partnership with Caterpillar that should be in production in early 2011, and available in early to mid-2011.

Overall, the MaxxForce 13 was more than enough engine to handle the job. With all the bugs worked out, perhaps Navistar has got its enhanced EGR system right after all.



A-PLUS: The International ProStar+ is noticeably better than its predecessor. The drafty doors are history and the BackCycler seat helps contribute to a comfortable ride.

Meanwhile, Navistar would like 15-litre customers to consider the 13-litre as an alternative (it's actually 12.4 litres).

In my opinion, the manufacturer has achieved terrific performance out of this smaller displacement engine.

Key to its good performance are two turbochargers mounted in series Bosche injectors that supply five rather than three squirts per combustion cycle.

The ProStar+ itself is worth a mention, as it comes with many operator-friendly options and appears to be roomier than previous year models.

My ride was a 6x4 day cab with a full aero package.

Besides the great sight lines and tight turning radius, the drafty doors are now gone and the entire unit is much quieter and better insulated.

My truck came with the National 2000 series seat which offers air cushion support every which way. It includes a BackCycler function that allows you to try a range of different settings while you're driving. When you find the right setting, you can lock it in.

There's no reason to climb around under the engine cowl because all fluids and dipsticks are accessible at ground level.

The tilt-away bumper is a nice feature that lets you get right close to the engine compartment for maintenance issues, and also makes changing the front tire easier.

The day cab model has the batteries mounted on the right side directly above the air tanks.

This leaves the driver's side free for a set of stairs and a cutaway section that provides easy access to air line hook-ups.

The ProStar/MaxxForce combination came with a subtle and quiet three-speed engine brake that was a little too subtle for my



LOTS OF POWER: The 13-litre MaxxForce was probably overpowered for lightweight local runs.

liking.

It was most effective at grabbing around 1,500 rpm but was really not great at holding the truck back. I used it a few times but never felt confident with it.

This truck was well set up for a regional driver staying hooked to the same trailer all day.

But for city driving, with half a dozen drop and pulls, a little thing like the air line sleeves mounted too high on the back of the cab cause a lot of needless climbing and repetitive exertion.

The MaxxForce 13 would be right at home in a regional truck pulling some weight up and down the road.

It was probably over-powered for the light loads I was carrying, and most likely the Maxx 11 would be enough motor for this kind of city P&D work.

That said, the unit seemed to be very good on fuel consumption.

I never took any mileage measurements but my visits to the fuel pump were infrequent and light.

The EGR system never let me down, but it would be nice to have something on the dash telling the driver when it's regenerating.

Possibly, the frequent appearance of the engine light on the leased vehicle was a minor glitch that just needed a reset.

But leasers should be aware that most customers are reluctant to take a vehicle out of service for a day and take it up to the dealer for a minor adjustment, especially during peak periods.

Overall, the MaxxForce 13 was more than enough engine to handle the job. With all the bugs worked out, perhaps Navistar has got its enhanced EGR system right after all. □

INDUSTRY

Driver shortage will be reflected in coming capacity crunch

The demographics of the trucking industry, combined with concerns over compensation of company drivers and owner/operators as well as lifestyle issues are creating the conditions for a severe shortage of professional truck drivers in North America.

Indeed, even with the modest growth in economic activity that we have seen over the past few quarters, the shortage is already being felt in certain markets and capacity is tightening.

With forecasts mainly pointing towards further growth in 2011, this trend is expected to broaden and deepen across the industry.

There is no doubt that the trucking industry in both Canada and the United States is facing a long-term and chronic driver shortage. The demographics of the industry on their own, guarantee this.

While all industries have concerns over a shortage of qualified workers and will be increasing their efforts to attract and retain workers, the situation in trucking is particularly challenging.

The Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council has done some useful research in this area and I borrow from it heavily. The demographic factors underlying the looming driver shortage are: a rapidly aging workforce; competition for labour from other sectors which compete with trucking for workers (notably construction); fewer people with the educational profile of most of today's truck drivers; and the gender imbalance that exists in the driver pool.

The largest single category of active truck drivers in Canada – 35% of the current driver population – is currently between the age of 45 to 54 years old. Almost a quarter of the drivers are more than 55 years old and 60% are over 45 years of age. This is an older demographic than virtually all other occupations. Moreover, the trucking industry's share of younger workers (20-24 years old) is much lower than all other occupations. It doesn't take a rocket scientist to see where this is heading.

The occupations from which the trucking industry previously used to recruit many of its drivers is also drying up. Hiring "boys off the farm," or from the military, long ago deteriorated.

Today, construction is the major sector that truck drivers had previously worked in – mainly as heavy equipment operators, tradesmen, helpers and labourers. However, the construction industry is also short of workers and will be competing with trucking and other sectors for future labour. And, when the construction sector is strong, many drivers leave and go back to construction for better paying jobs and more reasonable, steady hours.

When it comes to the educational attainment of truck drivers, the single largest group of current drivers (almost 40%) have less than or some high school. There will be fewer of these workers in the future as young people increasingly seek a higher level of



Industry Issues

DAVID BRADLEY

education in order to get better paying jobs.

While more women are driving a truck now than ever before, they still only make up less than 4% of the total number of drivers. Many of those would be in team operations, often with their spouses.

The moral of the story is that the industry is not going to be able to rely upon its traditional sources of labour in the future.

Tomorrow's truck drivers are going to have to be better trained and have achieved higher educational levels in order to cope with all the new technologies being in-

stalled on trucks to improve productivity, efficiency and safety. They will not be the same as their parents or grandparents in terms of expectations for job satisfaction, compensation and lifestyle.

Immigration is not a ready source of new drivers, even though there appears to be many experienced foreign drivers who would love to come to Canada.

One of the key problems is that truck driving is not considered a skilled occupation by immigration officials and it is hard to make the case that it is a skilled occupation with the kind of average education levels and pay scales that people in the job have.

Women are a growing part of the overall labour force and therefore should be an important non-traditional source of truck drivers. However, lifestyle and other issues

pose major hurdles for attracting women to the job.

The market will need to be much more accommodating than it has been so far in recognizing the challenges and enabling the necessary adjustments.

For most trucking companies this is the single largest challenge they and the industry face. It will not be resolved easily. At the end of the day, those carriers that have the drivers will win.

But, shippers need to take note as well.

There is likely to be a competition for trucking capacity the likes of which have not been experienced at any time before. □

– David Bradley is president of the Ontario Trucking Association and chief executive officer of the Canadian Trucking Alliance.

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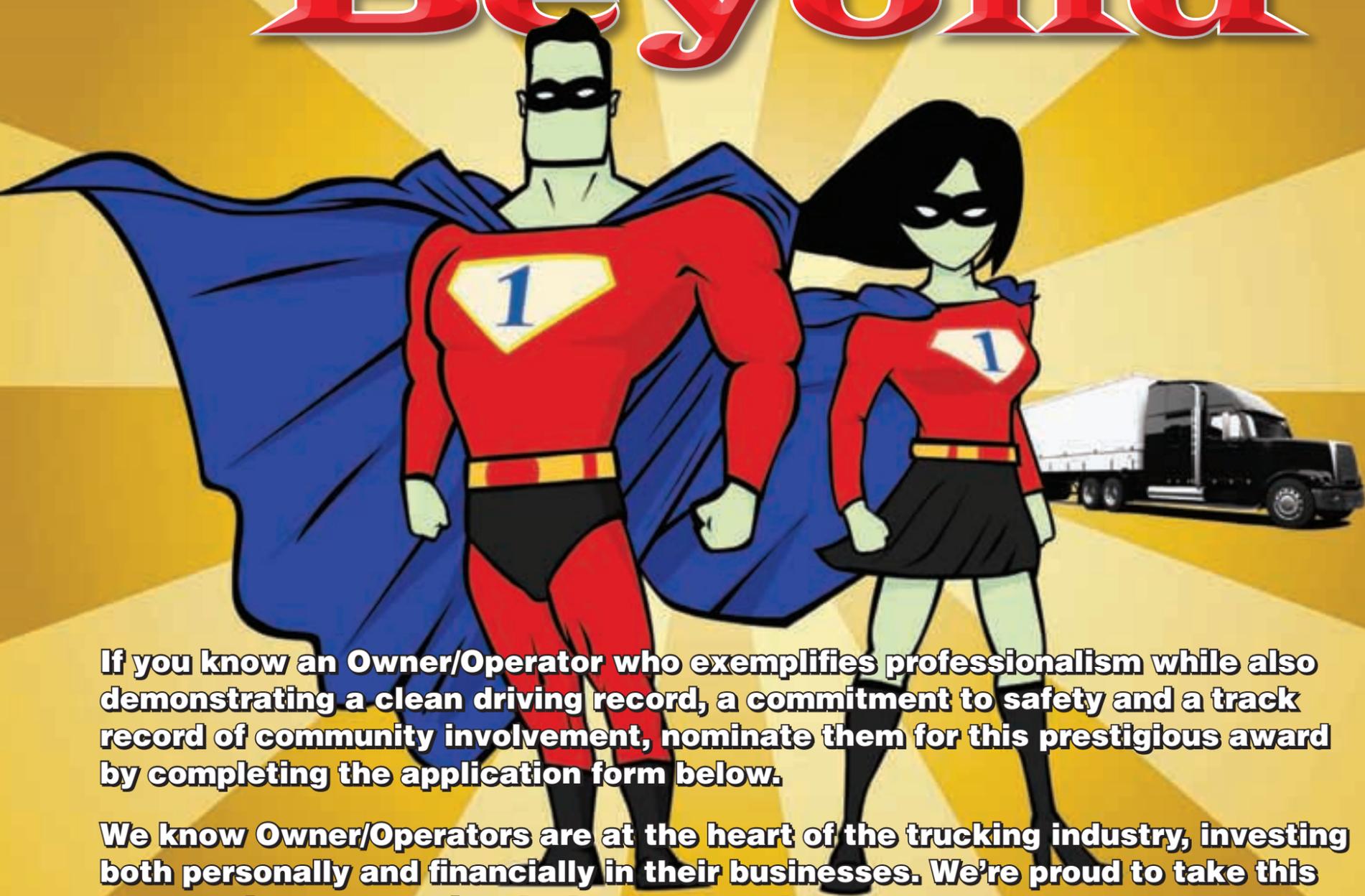
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Recessions can't stop all the good news

'While everyone in the trucking community is concentrating on keeping things afloat these days, here's a vote for taking time to acknowledge excellence.'

That was the lead-in to a column I wrote about a year ago and, although I (and most of you) would have hoped that 12 months later we would all be looking at the recession in the rearview mirror, that has simply not come to pass.

While economists and politicians continue to tell us it's getting better, good news in trucking is still difficult to come by.

But we can still enjoy success and excellence on many levels while we look forward to a return to 'normal.'

The Private Motor Truck Council of Canada is but one of many associations that have established annual awards to recognize those who contribute to the industry. We believe it is important to continue to celebrate the best in class, maybe even more important that we do it when the industry as a whole is suffering.

Thus, we're pleased to announce that the 2011 PMTC awards season is open and receiving applications.

The PMTC's annual conference in June each year is the venue for the presentation of our awards, but the time to prepare and submit entries is now. The conference combines educational forums and networking with the presentation of these awards as we recognize some of the people and fleets that contribute positively to trucking in Canada.

For this year's conference, which will take place June 23-24, we are returning to Kingbridge Conference Centre in King City, Ont., just outside of Toronto. Last year's event garnered a good deal of praise for both its educational value and the venue itself.

The PMTC's annual awards are a feature part of the conference, and have become a pivotal event in the trucking community. They are some of the most prestigious in the industry, and have been offered by the PMTC for many years. They represent the commitment to excellence of PMTC, its members, and the sponsors that help us maintain the programs.

For those who may think that there are bigger issues than awards during difficult times, I suggest that despite the economy, there are those who continue to excel at what they do. Their efforts not only deserve to be recognized, but can provide some encouragement for others to help raise the bar throughout the industry.

The PMTC awards program recognizes excellence and, in some way may even contribute to encouraging others to reach for the top.

Here's a brief overview of the awards and how to participate:

The Hall of Fame for Professional Drivers, sponsored by Huron Services inducts up to four professional drivers each year from PMTC member fleets. The Hall of Fame resides on our Web

Private Links

BRUCE RICHARDS



site at www.pmtc.ca and a visitor can review the outstanding records of the 38 members dating back to 1990.

The members of the Hall of Fame are there because they have compiled such extraordinary safety records and everyone in this industry should be proud of them.

Nomination forms are available on the PMTC Web site, along with a description of the criteria for entry. While the award winners are, in the estimation of the judges the best of the best, it is also a mark of distinction for any driver to be nominated, and we encourage the participation of all our members.

The **Private Fleet Safety Awards**, sponsored by Zurich, are open to all private fleets in Canada. Awards are available for fleets in three categories based on fleet size.

Awards take in to account the fleet's on road safety record, and the safety management programs they have in place that deliver those results. The awards are as much about recognizing the whole package as they are about on-road performance. It takes a well-managed safety program built on solid principles to achieve long-term results.

Simply completing the application (available at www.pmtc.ca) will provide any fleet manager a clear direction for developing such a safety program. The awards program criteria is based on the best practices of private fleets and winning in any category is a significant achievement.

The Vehicle Graphics Design Awards, sponsored by 3M Canada adds the colour and drama to our annual awards luncheon. This marks the 26th year of these awards and the competition continues to attract entries from across the country. Awards are presented in a number of categories based on vehicle type, and are shared by the fleet and its graphics house.

The graphics competition is open to all truck fleets, private or for-hire, PMTC member or not, as we encourage the entire trucking community to put on its finest and show off just a little. Many of the entries come via the graphics industry and we welcome their role in making this such a great event.

Award winners are featured in the PMTC's own magazine, *The Counsellor*, and other industry magazines such as *Truck News*. So join in and enjoy some free promotion, whether a fleet or a graphics house, we welcome your entries. Visit www.pmtc.ca and follow the links to submit your entries online. □

– The Private Motor Truck Council is the only national association dedicated to the private trucking community. Direct comments and questions to trucks@pmtc.ca.

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HEALTH

It's the thought that counts

As a truck driver, you know how important it is for you to stay alert while driving, unloading and even filling out your paperwork at the end of the day. Yet, it can be a challenge to remain attentive mile after mile, day in and day out. How can you keep your mind in tip-top shape? You can feed it, exercise it, and perhaps give it an occasional healthy boost. This month, let's look at how to feed it.

Even though a typical brain only weighs about three pounds, it needs a lot of support in order to manage the functions of a human being. About 20% of the oxygen you breathe is consumed by your brain and around 25% of the arterial blood pumped from your heart goes directly to feed your brain. With these requirements, your brain is certainly not low-maintenance. On top of a lot of oxygen and blood, certain vitamins are vital to sustain your mental alertness, problem-solving skills and good memory.

Vitamin A is essential for keeping you thinking straight. It is foundational to normal nervous system development and has also been found to promote the ability to learn and retain facts. Vitamin A stimulates the neurons of the portion of the brain that is responsible for learning and memory (hippocampus).

You can find Vitamin A in these foods: fortified milk and margarine,



cheese, cream, butter, eggs, liver, dark leafy vegetables (especially spinach), broccoli, as well as deep orange fruits (apricots, cantaloupe) and vegetables (squash, carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin). Folic acid (also known as Folate and Vitamin B9) is another nutrient that keeps your brain ticking. Folic acid helps decrease the homocysteine in your body. Homocysteine is an amino acid found naturally in the blood. However, when this amino acid level gets too high, it will damage your brain cells.

You can make sure you get enough folic acid by eating: green leafy vegetables, legumes, seeds and liver. Note: This nutrient is easily destroyed with heat and oxygen, so it's best to keep these foods in a sealed container.

The B Vitamins, B3, B6, B12, are also essential for preserving central nervous system function, especially for understanding and alertness. The B Vitamins help form myelin, which is the protective sheath surrounding the neurons that carry and manage the rapid transmission of electrical impulses from your brain. Healthy

myelin ensures that these nerve impulses reach the appropriate receptors throughout your body. Since B Vitamins also help prevent your brain from physically breaking down, a lack of B Vitamins can lead to brain shrinkage, reduced cognition, mood swings and inner stress.

To ensure you get enough Vitamin B3, eat: milk, eggs, poultry, fish, whole grain products, enriched breads and cereals, nuts and all foods with proteins. For Vitamin B6, add: green leafy vegetables, meats, fish, poultry, shellfish, legumes, fruits and whole grains. For Vitamin B12, include: all animal products. Note: the B Vitamins are easily destroyed through microwaving.

Vitamin C is another critical nutrient. Your brain actually has a higher proportion of Vitamin C than any other organ. Vitamin C and Vitamin E, working together, produce the following two chemicals: norepinephrine and dopamine. These brain chemicals support normal cognition, alertness and mood. You'll get a significant amount of Vitamin C from: citrus fruits, cabbage-type vegetables, dark green vegetables, cantaloupe, strawberries, peppers, lettuce, tomatoes, potatoes, papayas and mangoes.

Vitamin E, on its own, has strong antioxidant properties that reduce oxidation in the brain and preserve neurons. Vitamin E also helps to destroy free radicals that can attack brain cells. A recent study published in the New England Journal of Medicine found

that 2,000 IU daily of Vitamin E was enough to even slow the progression of Alzheimer's and dementia-like symptoms. As you know, a major symptom of all dementias is reduced mental alertness.

To get enough Vitamin E include the following in your diet: polyunsaturated plant oils (margarine, salad dressing, shortening), leafy green vegetables, wheat germ, whole-grain products, liver, egg yolks, nuts, and seeds.

Vitamin D has also recently been found to play an important roll in maintaining mental abilities. It's been noted that an adequate intake of Vitamin D can also reduce your risk of developing dementias, including Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease.

Although Vitamin D can be synthesized by your body with the help of sunlight (as noted in a recent article), Vitamin D can also be found in: fortified milk, margarine, butter, cereals, chocolate drink mixes, veal, beef, egg yolks, liver, fatty fish (herring, salmon, sardines) and their oils.

No matter which of these foods you decide to add to your diet, moderation is the key. Eating too much of a good thing can make your thinking become sluggish because more blood gets redirected to your digestive system, leaving your brain high and dry. □

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

Jumper's knee

At first glance, truck driving may not seem like a profession that would be prone to knee injuries. However, due to the physical demands of their job, many drivers develop painful and sometimes debilitating knee conditions.

A common knee injury sustained by drivers is called patellar tendonitis, which is better known as jumper's knee. This is a condition that affects the tendon that connects your kneecap to your shin bone. The patella tendon functions to help your muscles straighten your knee like when you are walking up or down



stairs or kicking a soccer ball.

Patellar tendonitis is caused by repeated stress and strain on the tendon. Eventually, the stress leads to small tears in the tendon itself. As more and more tears occur, inflammation and pain in the tendon start to appear. For truck drivers, the most common causes of this injury are climbing in and out of trucks, jumping off trailers and long hours operating the clutch and

gas pedals. Other risk factors that may affect drivers include tight leg muscles, muscular imbalances and excess weight.

The first symptom of patellar tendonitis is usually pain just under the kneecap. Initially, the pain will only be present during physical activity. The pain is usually sharp in nature but disappears once the activity is stopped. As the condition worsens, the pain may become constant.

In most cases, the diagnosis of patellar tendonitis is determined based on the patient's signs and symptoms as well as a physical exam. However, if it is still unclear, diagnostic testing such as X-rays ultrasound, and MRI may be necessary. It is important for

your doctor to rule out other more serious knee conditions.

Once a diagnosis of patellar tendonitis is reached, your doctor will discuss possible treatment options. The good news is that most people respond favourably to conservative treatment and surgery is not usually required. The first mode of treatment is to rest and reduce the amount of strain on the knee.

Next, ice and anti-inflammatory medications are used to reduce the swelling in the tendon. Massage and gentle stretching are also effective to reduce the pain and irritation. Finally, in the later stages of treatment your doctor may recommend strengthening exercises and body mechanic modification, all of which an agronomist, physical therapist or chiropractor can help you with. If all else fails and no significant improvement is observed after 10 to 12 months of conservative treatment, surgery may be considered. The goal of surgery is to repair any tears or remove severely damaged sections of the tendon.

Although you cannot completely prevent this condition, you can reduce your risk of developing it. Avoid activities that put excess strain on the patellar tendon such as jumping off of your trailer. And try to use proper mechanics when getting in and out of your cab, for instance the 'three point technique.' Lastly, try to maintain a healthy body weight and perform lower body stretches regularly. Patellar tendonitis is not a life-threatening injury, however, if left untreated, it could develop into a very painful and debilitating condition. □

- Dr. Christopher H. Singh runs Trans Canada Chiropractic at the 230 Truck Stop in Woodstock, Ont. He can be reached at 519-421-2024.

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ANOTHER WRECKHOUSE VICTIM: The driver of this truck, plated in Manitoba, learned the hard way that the Prairie winds have got nothing on the Wreckhouse.
Photo by Wayne Osmond

Wreckhouse winds used to threaten railway as well

Continued from page 14

blame outsiders for many of the rollovers, Peddle argues that locals must share the blame – especially those who’ve become complacent.

“To be honest, I really think the people that are from away are not the ones getting caught, because they’re unfamiliar with it so they’re scared s—tless to move on,” he says. “What you’ve got are the cocky bastards that run it every single day and think they know it all.”

Once you’ve had a scare, however, you’re not likely to take any further chances. Peddle recalled his own Wreckhouse near miss as a young truck driver.

He was riding as a passenger in a lightly loaded truck, pulling a dry van with about 10,000 lbs on-board. The driver was a fearless older fellow, Peddle says, who decided to make a run for it despite gusting winds. A younger Peddle looked into the mirrors and was horrified to see the rear of the trailer being picked up and tossed in the wind.

“Needless to say, I had no more issues with Wreckhouse after that, because I wouldn’t go,” he says with a chuckle.

Wreckhouse history

The Wreckhouse winds are not a new phenomenon, although anecdotally the winds are increasing, according to locals.

“This year the winds have been very excessive,” Churchill says. “They’ve been 150 km/h and for

very long periods of time. Whatever is going on in the world is changing our patterns a little bit.”

But the winds have always blown through the valley and trucking is not the only mode of transport that has had to contend with the dangers.

As Churchill alluded to, the Newfoundland Railway use to send trains through the Codroy Valley and at times the rail cars were blown off the tracks by the same Wreckhouse winds that truckers fear today.

Those familiar with the region tell the story of Lauchie MacDougall, a local farmer who was employed by the railway to send warnings to Port aux Basques when the winds were too fierce to risk sending the train.

Legend has it the one time his warnings were ignored, more than 20 rail cars were blown off the tracks. MacDougall died in 1965 and his wife continued serving as a wind advisor for the railway until 1972.

MacDougall lived in a small house that was built low to the ground to sustain the winds. Sadly, Osmond says the house was burnt down by vandals, sending a fascinating piece of Canadian history up in smoke.

Fair warning

Government officials in Newfoundland must be disheartened that their six-figure investment in electronic warning signs has not yet reduced the rate of truck rollovers.

Transport Minister Tom Hedderson blasted the truckers who ignored wind warnings in December, telling local media their actions were “dangerously irresponsible.”

Department staff were equally irked when they had to go in after the truckers to help them get through safely.

“They should never have been there,” Hedderson told the CBC. “They should have never put us in a situation where we had to do that.”

The two digital signs, up and running since last November, are located at the Visitor Information Centre just outside Channel-Port aux Basques and the other is 47 kilometres east of there, near the Mollichignick River Bridge in the Codroy Valley.

Churchill remains hopeful the signs will eventually be effective, but for now, the problems are twofold: drivers don’t know the signs are there and there’s no explanation on what the signs mean.

“This electronic sign would be critical if guys would stop and use it properly or if something on the signs would tell us what it means,” he says, noting drivers coming off the Marine Atlantic ferry have little time to interpret the sign and no place to park upon disembarking.

Unfortunately, there’s no help for drivers who find themselves caught in the midst of a Wreckhouse windstorm.

Snow, ice, fog or torrential rains can all be waited out by parking the truck – but there’s no escaping the wind and a parked truck is no less vulnerable than one that’s moving.

“If you get out there and you get caught, you’re on your own,” Churchill says. “There’s no place to turn around. Once you’re out there, you’re in it. It’s just like being in a wind tunnel and you’ve got to get through it because there’s no turning back. That’s why it’s critical that guys not try it. It’s better to err on the side of caution.” □

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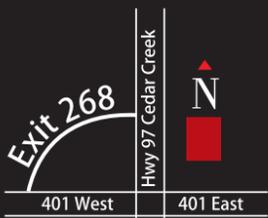


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TRAILERS



Box on wheels, no more

A trailer industry revival is underway as savvy fleet managers rediscover the lost art of spec'ing dry vans

By James Menzies

TORONTO, Ont. – The trailer business, says Conny Weyers, president of Trailers Canada, hasn't been a whole lot of fun over the past few years.

"What we've seen since the early 2000s is that it became 'How big is it and how cheap is it?' and that was the extent of the conversation. There was no spec'ing. A trailer was a trailer and nobody cared. It became a very unglamorous place to be," laments the industry veteran. However, he says there's reason to be optimistic as the industry emerges from recession and fleet owners and asset managers begin to take a fresh look at the lowly van trailer with an eye on lowering operating costs through proper spec'ing.

"We've seen a lot of owners getting back into the spec'ing of trailers," Weyers says. "They're taking out asset teams and accountants and we're actually spec'ing trailers again. The customer sees there are benefits to spec'ing a unit rather than just buying a unit. It has actually been a little bit of fun over the last year or so."

So, what has changed to suddenly

earn the van trailer some newfound respect in the eyes of fleet managers? For one, savvy fleet operators have turned their attention to the trailer after squeezing every ounce of productivity possible out of the power unit. The advent of new technologies like side fairings and wide-base singles has proven to fleet managers that not all trailers are created equal and purchase price and load capacity are not the only considerations when looking to maximize their return on investment.

"They're looking at it as a centre where they can possibly save dollars," Weyers says. "In the past, (trailers) were a load-carrying agent. Now they're possibly a cost saving centre, which is great."

George Cobham Jr., vice-president of sales and marketing with Glasvan Great Dane and his co-hort Mike Hignett, who oversees new and used equipment sales for the same company, have noticed the trend as well.

"We're finding that fleet managers are highly-researched these days. They're spending more time looking at the spec' and considering all the op-

tions," Cobham says. "In the last six to eight months, I've found that people have given us their ear a little more when talking about our products and they're willing to talk about some of the problems that they've had."

There's nothing more disheartening, adds Hignett, than providing a customer with a five-page quote only to see them turn to the final page and retort that the price is too high.

"There's a reason why Brand A is higher than Brand B – and it's not just because we're trying to make more money than somebody else," Hignett says. "Thicker aluminum costs more than thinner aluminum, better grade stainless steel costs more than muffler grade stainless steel."

Another reason fleets may be taking a closer look at trailer spec'ing is that the industry lost a major Canadian manufacturer during the recession and there are a lot of fleets sitting on massive trailer pools for which they may now have trouble finding proprietary parts – not to mention support.

"I think some fleet managers are taking a harder look at where they're buying their equipment from," says Cobham.

So now that fleets are spending more time spec'ing trailers, what are some of the things they're looking at?

Aluminum roofs

The industry's love affair with translucent roofs, as torrid as it once was, seems to have lost its sizzle. Between the mid-90s and about 2006, Weyers says about 95% of the trailers his company sold had translucent roofs. Today, it's come full circle with only about 3-5% of customers requesting translucent roofs.

"Heat is a problem with translucent roofs," he explains. "The trailers run hotter and there can be some discoloration of the product because of the sun's UV rays coming through."

Sky lights along the top edge of the trailer wall have become a popular option, allowing some daylight into the trailer without any of the side-effects inherent with translucent roofs. But Glasvan's Cobham contends there's still a place for translucent roofs, which have improved in recent years.

"There are still people who want it,"

he says. "More on the small fleet and owner/operator side, where they can control how their trailers are loaded."

Damage is another issue with translucent roofs. Repairing them is tricky and the result is unsightly, while aluminum roofs can be easily patched, good as new.

Bye-bye, plywood

Like the poor translucent roof, plywood is also on the outs with truckers and trailer manufacturers.

"Five years ago, 75% of our inventory was plywood-lined trailers with logistics posts," Hignett says. "Now, it's probably reversed."

Plywood is heavy, retains water and is difficult to repair, causing it to be gradually displaced by more plastic composite materials.

"Plywood is almost a thing of the past," Weyers agrees. "We're seeing plastic become a major part of the trailer with wood becoming almost non-existent."

Brakes and tires

Disc brakes were gaining a lot of momentum with trailer customers. Then the economy crashed, abruptly halting any progress. Disc brakes are a costly spec', but the investment can often be justified since the brakes require less maintenance than drums and can improve safety by providing greater stopping power. And as disc brakes increased in popularity, the costs have come down.

Weyers predicts disc brakes will become a common spec' within the next six years.

"I think the economic slowdown of the last two years has stopped that from happening but now we have more people coming back into that," he says. Glasvan's Cobham agrees, noting disc brakes come up in more conversations with customers. "People are still stand-off-ish," he says.

Wide-base tires are another option that's getting a lot of attention, but so far reviews are mixed.

"We had a lot of customers try them between 2006 and 2008 and a good number of them switched back to duals," Cobham says. "They didn't necessarily have a great experience."

But that's not to say they don't work.



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Hair Colour: Light Brown

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Wide-base tires have been proven to deliver substantial fuel savings – when properly used.

“A lot of fleets are getting several hundred thousand kilometres out of their super-single tires and they have very careful tire maintenance systems in place,” Cobham says, noting some major fleets have installed nitrogen inflation systems in their facilities to help keep tire pressures constant. “You definitely can’t just put the tires on and check the pressures once every three months, it requires more attention than that.”

Weyers also has seen issues such as irregular wear, especially on the inner and outer edges of the tire.

“We’ve been told it’s tire pressures (causing the problems) but we don’t have enough facts on that yet,” he says. Still, about half of the trailers he sells are now being spec’d with wide-base single tires.

To LCV or not to LCV?

Fleets participating in Ontario’s long combination vehicle (LCV) pilot project may currently be limited to just two permits. But that’s not stopping them from making every new trailer they order LCV-compatible.

“Companies that have two permits will put these systems on over 50 trailers,” Cobham notes. “Some companies this year that I know of have purchased more than 100 trailers, all set up for LCVs.”

It seems like a big leap of faith for a program that has yet to receive any public acknowledgment from the Ministry of Transportation that it will be expanded beyond its current ‘pilot’ status. But Weyers says for fleets looking to run LCVs, it’s a gamble worth taking since it costs twice as much to make a trailer LCV-compatible in the aftermarket.

Flooring

Even trailer flooring has evolved in recent years. Weyers says most floors now feature composite materials laid underneath the hardwood, to prevent moisture from seeping up and rotting the wood surface.

Great Dane offers Prolam flooring, which is fitted together in a unique way that the company says makes it stronger and longer-lasting. The rear section of the trailer floor then receives a special coating, giving it added protection where forklifts will do most of their damage.

Other add-ons

Trailer side fairings are now being installed by many large, long-haul fleets and even smaller fleets and owner/operators are now inquiring about the fuel-saving devices.

“We’re getting more and more people every day ordering them,” Hignett says. “Nearly half of the trailers in our yard have some kind of side skirt on them.”

Glasvan Great Dane is doing about five to 10 side skirt installations a week, Cobham estimates, compared to about one a month just two-and-a-half years ago.

Side skirts are another item Weyers is taking a wait-and-see approach to.

“For the long-distance guys, yes, they work,” he says. “Customers that are running them seem to see savings but fleets are not coming back with any specifics yet.”

For a piece of equipment that’s often unfairly labeled as a simple box

‘We’ve seen a lot of owners get back into the spec’ing of trailers.’

Conny Weyers

on wheels, there’s a lot going on in the dry van marketplace. Glasvan’s Cobham says as customers finally begin replenishing their trailer fleets after two years of keeping their wallets locked tight, flexibility is the ultimate objective.

“Customers want their trailers to be more flexible now,” he contends. “Customers are sacrificing weight so their trailer can deck freight and at the same time be LCV-ready. Your LCV-ready trailer weights 500-700 lbs more than a standard trailer and now maybe you’re spec’ing a reefer with vertical logistics in it, adding another 1,000 lbs to the trailer. They want that trailer to be able to do everything so they can go after different freight and be more flexible.”

So as the dry van industry experiences a revival, it may be prudent for fleets to begin locking in their orders before capacity is eaten up and the inevitable pricing pressure takes hold. After all, Weyers points out a dry van cost about 20-30% more in the late 90s than it does today.

“We haven’t been able to get pricing back up at all,” he says. “Back in 1998 or 1999, it would be nothing to pay \$28,000-\$29,000 for a new trailer. Today, we’re down in that \$24,000-\$25,000 range.”

With some manufacturers wiped from the landscape by the recession and others shuttering factories, there’s some question on whether the industry will be able to keep up with demand.

The current lead-time for a new dry van is about 90 days, Cobham says.

But according to industry analyst ACT Research’s latest *State of the Industry: US Trailers* report, net orders for dry vans were up 215% year-over-year in November. Senior analyst Kenny Vieth said the trailer industry is entering an upcycle that should last two to three years.

With that in mind, you can’t accuse Weyers of being entirely self-serving when he urges truck fleets to get their orders in soon.

“Sooner or later, there will be big demand and no supply,” he warns. “I think that may happen next year or in 2012, where a demand bubble will be created and the manufacturing sector right now has backed itself off so much that it won’t be able to catch up with the demand. Once the large fleets start buying, it’ll gobble up all the production for quite a while and we could be back to where we were in 1998 with a 12- to 14-month lead-time.” □

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NEW PRODUCTS

Twinkle, twinkle little Star

TerraStar packs a punch as International's new Class 4/5 offering

By James Menzies

DENVER, Col. – The demise of Sterling and GM's withdrawal from the medium-duty truck market created a gaping void in the Class 4/5 arena; a void that Navistar International hopes to fill with its new International TerraStar.

"We're the market leader in the medium-duty segment and the main way for us to sell more product is to enter into different markets," Navistar International's Paul Schunke said during a recent media ride and drive event. "OEMs are exiting the market and customers were asking us for a more commercial-grade vehicle and that's why we got into that (Class 4/5) market."

With their departure, GM and Sterling abandoned about 26% of the market, a significant share that Navistar wasn't willing to leave to the incumbent players.

Navistar's answer to the more heavy-duty requirements of the light-duty commercial vehicle segment is the International TerraStar, a Class 4/5 offering that delivers commercial-duty functionality in a smaller package for a wide range of applications. It goes head to head with the remaining players in this thin segment, namely Ford and Dodge, which offer the F-450/F-550 and Dodge 4500/5500 respectively. (Hino has also come out with a new Model 198 for Class 5 applications).

Because of its strong presence in the Classes 5-7 markets, Navistar was able to bring a new model to market quickly by borrowing heavily from existing products. The cab was taken from the DuraStar, the front and rear axles and brakes from the CityStar. The truck is powered by International's new MaxxForce 7 engine with 300 hp and 660 lb.-ft. of torque.

"To start from scratch, with a

new cab, new frame and new suspension – that's a multi-year program," Schunke said. "We had this big tool shed from which we could bring all these tools, which allowed us to significantly cut down development time."

New to the TerraStar is the frame, which is lowered six inches compared to the DuraStar, making it easier to climb into and out of the cab. Since International is no stranger to designing and building work trucks, most of the worker-friendly attributes came as no surprise. For instance, the grab handles are big enough to grab hold of while wearing work gloves, I noticed while driving the TerraStar on a road course laid out by Navistar during a test drive at Denver's Invesco Field.

About 70% of the medium-duty trucks built by International today are matched with Allison automatic transmissions, which make the truck remarkably easy to drive and also optimize fuel efficiency. This is important, since these trucks are often operated by workers who have received no formal training on fuel-efficient driving.

The TerraStar I drove had the standard Allison 1000 Series automatic transmission, which the company says optimizes power output as well.

The truck drove much like an oversized pick-up truck, which will be an easy adjustment for workers who may not have experience driving commercial vehicles. Because the TerraStar uses the same spacious cab as its bigger brother the DuraStar, the cab is available in a variety of configurations including a 26-inch extended cab and 44-inch crew cab.

When it comes to medium-duty applications, visibility is important.



SHINING STAR: The International TerraStar performed better in the Invesco Field parking lot than the Denver Broncos did inside the stadium this year.

Not only because inexperienced drivers may often be behind the wheel, but also because in many cases, the truck will be operated in cramped work sites.

The TerraStar offers excellent visibility all-around, thanks to the elevated seating position in the supersized cab. This should help owners cut down on repair costs. Equally important when it comes to avoiding dings and scrapes, is turning radius.

The TerraStar falls just short of its competitors in this category, with a 28.2-ft. left-hand curb-to-curb turning radius (compared to 26.4-ft. for Ford and 27.3-ft. for Dodge). But Tom Schmitt, sales training project manager with Navistar, says turning radius is a subjective metric.

"Actual turning radius is going to depend on the axle, the tires, the steering gear and everything else you have under the front end of that truck," he said.

The course I drove included some tight right- and left-hand turns, which I navigated without crumpling so much as a single pylon. Granted, before I pat myself on the back too enthusiastically, I should note the course was built wide enough to accommodate the

bigger DuraStar as well. At any rate, when the difference in turning radius is measured in inches, it's not likely to be a deal-breaker.

Another strength of the TerraStar is its serviceability, which should really come as no surprise since the truck borrows from the best of International's proven medium-duty models.

The TerraStar has a tilt hood, as any serious work truck should, rather than the alligator-style hood opening you'll find on the Ford or Dodge offerings.

Schunke said serviceability seems to have been an afterthought in the Class 4/5 market, something International intends to change. In some cases, the entire cab had to be lifted off the frames of competitive vehicles to perform engine maintenance. The TerraStar's engine can be easily accessed from either side, making it simple to perform everyday inspections and replenish fluids.

Speaking of fluids, you won't find a diesel exhaust fluid (DEF) tank on the TerraStar. While Ford, Dodge and Hino have elected to meet stringent EPA-mandated NOx emissions standards with exhaust aftertreatment, the International MaxxForce 7 instead eliminates NOx in-cylinder.

That means customers won't require DEF for the selective catalytic reduction (SCR) system used by all other medium- and heavy-duty truck manufacturers in North America. While a compelling argument can be made for and against SCR, it's one more differentiator that Navistar feels will work in its favour.

The International TerraStar is a true commercial-grade Class 4/5 that borrows heavily from the company's proven medium-duty products. The large cab and big truck appearance do come at a premium though. It's expected the TerraStar will cost more than its Ford and Dodge competitors to the tune of a few thousand dollars.

Nonetheless, interest in the truck seems strong. By last October when I drove the truck, Navistar officials said they'd received orders for about 800 units, generated by trade show appearances alone with no presence yet established on dealer lots. But dealers should have received their TerraStars by now.

In a market segment with few choices, the TerraStar will be a welcomed addition. □

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NEW PRODUCTS

Tires & Wheels

Hankook Tire Canada has come out with a **drive tire** designed specifically for Canadian winter conditions. The studless DW02 features a small-block tread design and softer compound to improve grip on winter roads, Hankook announced. The DW02 is only available in Canada. It also features full-depth sipes to improve traction as well as wide open shoulder grooves for improved braking performance, the company claims. The tire is available in sizes 11R22.5-14 ply and 12R22.5-16 ply.



Michelin has developed versions of its **mobile truck tire app** for the iPhone and Android-based smart phones. The tire app was first introduced for the Blackberry last year. It provides access to the Michelin ONCall emergency road service system as well as a dealer and service locator. The app uses GPS and Google Maps technology to help drivers find the nearest service location. For more info, visit www.michelintruck.com.

Lighting

Peterson Manufacturing has come out with a line of new **white LED interior and dome lights** for commercial trucks. Designed primar-

ily for aftermarket sales, the Peterson-branded models boast handsome styling and economic pricing, according to the company. The new products include: Model 361, a clear four-inch round LED interior light with six diodes; the Model 366, a 5.5"x3" rectangular LED dome or interior light with 24 diodes; the Model 369S, a clear 12-inch swivel LED interior rail light with 24 diodes and on/off switch; and the Model 379S, a clear 5.5-inch round LED dome light with 30 diodes and on/off switch. For more, see www.pmlights.com.



Truck-Lite has come out with a new **LED snowplow kit** aimed at improving the visibility of, and for, snowplow operators. The company says its LED lights are significantly brighter than conventional lamps, have a much longer life and draw less current. In snowplow applications, halogen lamps often break due to heavy vibration. The new kit has been tested in the town of Leroy, N.Y. The kit is composed of a right- and left-hand lamp assembly as well as the appropriate harness. For more info, visit www.truck-lite.com.

Trailers

Trailer Wizards, the recently renamed entity consisting of Lions Gate Trailers and Provincial Trailer Rentals, has announced the launch of a **new 24/7 emergency roadside service number**. Customers can take advantage of the program by calling 855-EASY-ERS (327-9377). The

ERS program covers Canada and the US. Trailer Wizards says the new help line is one of many enhancements the company is bringing to market. For more info, visit www.trailerwizards.com.



ATDynamics has come out with a new version of its **trailer tail**, the TrailerTail Model 2011, which is constructed of thermoplastic composite and can easily be folded in when travelling on Canadian roads where the device is not yet approved for use. The company says several Canadian fleets are planning to add the device to their trailers for use when travelling in the US. The system has proven to deliver 6.6% fuel savings in independent testing, the company says. The company recently inked a massive deal with Mesilla Valley Transportation, which has committed to retrofitting its entire fleet of 3,500 trailers with the device. For information, visit www.atdynamics.com.

Accessories

Danatec Educational Services has announced it has partnered with Spectrum Absolute Training to provide Class 7-specific **transportation of dangerous goods (TDG) training**. The online program is targeted towards those who ship, handle or transport radioactive materials. The TDG Class 7 online course is available by visiting www.danatec.com.

Mack Trucks has revamped its **online store**, featuring an expanded line of products. Available at www.mack-shop.com, the Web site offers the full collection of Mack

merchandise, including new items, older collectibles and close-out items. Accessories such as watches, key chains and belt buckles are also available.

Aries Manufacturing and Cobra Electronics have come out with the Cobra CBTH8 Ultra Light **Bluetooth Headset** with noise-cancelling technology as part of Cobra's 50th anniversary edition line of products. The headset weighs about half of what most other over-the-road wireless headsets weigh, the company says. Cobra says its headset has been extensively tested by professional drivers. It retails for US\$99.95 and is available online at www.cobrahandsfree.com.

Components

Detroit Diesel has announced Claire Advanced Emission Controls' LongMile **diesel particulate filter** is CARB-approved as Level 3+, the highest level of certification offered by CARB. That means the filter has demonstrated the ability to reduce particulate matter emissions by more than 85% while meeting the NOx emissions standards, the company says. The DPF was developed in partnership with Detroit Diesel. The LongMile DPF is available as a retrofit option for older diesel engines, bringing them up to EPA07 PM standards. Speak with a Detroit Diesel dealer for more info, or visit www.detroitdiesel.com.

Tracking

Inthinc has announced it has added a touchscreen to its waySmart commercial driving safety solution to allow for **hours-of-service tracking**. The touchscreen can be used in place of the handheld key pad interface and provides a user-friendly graphical interface, the company says. The system is designed to be easily mounted in the cab of the truck. It displays hours-of-service logging and sends alerts when approaching time limits. It also constantly posts the speed limit. For more info, visit www.inthinc.com or call 866-294-8637.

Cheetah Software Systems has announced it is now offering a plug-in solution that allows customers to access ALK Technologies' CoPilot Live v8 **turn-by-turn GPS navigation** software. The GPS system compliments Cheetah's routing and dispatch optimization capabilities, offering a combined solution that optimizes routing, dispatch and customers service while also improving safety by providing drivers with turn-by-turn, spoken directions. For more info, visit www.cheetah.com or www.copilotlive.com.

GreenRoad has added new features to its real-time driver coaching system that help fleets reduce their idling. The company says users of its GreenRoad 360 system, which provides in-cab driver coaching, typically see fuel savings of up to 10%. With the new **idling performance solution**, the company says fleets can save another 2-5% in fuel. Visit www.greenroad.com. □

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4 Colours

(13) 2011 VNL 780's
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(3) 2005 VNL 630
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(2) 2007 VNL 670's
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(1) 2008 VNL 730
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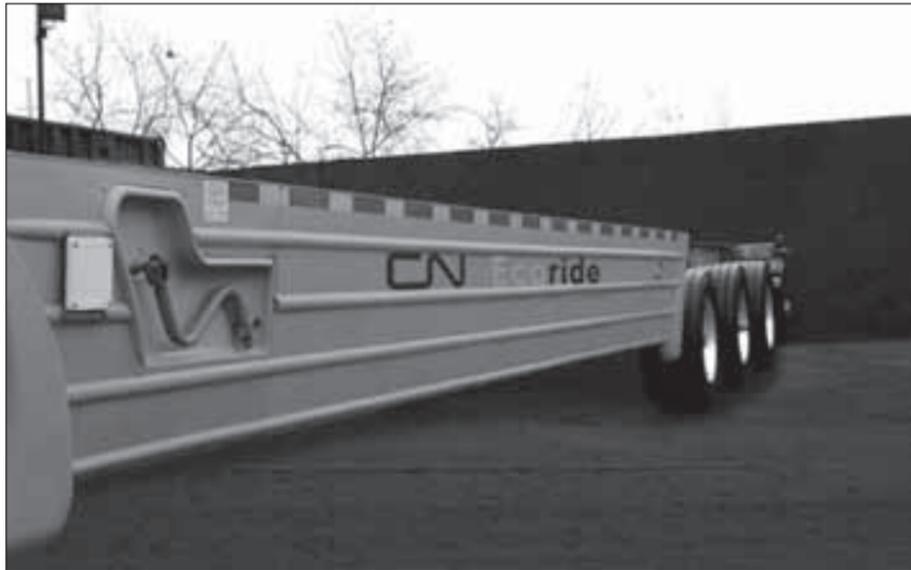
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FLEET NEWS



ECORIDE: CN predicts its new fuel-efficient container chassis can save as much as eight to 10% in fuel. It will be used in CN's Ontario intermodal operations.

CN develops fuel-efficient container chassis

TORONTO, Ont. – Canadian National (CN) has come out with a new environmentally-friendly container chassis it expects to reduce fuel consumption by eight to 10%.

The EcoRide chassis was developed in collaboration with a Canadian supplier. It features side skirts, low rolling resistance wide-base tires on each axle and weighs 15% less than a conventional CN container chassis, the company claims.

The chassis will be put into service in Ontario.

“CN stands for innovation and is continuously looking for ways to reduce its energy consumption and carbon footprint,” said Jean-Jacques Ruest, CN’s executive vice-president and chief marketing office. “After the successful launch last year of EcoTherm, our new greener insulated container, the CN team started to explore other opportunities to provide custom-

ers better supply chain solutions that reduce carbon emissions. CN’s next steps in environmental innovation will include testing hybrid container cranes, in-terminal hybrid trucks, and energy efficient generators. CN is deploying the hybrid shunt trucks in ground switching of containers on chassis at our Brampton Intermodal Terminal this month.”

The new chassis seems to be a hit with customers. Major customer Kraft Canada applauded the initiative.

“We are working very closely with CN to develop a low carbon supply chain,” said Craig McLaughlin, vice-president, supply chain, for Kraft Canada. “We appreciate that CN continues finding new ways to be more energy efficient. CN is aligned with Kraft’s focus on those suppliers that deliver the most value, which includes great service, innovation and reduced carbon emissions.” □

TransForce lands Dynamex in mega-deal

MONTREAL, Que. – TransForce has announced it has acquired same-day delivery provider Dynamex in a deal worth US\$248 million.

That amounts to US\$25 per share, which betters a deal agreed to by Dynamex with Greenbriar Equity Group on Oct. 1 worth US\$24 per share. Dynamex has said it has terminated the original agreement with Greenbriar. Dynamex is headquartered in Dallas, Texas and employs 1,500 workers in addition to having agreements with 3,700 independent contractors. TransForce chair Alain Bedard says the acquisition will allow TransForce to expand its courier capabilities while also providing an avenue into the US market.

“TransForce is currently a significant player in the package and courier sector in Canada and the acquisition of Dynamex will enhance service to existing customers while proposing a powerful service offering to potential clients, as Dynamex specializes almost exclusively in same-day delivery services, a segment generally not offered by TransForce, and by opening doors to the US markets,” said Bedard, chairman, president and CEO of TransForce. □

FedEx Freight offers speedier service to Canada

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – FedEx Freight Canada says it has reduced transit times in more than 500 lanes connecting Toronto and Montreal to dozens of cities and regions in the US. The company says these service enhancements are designed to enable cross-border LTL shippers to achieve supply chain improvements.

“FedEx Freight is committed to providing outstanding service to LTL shippers throughout North America. In addition to these transit improvements, we have expanded our service centre network in Canada in recent months and streamlined processes for customs clearance,” said William J. Logue, president and CEO, FedEx Freight.

Specific north and southbound cross-border transit-time reductions include: Three-day service improved to two-day service from

Atlanta and Savannah, Ga., Charlotte, N.C., Charleston, S.C., Birmingham, Ala., to Toronto, Mississauga and Hamilton, Ont.; three-day service reduced to two-day service between Memphis, Tenn., St. Louis and Kansas City, Mo., and Toronto, Mississauga and Hamilton, Ont.; Three-day service improved to two-day service between Milwaukee, Rockford, Ill., St. Louis, Mo., and Montreal; Four-day service reduced to three-day service between Denver, Houston and other cities in the central US and Montreal; and Five-day service reduced to four-day service between Los Angeles, Seattle and other points on the West Coast and Montreal.

“Our goal is to add value for our customers’ supply chains, and I am pleased with the steps we have taken to strengthen our Canadian service offering,” said Logue. □



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FLEET NEWS

Trans-Send Freight CEO names daughter as successor

MISSISSAUGA, Ont. – Trans-Send Freight Systems has announced that Lisa Carwardine, daughter of current president and CEO Rob Carwardine, will take over the company's reins as of Feb. 1.

“Lisa will provide a new fresh vision for the company, expelling myths that the trucking industry is just for her male counterparts,” her father said in a release. “Lisa has excelled through all departments of the company over the past 10 years and is extremely excited about this new challenge.”

Lisa has been involved in the transportation industry since she was a child, working alongside her father, according to the company.

“The time has come for Lisa to direct the company into the future,” said Rob Carwardine.

“Trans-Send is now poised for growth and we are all excited in wishing Lisa all the success in the world,” said company controller Anthony Gallimore. □



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Mullen expands fluid-hauling capacity

OKOTOKS, Alta. – Mullen Group has announced a series of transactions that will expand its fluid-hauling and handling capacity in northern Alberta and northeastern B.C.

In November, the company closed an acquisition of Radium Industrial Solutions GP, a Grande Prairie-based fluid hauler. That business will be operated as part of Mullen's Cascade Energy Services business.

Mullen has also agreed to terms that will see it acquire Panda Tank and Vac Truck Services, also out of Grande Prairie, Alta.

That deal closed Jan. 1 and Panda will be operated as a standalone business unit, increasing Mullen's presence in and around Grande Prairie, Fort St. John and Dawson Creek while expanding the company's reach into the Grande Cache area, the company announced.

Mullen has also inked a letter of intent to take over the fluid hauling assets of an undisclosed private company based in northern Alberta. That deal was expected to close in early January, with assets integrated into Mullen's existing fluid hauling businesses, the company announced.

"Acquiring businesses leveraged to fluid hauling and the production services segment of the oil and gas industry has been a strategic focus of the Mullen Group for several years," said chairman and CEO Murray Mullen. "New drilling techniques and multi-stage fracturing are creating

new opportunities associated with the development of resource plays throughout North America. These acquisitions provide Mullen Group with additional equipment and an experienced workforce."

"The addition of these three businesses to our fluid hauling operations not only expands the geographic coverage we can provide to our customers, it provides us with an opportunity to leverage our existing infrastructure to achieve economies of scale," added president and co-CEO Steve Lockwood. "We anticipate that these three acquisitions, once completed, will increase Mullen Group's annual consolidated revenues by approximately \$42 million. In terms of operating profitability we expect these businesses will generate operating income (EBITDA) margins similar to Mullen Group's current margins within the first six months of the acquisition." □

Bison buys 200 heated trailers, 300 tractors

WINNIPEG, Man. – Bison Transport has ordered 200 new 53-ft. heated Great Dane trailers.

The addition of these new units will be added to Bison's existing 3,000-plus fleet of dry, heated, refrigerated and multi-temp trailers. Bison is touting the new group of trailers as being "the ultimate in environmental stewardship," which each unit outfitted with aerodynamic trailer fairings and pintle hooks for the company's long combination vehicle (LCV) operation.

In addition to the new trailers, Bison will also be replacing about 300 of its tractors this year in an effort to improve fuel efficiency and green its fleet, the company announced.

The tractors are a mix, including: Volvo 430 regional spec' sleeper cabs for LCV/regional applications; Volvo day cabs for LCV applications; Freightlin-

er Cascadia day cabs for LCV/regional work; and Freightliner Cascadia regional spec' sleeper cabs. Some yet-to-be-determined day cabs are also being spec'd for Vancouver-area regional hauls.

"We've seen an increasing demand across our network for temperature-controlled trailer equipment, and the addition of 200 heated trailers will ensure we are well positioned to serve our customer's needs today and in the future," said Bison president and CEO Don Streuber. "The tractor acquisitions are an upgrading of our existing company tractor fleet and the best example of over-the-road environmental responsibility in the market today. We remain committed to doing what is right in all facets of our business. This includes how we treat our people, how we serve our customers, our approach to safety, and our responsibility to environmental sustainability." □

Kriska to acquire JMS Transportation

PRESCOTT, Ont. – Kriska has inked a letter of intent to acquire JMS Transportation in a deal that's slated to close Jan. 31.

JMS is a 30-truck fleet based in Point Edward, Ont. that provides domestic and cross-border truckload services to customers in Canada and the US.

It's owned and operated by Kevin Langford, who will stay on with Kriska, as will other staff and owner/operators with the company.

Langford will serve as regional director and will integrate JMS into Kriska's operations, the companies announced.

"Much of the news in the last couple of years has been grim," Langford said. "Companies downsizing, closing and jobs lost. This is a good news story for JMS, our customers and our employees. Kriska is a well-respected organization and their decision to expand into the southwestern Ontario market with the acquisition of JMS will allow us the resources of a larger carrier to be more effective and efficient. We're now well positioned to grow and bring jobs back to the region."

Added Mark Seymour, president and CEO of Kriska: "Our strategy at Kriska in the last few years has been to make strategic acquisitions that add quality people and customers to our organization. Our track record in doing so speaks for itself. JMS is a quality organization with strength in culture, people and customers. This is going to be a great fit." □



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SAFETY

Benchmarking data can predict the threats to come

Few business leaders would pass up the chance to gaze into a crystal ball that identifies costly problems before they occur. They are the details which could mean the difference between a profit and loss; a competitive edge in the days of frozen rates and low freight volumes.

They are also the predictions that fleets can make with nothing more than a spreadsheet and a commitment to benchmarking.

Research by the National Safety Council has found that about 30% of collisions – a group of crashes including head-on collisions, T-boned vehicles, hit pedestrians, rear-enders, jackknives and rollovers – account for 75% of collision-related financial losses. And there is a direct link between this type of collision and the past behaviour of high-risk drivers. Those who collect tickets for tailgating, speeding, aggressive driving and lane hopping,



Ask the Expert

ALBERT ZIMBALATTI

for example, are known to have a bigger chance of being involved in one of the rear-end collisions that are the leading cause of truck driver fatalities.

Every speeding ticket, moving violation, overweight trailer, or hours-of-service violation is a sign of other challenges to come, the researchers found. Even those drivers who collect a seemingly minor out-of-service violation are 16% more likely to be involved in a collision in the next 12 months.

Knowing that high-risk drivers are at the heart of the costliest problems, fleets can look at past performance to identify the early indica-

tors of future losses.

The data itself can come from a number of sources. Those who are crossing the border will be able to tap into new CSA reports into seven Behaviour Analysis and Safety Improvement Categories (BASICS) including unsafe driving, fatigued driving, driver fitness, use of controlled substances and alcohol, vehicle maintenance, cargo-related issues, and crash indicator. In Canada, important details can be collected by tracking changes in records such as Ontario's Commercial Vehicle Operator's Registration reports, or simply by tracking the details around violations, collisions and customer complaints.

Each of the numbers that emerge can be compared to benchmarks that are based on past performance.

But for the data to transform into valuable information, fleets need to track the details in a meaning-

ful way. While most companies will file accident reports, the facts are often hiding in a bulging file folder that fails to offer any insight into emerging patterns. A more effective benchmarking tool compiles the information into a chart or a central source where any troubling increases can be identified and compared.

Just like the story in a newspaper, the vital details include who was involved in an incident, what happened, when it occurred and where. The numbers are also compared in a way that reflects the operation, such as a long-haul fleet's focus on the number of incidents per million miles. Once any of those factors begin to pile up in the form of troubling trends, it is a matter of asking why a situation occurs, and looking for steps to solve the issue.

Some of the facts can lead to surprising findings. One safety manager recently discovered that a surge in the number of collisions caused by a "loss of control" was actually linked to medical issues. A challenge like that might need to be addressed with a focus on the medical screening process.

Another carrier was baffled by an increase in the number of speeding tickets, since all of the truck engines had been governed with a top speed. A closer look at the situation showed that most of the tickets were issued in rural areas, which had lower posted speed limits. But the issue was addressed by telling drivers that, if caught speeding, they would lose dedicated runs and be placed on an open dispatch board.

Indeed, the challenges can often be connected to a group of drivers as easily as an individual. Drivers who are prone to an aggressive driving habit might be graduates of the same school, easily identifying those who need retraining in a specific skill. A fleet might even need to re-evaluate its ongoing hiring practices if most of the high-risk drivers appear to come from a common source like a specific driver service.

These are just a few examples that show there are solutions and savings to be found. It is simply a matter of looking behind the numbers, identifying the issues that are the greatest cause of concern, and then setting the strategies for change.

After all, the only thing better than predicting a threat is finding the solution that prevents it. □

– This month's expert is Albert Zimbalatti. Albert is the manager of special risks, safety and training services for Markel Insurance Company of Canada and has more than 33 years experience in providing loss control and risk management services to the trucking industry. Markel Safety and Training Services, a division of Markel Insurance Company of Canada, offers specialized courses, seminars and consulting to fleet owners, safety managers, trainers and drivers. Markel is the country's largest trucking insurer providing more than 50 years of continuous service to the transportation industry. Send your questions, feedback and comments about this column to info@markel.ca. To read about more industry hot topics, visit Markel's Web site at www.markel.ca and click on the Articles & Essays section.

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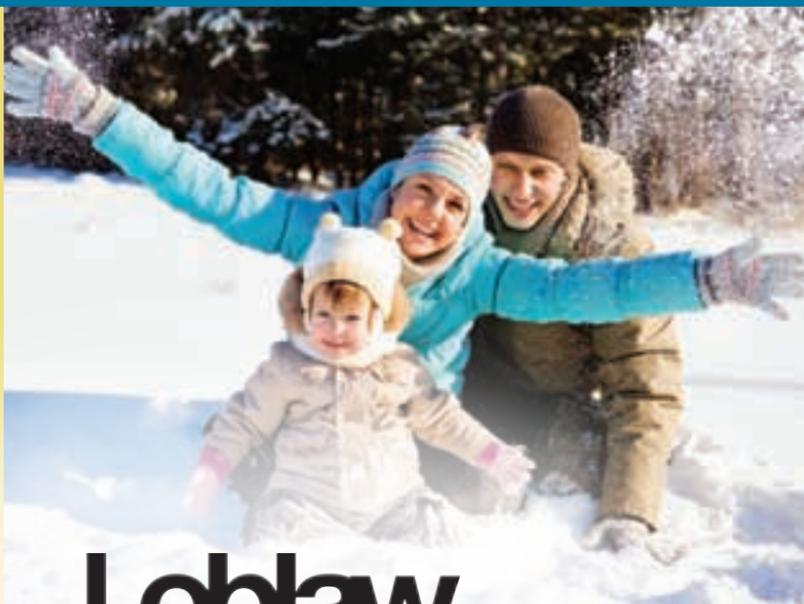
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PEOPLE

Linda Gauthier has announced she is resigning from the Canadian Trucking Human Resources Council (CTHRC) in June. Gauthier has been with the CTHRC since 1995 and has served as its executive director since 2002. The organization has solicited the help of Pragmatic HR Solutions in Dartmouth, N.S. to help it find a replacement.

Gauthier won the National Transportation Week Award of Achievement in 2003 and has been a vital part of many of the CTHRC's major projects, including establishing essential skills profiles for a variety of occupations in the trucking industry and developing the Closing the Gap initiative that brought together stakeholders from government and industry.

The Canadian arm of Yokohama Tire has reorganized to create distinct business units to manage sales and marketing operations of its consumer and commercial lines, the company has announced. **John Overing** has been named business unit director for commercial tires.

The new marketing and sales organizational structure will be supported by the company's existing administration, distribution and technical departments, Yokohama officials said.

Flo Components has named **Steve Matheson** its new Ontario sales manager. Matheson has worked as a vice-president in engineering and sales/marketing capacities over the past 12 years and will aim to grow Flo's presence in the Ontario market, the company announced. Matheson also hopes to increase local availability of technical support for customers. Flo specializes in automatic greasing systems for equipment in the construction, road building, aggregate, mining and trucking industries.

Trailer Wizards, formerly Lions Gate Trailers/Provincial Trailer Rentals, has appointed **Chuck Waterhouse** as manager of emergency road services. Waterhouse will report directly to Steve Nash, vice-president of Trailer Wizards' Central Region, and will be coordinating the efforts of the company's maintenance personnel and service partners throughout Canada and the US. The service can be accessed toll free at 855-EASY-ERS (327-9377).

Eaton Corporation has named **Kenneth F. Davis** president of the company's vehicle group. Davis succeeds Joseph P. Palchak, who announced his decision to retire at the end of June. In his new role, Davis will report to Craig Arnold, vice-chairman and chief operating officer of Eaton's industrial sector, and will be responsible for the company's automotive and truck businesses. Davis' current role as president of the Americas for the vehicle group will not be filled, the company announced.

Great Dane Trailers has named **Dave Durand** its new vice-president, aftermarket parts. Durand previously served as aftermarket parts director with the company. Durand will continue to oversee the PDC and parts activities associated with Great Dane's branch operations, the company announced. Durand has worked for Great Dane since January 2006 and has 25 years of aftermarket parts experience. □

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AWARDS

B.C. driver named tops in Canada

SURREY, B.C. – Canadian Freightways trucker Heinz Alvin (John) Beeler has been named the 2010 Canadian Trucking Alliance/Volvo Trucks Canada Driver of the Year. The announcement was made at the British Columbia Trucking Association’s (BCTA) annual Christmas party Dec. 2.



JOHN BEELER

Event organizers say Beeler was chosen for his demonstrated dedication to safety and impressive collision-free driving career, spanning more than 36 years and almost five million kilometres.

“John Beeler is an outstanding truck driver and a true professional, both on and off the road,” said David Bradley, CEO of the Canadian Trucking Alliance. “Canada’s highways are made safer by the efforts of John and other drivers like him. He is very deserving of this prestigious award.”

Beeler was presented the award by Terry Warkentin, fleet sales manager of Volvo Trucks Canada, during festivities at the Sheraton Vancouver Guildford Hotel in Surrey. As part of this honour, Beeler received a trophy, cash prize and weekend getaway for two.

“I am delighted that John has received national recognition for his outstanding safety record,” said Paul Landry, president and CEO of BCTA.

“He’s not only logged 36 accident-free years as a professional driver, he has also done it in a province with the most challenging terrain in Canada. He is the first B.C. driver to win the national award since 2003.”

Each year, a panel of judges made

up of representatives from Transport Canada, the Traffic Industry Research Foundation, Canada Safety Council, the RCMP and the Canadian Trucking Alliance selects a national winner from among recipients of the Driver of the Year award in each province.

The national winner is selected for excellence among peers who have maintained a collision-free driving record and otherwise demonstrated exemplary professionalism both on and off the road.

Beeler was awarded the B.C. Driver of the Year award at BCTA’s annual Management Conference in June.

Officials say his driving record has earned him many accolades from organizations including the National Safety Council, the RCMP and Canadian Freightway.

In addition to training company drivers, Beeler also offers his expertise to outside carriers by consulting on safety issues and has assisted authorities in collision investigations. Beeler makes his home in Maple Ridge, B.C., with his wife, Charmaine. □

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AWARDS

Armour issues first ever four million mile award

MONCTON, N.B. – Georges LeBlanc, a former Canadian National Driver of the Year, has become the first ever Armour Transportation Systems driver to rack up four million accident-free miles with the company.

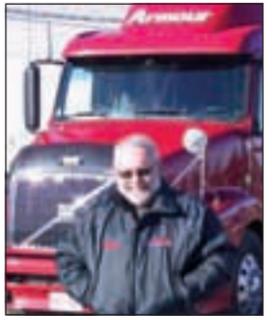
LeBlanc started his career with Armour at the age of 14, working part-time for company founder Gordon Armour, handbombing freight during the summers. He took an interest in driving and took to the highway after the completion of high school.

In November, LeBlanc was presented with the company's first ever Four Million Mile Award. The latest accolade comes six years after LeBlanc won the Canadian Driver of the Year award. When asked what has contributed to his stellar safety record, LeBlanc said: "I always allow time for unexpected delays. By doing this, I don't get stressed or have to rush to meet scheduled appointment times."

LeBlanc's driving career spans 39 years and he still drives today, normally to North Sydney or the Quebec border, the company says.

Armour Transportation has 16 drivers who have at least three million accident-free miles, 111 drivers with two million and 421 professionals who have reached the one million mile mark.

"The commitment and professionalism displayed by all of our employees is the foundation upon which Armour Transportation Systems is built," the company said in a release. □



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Bison O/O reaches 2M accident-free miles

WINNIPEG, Man. – Laird Copeland, an owner/operator with Bison Transport has reached a major driving milestone in his career with Bison, having achieved two million consecutive accident-free driving miles. Laird has been with Bison since 1996 and says the key to his success is simple: "Take precautions, observe all possibilities of danger and avoid them."

"Safety is a top priority at Bison Transport and it is with professional drivers like Laird that Bison has been named by the Truckload Carriers Association for the fifth consecutive year as having the lowest DoT (Department of Transportation) reportable accident rate in over the 100 million mile carrier category. We are proud to recognize Laird for his commitment to safety," said Garth Pitzel, Bison's director of safety and driver development.

Laird was formally recognized at Bison's annual awards banquet in Calgary Jan. 14. □

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MAIL

Shorter workdays welcomed

Dear Editor:

I don't usually comment on things like this, but I've grown tired of the false directions that are given to people when others' interpretations are given as the best answers.

I've been driving for 16 years now and am glad of the (proposed US HoS) changes. So long to 13-hour drives and 14-hour shifts. If they want to cut our days to 12 or even eight, then let them. The only way companies and drivers will be able to recoup their losses is to raise their rates. If I can work eight hours and earn what I make in 14, then bring it on.

Politicians, regulatory committees and such see the big picture. They know the repercussions and the benefits. Companies will have to raise rates to recoup, pay drivers more to stay, buy more trucks

to move the freight since the drivers can't work as hard.

In all, it'll boost the economy, truck sales, revenue and about 50,000 other things. I wish people would stop going on as know-it-alls and as though regulators or politicians haven't a clue. Believe it or not, they are not idiots. They should be given thanks for moves like this.

So I have to work less hours, big deal. They know rates will rise. In fact they expect it.

Do you honestly believe I want to be behind the wheel every minute I'm awake? Do I get overtime after eight hours? Can I take walks behind the wheel? Do I like working 70-hour weeks? Then shut the hell up! □

Dave Hilhorst
Via e-mail

CB radio ban makes no sense

Dear Editor:

I have just read your article on Alberta and the new ban on CB radio operation. How any elected official could hold a position of authority and be so small-minded is beyond me.

The new rules concerning texting are needed – but this is ridiculous. After 4.5 million miles, I think myself and others like me need to find something else to waste our time and energy on. We have too many people getting paid too much and knowing too little controlling our work and our lives. The driver shortage will continue. It is no wonder our young men and women don't want to join us in our efforts to fuel and feed our nation. □

Richard Page
Via e-mail

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OPINION

In Europe, children dream of driving the classic-styled conventional

Many years ago as a small boy, I used to push my toy trucks around the floor, dreaming of the day I would become a trucker myself. Model trucks were my only toys, I wasn't interested in anything else and there was one truck in particular that was my favourite.

It took me almost 30 years before I had the chance to drive my dream truck, but I never let the grass grow under my feet in the meantime.

Originally from England, I spent the first 20 years of my career trucking throughout Europe and Scandinavia with a couple of trips to Asia and North Africa.

Dealing with border crossings and Customs formalities was difficult as everyone spoke different languages and used different currencies – and they all drive on the wrong side of the road too.

As well as being a driver, I also ran a fleet of 200-plus trucks, had five of my own and spent a couple of years as a road tester/staff writer for a magazine called *TRUCK*. I continue to write for a sister publication and now write about my experiences over here in Canada, where I've been long-haul trucking for the past three years.

So, back to the 1970s and wearing the knees out on my pants as I racked up big miles pushing my favourite truck around the floor.

The truck in question was a 359 Peterbilt. It was unlike all the cabovers we have in Europe, I had plenty of those, but they were real, I could see those anytime I rode in the truck with my Dad. The long-nose Pete was unlike anything I'd ever seen or was likely to see in real life, until I made the move to Canada.

I now drive that dream, except mine is a 379. It has all the lights and chrome and I keep it as nice as possible, but how long will I be able to carry on living the dream? Fuel costs and impending legislation are making the classic large car a dinosaur, it won't be very long until they're extinct. I'm deeply saddened by this. Thirty years of dreams have finally come true for me and soon my prize will be taken away to a junkyard.

I understand that times change, technology moves on in a never-ending quest for perfection, new truck models have a wealth of fancy gadgets, air-ride this and that, one-touch switches, much more space and visibility, they make the driver's life far more comfortable – but is that really progress?

After all, we're truck drivers – we're supposed to be tough. We moan that the newer drivers are a bunch of wimps, that they couldn't have done the job back in the days when we had twin sticks or no power steering, no A/C or APUs.

At the rate things are going, driving truck will be as difficult as playing a computer game. In five or 10 years there will be drivers who have never shifted a stick, never had a map open on the jump seat looking for that short cut through the bush – they will just push a few buttons and follow the instructions given to them by a computer. Is that really trucking?

We call ourselves truckers, that is short for truck drivers, because that's what we do, we drive trucks. If the classic truck dies out, we die with it,

You say tomato,
I say tomahto

MARK LEE



to be replaced by machine operators who push buttons in computers with 18 wheels. My grandson will be able to take the wings off a model plane and push that around the carpet, apart from the windows in the side it will look exactly the same as the trucks of the future.

Speaking of youngsters, give a five-year-old a piece of paper and some crayons and ask them to draw a truck. You can guarantee that the end result will look like a 379 or a W9, with a big long hood and a set of fat pipes. It's the way trucks have always looked and it's the way they *should* always look.

Remember, I've driven in Europe

for most of my career. Over there, everything is a square box and half of the time the only way you can tell one truck from another is by reading the name on the badge.

A bit extreme, you may think, but look at the shadow of a ProStar or a Volvo VNL, or a Cascadia, or a T700 – they're all the same.

Now imagine the shadow of a 379, or a W9, or a Western Star – each has it's own distinct shape. They're not called a classic for nothing, the shape of that shadow says 'proper truck,' unlike the new trucks that just block out the sunlight in a shape that signifies that they're a method of moving freight from A to B.

Like I said, I understand why things have to change, but we cannot allow the classic to disappear. If we do, what will the truckers of tomorrow have to dream about?

I've driven one of the newer aerodynamic trucks over here before I

got my Pete. It never got a second glance, even though it was a pretty striking colour and was always clean and shiny.

Yet in my Pete, I'm always getting waved at by young kids in four-wheelers, I've had a group of architects from overseas take pictures of my truck as they said it was an example of classic North American design, I've even had a young lady remove her shirt. None of that ever happened in my modern truck. That's the appeal of the classic and long may it continue. □

– A fourth generation trucker and trucking journalist, Mark Lee uses his 25 years of transcontinental trucking in Europe, Asia, North Africa and now North America to provide an alternative view of life on the road.

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OPINION

Training for a marriage

The training of entry-level drivers in this industry is too often inadequate

Truck driver training schools are a lot like a marriage. Sometimes you get a great one, sometimes not.

What amazes me is once the rookie or newbie (greenhorn, for all you Albertans) is out of school and receives their licence, they feel they can now pursue a life behind the wheel. Nothing could be further from the truth.

If the truck driver training school has not prepared you for your new life-long career, odds are you won't see the inside of a big rig, except to take a road evaluation and be told you are not up to the standards of the company. No marriage here. If the higher powers have their way, and they usually do, soon all companies will need a certified driver trainer or will need to hire one through a consulting company. So,



Guest Column

MARTIN COWIE

if the school cannot put you behind the wheel as a professional or close to it, hope you don't mind serving hamburgers, because that is where you're heading.

After 20 years on the road, I decided to make a change. The manager of a truck driving training school thought I had what it would take to make it as an instructor. He was correct. After a year in the truck and classroom, I became team leader of six instructors. Not long after that, the school opened

up a second facility and I was now a supervisor running the second school.

At the time, in my opinion, the school I was employed by had a program that was second to none. Forty hours in the truck, 40 hours learning the pre-trip inspection and the components associated with the pre-trip, 40 hours learning how to back up the truck and trailer. And 108 hours in the classroom. After 40 hours of backing up a truck and trailer, 95% of the students could perform a blindside backing into a dock and do it within one or two attempts. In my opinion, just about anyone can drive rig straight down the road. If you can back your rig into a dock door on one attempt, I tip my hat to you. I made a lot of money backing another driver's rig into a cross-dock door, due to his lack of training in regards to backing up the unit.

Some of the schools out there, I find, are not strict enough with their regiment. For instance, some schools say that all you need is 30 hours behind the wheel to receive your 'A' licence. This may be true, you will receive your li-

cence. However, you will not get a job with a reputable company or you may not get a job at all due to the fact that you do not have enough hours behind the wheel with a qualified trainer. The more hours the school can offer you in the truck and in the yard backing and learning the components of the truck and trailer, the better off you are.

I'll be honest, back in 1978 when I went for my licence I paid a company \$225 for an hour in the truck for four days straight. On the fifth day, with the company's truck and trailer, I went to the licensing division in Alberta and was taken out for a road test. Back then the pre-trip was to kick the tires, check your signals and away we went. I was back in the licensing office in five minutes with the instructor informing me that I had passed and now I am qualified to drive a tractor-trailer. What?!

I started in a gravel truck and worked my way up to a tractor-trailer; something a lot of drivers out there should consider.

The usual six to seven weeks in the truck driver training school, in my opinion, is information overload. When the newbie leaves the school, they should have the opportunity to phone the school and ask questions regarding their training while they were a student. I found that most of the students forget a lot of the training that happened in class. There is a reason the governments of Ontario and Alberta have brought in their respective apprenticeship programs. They know the potential professional driver will need more than 30 hours behind the wheel. They know that someone heading down our highways doing 105 km/h with 90,000 lbs under them and only 30 hours behind the wheel is a time bomb waiting to go off.

To give you a little more insight to my meaning; I worked for a large company and was advised by the owner that the company had ordered 10 more trucks and needed them to be filled. My driver trainers took out 110 drivers. Of those, they brought me 10 and I failed two of them. My personal problem is: Where are all those drivers being trained? What truck driving school would allow a person to leave their facility when they know the person needs more hours behind the wheel or learning to do a proper pre-trip inspection? The scary part of all this is the drivers who we did not hire are now working for a company that handed them the keys and told them the truck was in the yard and full of fuel.

There may be a marriage of driver and company, however divorce will soon follow due to the possibility of collision, lawsuit and possibly civil court. I respect and tip my hat to those truck driving schools who push their programs with more than 20 or 30 hours behind the wheel. You ask any old-timer truck driver when he stopped learning things in regards to driving a truck and they'll tell you they never stop learning. Sounds like a marriage to me. □

— Martin Cowie is currently a transportation consultant assisting companies with the MTO and DoT compliance. He has over three decades of over-the-road experience and more than three years as a manager and instructor of a truck driving school, training safety and compliance theory to students through a private career college. He can be reached at trans-corp@inbox.com.

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IN MEMORIAM

Great Dane pioneer passes away

SAVANNAH, Ga. – Great Dane Trailers is mourning the passing of the first “true salesman” the company ever had. Chris Hammond Jr., former president and chairman of the board for Great Dane Trailers, passed away Jan. 3 at the age of 98, the company announced.



THREE HAMMONDS: (L-R) Kit Hammond, Chris Hammond IV and Chris Hammond Jr. each worked for Great Dane Trailers.

He joined Great Dane in 1937 as the company’s first salesman, building relationships with customers throughout the southeastern US. He helped found the Truck Trailer Manufacturers Association and later served as its third president in 1943.

In 1949, Hammond also helped develop the industry’s first true refrigerated semi-trailer, according to the company. Hammond was responsible for changing the colour of the Great Dane logo’s oval from black to red in 1953. He retired as Great Dane’s chairman in 1984 but remained on as a consultant. Hammond’s son Kit and grandson Chris both have worked

for the company. Kit retired in 2005 but Chris remains as vice-president, dealer sales.

“Mr. Hammond was a pioneer in the truck trailer industry for more than 50 years, and his influence was instrumental in developing what began as a local trailer company into a national enterprise,” Great Dane said in a release. “Such an example and spirit will not soon be forgotten.” □

Former Truck News O/O of the Year passes on

HAMILTON, Ont. – Herbie Walker, an owner/operator for more than 40 years and the 12th recipient of the *Truck News* Owner/Operator of the Year Award, has died. Walker, 66, passed away suddenly on Dec. 28 in Hamilton, according to his family.

Walker got his start in the mid-’60s hauling softwood lumber for H.S. Bartram Ltd. in Stoney Creek, Ont. A few years later, Walker branched out to work for Erie Flooring Wood Products in West Lorne, Ont. At the time of his award win in Fergus, Ont. the summer of 2005, he had been with that company for more than 33 years. The seasoned veteran was an active humanitarian, both on the road and in his community, having helped police get dangerous drivers off the road, assisting at the scenes of accidents and participating at McDonald’s Restaurants McHappy Days.

The family is asking for donations to be made to the Ronald McDonald House and/or a charity of choice in lieu of flowers. Online condolences may be placed at: www.cresmountfennellchapel.com. □

Gorski Bulk Transport founder passes

WINDSOR, Ont. – Ted Gorski Sr., founder of Gorski Bulk Transport, has passed away at the age of 88. Gorski passed away Dec. 11 after a brief illness. Gorski was known to be equally passionate about agriculture and transportation and was known for pio-

neering the introduction of anhydrous ammonia for farming in Ontario. Donations can be made to the Holy Trinity Church Restoration Fund or the charity of your choice, Gorski’s family said. Visit www.FamiliesFirst.ca to share memories or to donate. □

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Feb	179	174	217	117	182	56%
Mar	211	228	264	131	249	90%
Apr	200	212	296	142	261	84%
May	275	280	316	164	283	73%
Jun	271	288	307	185	294	59%
Jul	197	219	264	156	238	53%
Aug	210	235	219	160	240	50%
Sep	190	206	203	180	234	30%
Oct	188	238	186	168	211	26%
Nov	182	227	143	157	215	37%
Dec	159	214	139	168		

TransCore Canadian Spot Market Freight Index 2006-2010

TransCore index shows spot freight stays strong in November

TransCore's Canadian Freight Index showed a 37% increase in spot market freight volumes for November compared to the same month last year. Volumes were also up 2% compared to October, despite the fact the month usually shows a decline following the US Thanksgiving, TransCore notes. November's results reflect the first month-over-month increase in load posting activity since August and this November's freight availability was the highest for the month since 2007.

TransCore also noted that capacity improved in November. For the first time since January, equipment postings increased a modest 1% (year-over-year). This follows double-digit decreases through much of 2010.

For October, the index showed a 26% increase in year-over-year spot market load levels. October also had the second highest freight volume compared to the same month over the last five years. However, the index also recorded a 23-point dip in spot freight availability compared to

September, which was the third consecutive monthly decline at the time. Load volume levels continue to stay above 200 index points as they have for nine straight months now.

TransCore derives its index from its Loadlink freight-matching service, which includes more than 13 million loads and trucks each year.

As a result of this high volume, TransCore believes its Canadian Freight Index to be representative of the ups and downs in spot market freight movement and provides a historical account of the domestic and cross-border spot market freight movement.

The first four columns in the chart include monthly index values for years 2006 through 2009. The fifth indicates index values for current year 2010. The last column indicates the percentage change from 2009 to 2010.

For the purpose of establishing a baseline for the index, January 2002 (index value of 100) has been used. □

Ground transport costs drop slightly

Results published by the Canadian General Freight Index indicate that after several months of steady increases, the cost of ground transportation for Canadian shippers dropped slightly in October.

The CGFI Total Freight Cost Index decreased by 0.8% in October compared to September, while the Base Rate Index, which excludes the impact of fuel surcharges assessed by carriers, decreased 0.92%. The CGFI is still 7.5% above the April low point and 5.3% above last year's result for the same period.

Notably, average fuel surcharges increased by 6% to 13.77% of base rates when compared to September results. Fuel surcharges increased for the first time in five months, and are beginning to reflect the higher cost of diesel fuel for trucking companies.

In September, the CGFI Total Freight Cost Index increased by 0.4% compared to August, while the Base Rate Index also increased by 0.7%. Average fuel surcharges remained essentially unchanged at 13% for the month.

"We are just starting to see the impact that higher fuel prices will have on shippers and trucking companies, and we expect to monitor this trend through the winter months," said Doug Payne, president and chief operating officer of Nulogx. "As for the slight decline in base rates, this is not unexpected given the consecutive monthly increases we have seen since last April." □

US truck tonnage dips slightly

Seasonally-adjusted US truck tonnage took a 0.1% hit in November, according to the latest data from the American Trucking Associations.

In September and October, tonnage increased a total of 28%. The not seasonally-adjusted index was down 3.7% in November. Compared with November 2009, seasonally-adjusted tonnage was up 3.9%, significantly lower than October's 6% year-over-year increase, the ATA noted. Year-to-date tonnage is up 5.9% compared to the same pe-

riod in 2009.

"Tonnage increased for two consecutive months in September and October and I don't expect volumes to rise every month," said ATA chief economist Bob Costello. "Additionally, the decrease in November is much smaller than the gains during the previous two months." Costello said he expects truck freight tonnage to grow modestly during the first half of 2011 before accelerating in the latter half of the year into 2012. □

Class 8 market poised for take-off: ACT Research

ACT Research is predicting North American demand for Class 8 trucks will top 300,000 units in 2012 and 2013. In its latest *ACT North American Commercial Vehicle Outlook*, the analyst said the fundamentals that would support the start of an upcycle in the market are now in place, with net orders of new trucks and trailers up in the last quarter of 2010. The forecaster says indications are that trucking fleets are ramping up the replacement of vehicles, which has been deferred the past two years. ACT says full-year production of Class 8 trucks will come in at 154,500 units in 2010, up 31% over 2009 but still below normal replacement demand. ACT also suggested trailer production to grow in excess of 50% in both 2010 and 2011.

"The combination of rising freight volumes, improving trucker profits, rising used equipment values and the oldest North American fleet on record have led to a resurgence in demand for new commercial vehicles," said Kenny Vieth, president of ACT Research. "The biggest constraint in 2011 will be the ability of equipment manufacturers and component parts suppliers to ramp up production fast enough. As a result, the upcycle is expected to last through 2013." □

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FEATURE

Snow removal:

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1 Before leaving the yard, drivers pull up alongside the snow removal trailer, leaving enough space between the trailers to allow snow to escape. Previously, they had to pull into the wash bay for snow and ice removal, which was time-consuming, required the help of a second person and cluttered the wash bay with snow and ice.



3 Drivers can now safely remove snow and ice from atop their trailer. It takes about 15 minutes to remove snow and up to a half-hour if ice is present. Drivers use a highly specialized piece of equipment for this task: A piece of hockey board attached to the end of a stick. What could be more Canadian than that?

By James Menzies

BADEN, Ont. – What to do with snow and ice that’s accumulated on trailer tops has been a quandary since, well, since folks began hauling freight in van trailers.

The issue has received more attention lately, however, thanks to new legislation in New Jersey that requires drivers to make a “reasonable effort” to remove snow and ice from the roofs of their trailers or face hefty fines.

There are several snow removal

systems on the market, some more effective – not to mention cost-effective – than others. However, the Erb Group of Companies has come up with a system of its own that provides drivers with a safe and easy way to clear off their



2 Drivers climb the stairs, fabricated by Cress-Ridge Machine, up to the catwalk that’s strategically located within the trailer’s walls to avoid the need for fall protection equipment.

equipment while also finding a secondary use for decommissioned reefer trailers.

Tom Boehler, director of safety and compliance with Erb Group, said the idea stemmed from a prototype system that was built at the company’s Ottawa terminal, but with the catwalk affixed to the outside of the trailer. To avoid a litany of fall protection requirements, the company’s health and safety committee teamed with a local machine shop to fine-tune the system to make it safer and to save drivers the hassle of wearing harnesses. The result is a system that works pretty well. So well, in fact, all nine of Erb’s Canadian terminals now have a system of their own.

The system begins with a good reefer trailer, Boehler explained during a recent tour.

“This trailer was about seven years old,” he said. “It still has valid inspection stickers. Over the years, these trailers gain weight in the walls from moisture and start costing a lot of money to maintain, so we were going to decommission these trailers. But they are still roadworthy and can still be annually inspected and certified if you wanted to move it to a customer’s to clean trailers there.”

Reefers are ideal because they have strong floor, roof and wall structures. Cress-Ridge Machine

out of nearby New Hamburg provided the fabrication of the steps and crossbeams, at a cost of a little under \$9,000. Add the value of the trailer, and each system costs about \$12,000, Boehler said. Cleaning a trailer can take anywhere from 15 minutes for light snow to up to half an hour if ice is present. Drivers are paid for their time and seem to appreciate having the system available.

“I think most of them are glad there’s something there and they don’t have to rely on the wash bay being open and someone coming in to do it (for them),” Boehler said. “It’s something that’s easily-accessible to them and there’s no tie-down required.”

As shippers have learned about the system, some have asked the company for a price on getting a similar snow removal system for their own facilities. With more trailers nearing the end of their freight hauling days, it could mean that Erb has stumbled upon a lucrative side business.

“We’ve had some of our shippers enquire about purchasing trailers through us and setting up the fabrication. I haven’t heard whether they’re going ahead with it or not but we do have some trailers that are going to be decommissioned so the opportunity is there,” he said. □

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OEM/DEALER NEWS

Trailer orders continue to surge in November

COLUMBUS, Ind. – Trailer orders continue to surge, rising 23% month-over-month in November, according to the latest data from ACT Research.

November net orders came in a whopping 215% over November 2009. November's net orders totaled 21,314 units, according to the latest *State of the Industry: US Trailers* report.

The surge has been led by dry van orders. Over the past three months, net orders for dry vans are up 217% compared to the same three-month period last year. All eight trailer types tracked by ACT are up from 2009, although grain trailers and flatdecks only modestly.

"An appropriate description of 2010 trailer net orders would be 'in like a lamb, out like a lion,'" said Kenny Vieth, president and senior analyst with ACT Research. "With rising trucker profits and deferred capital investment, the stage is set for healthy trailer demand in 2011. History shows that when the industry cycles, it is typically a two to three year process." □



LESS WASTE FOR REFUSE FLEET: Steve Cooke, maintenance manager for National Waste Services in Ajax, Ont. says DuraSeal tires are proving to reduce flats in the company's refuse fleet.

Five years in, Goodyear seeing strong sales of DuraSeal tires

AKRON, Ohio – As Goodyear celebrates the fifth anniversary of its DuraSeal tire sealant technology, the company says it is seeing strong interest in the product.

Goodyear says its DuraSeal tires are the only truck tires with a built-in sealant, which instantly seals punctures of up to a quarter inch. It was first rolled out for the waste industry and later expanded to tire applications.

"Growth for DuraSeal Technology has been tremendous, and day-in, day-out, it's helping to prevent flats for our customers," said Bruce Woodruff, director of marketing for Goodyear. "We've seen our sales nearly triple on our trailer tires with DuraSeal Technology in the past year. What's more, our G288 MSA – a mixed service tire for use in the waste industry, especially transfer dump operations, as well as in construction applications, has doubled in sales in the past 12 months."

Goodyear officials say the DuraSeal technology is well-suited for trailer positions.

"Our research, analyzing all flats that are processed through fleetHQ, our emergency roadside service program, showed that a majority of flats

occur in the trailer position," Woodruff said. "Trailers not only pick up nails and other debris on the road, but when backing into loading docks."

Ajax, Ont.-based National Waste Services has been testing Goodyear's DuraSeal tires on the drive position of its roll-off truck based in Lindsay. Over two years, the tires have run 175,000 kms without a flat, which maintenance manager Steve Cooke says is "extraordinary" given the application. Previously, Cooke said the company's trucks would commonly get two or more flats in a week.

Because of the success of the test, National Waste Services now uses the Goodyear G177 with DuraSeal on the drive positions of trucks that operate in rural areas. It has also begun using DuraSeal tires on its eight UAG open-top and four compact trailers.

"It's critical for those highway units not to have any downtime," Cooke said. "It's a time-sensitive run because the drivers have just enough time to make one trip down to landfills and then drive back to load up for the next morning. We can't have the drivers sitting on the side of the 401 waiting to get a flat tire repaired." □



STRONG ORDERS: Class 8 order boards are filling up, ACT reports.

December Class 8 orders up 115% y-o-y

COLUMBUS, Ind. – North American net orders of Class 8 trucks surged to 25,500 units in December, marking a year-over-year increase of 115% according to ACT Research. While the numbers are preliminary, they are typically accurate to within 5%.

"The industry closed 2010 with a string of three strong months of net orders. With nearly 71,000 orders booked, the fourth quarter was the best quarter for Class 8 vehicles since the second quarter of 2006," said Kenny Vieth, president and senior analyst. "The ramp up in demand is consistent with the up-cycle we have been forecasting for over a year and confirms production levels will increase significantly in 2011." □

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OEM/DEALER NEWS

Kenworth extends extended warranty program

KIRKLAND, Wash. – Kenworth and Paccar Financial's extended warranty program is now available through March 31 for Canadian customers who purchase new Kenworth Class 8 factory trucks that meet eligibility requirements.

Kenworth customers may receive a three-year/480,000-kilometre basic vehicle extended warranty by choosing Paccar Financial to finance purchases of new Kenworth Class 8 trucks with a standard highway warranty.

"Qualifying Class 8 customers receive an additional two years and 320,000 kilometres of warranty coverage valued at more than US\$5,700 per eligible truck under this joint Kenworth and Paccar Financial program," said Gary Moore, Kenworth assistant general manager for marketing and sales. "The World's Best trucks from Kenworth and competitive financing packages and services



FREE EXTENSION: Qualifying Class 8 purchases financed by Paccar Financial will net a customer two additional years of coverage for a limited time.

from Paccar Financial provide customers with a cost-effective, winning combination."

The offer is available on Kenworth trucks ordered on or after Sept. 16 and financed through Paccar Financial no later than March

31, which is extended from the prior deadline of Dec. 31. There is a maximum quantity of 20 units per customer. For more information on program terms and conditions, visit www.kenworth.com or call 800-777-8525. □

Hino wins J.D. Power award for MD engines

NOVI, Mich. – For the third straight year, Hino's engines have won a J.D. Power and Associates award for Medium-Duty Truck Engine satisfaction.

The study measures customer perceptions of 2009 model year Classes 5-7 vehicles. Eight factors were used to measure overall engine satisfaction, including: reliability; accessibility to components for service; engine warranty; engine control module; maintaining speeds on grades; fuel economy; vibration at idle; and acceleration while loaded.

"Hino Trucks' heritage of design excellence and advanced engineering is reflected in every truck. The fact that Hino's proprietary engine has received this award for each of the three years the award has been given is a tremendous accomplishment," said Glenn Ellis, vice-president of marketing and dealers operations for Hino Trucks. "As the emission regulations continue to challenge the engine manufacturers to produce more efficient, cleaner engines, Hino is proud to meet this challenge and maintain the quality, durability and reliability our customers demand." □

Bendix welcomes regs that limit copper in brakes

ELYRIA, Ohio – Bendix Spicer Foundation Brake is applauding state laws in California and Washington that reduce the amount of copper allowed in brake friction materials, beginning in 2021.

Bendix says its current line of foundation drum brakes already meet the new mandates. California and Washington are placing limits on copper content to reduce the harmful effect toxic copper brake dust runoff can have on waterways. Rhode Island and New York are also considering similar legislation.

"We commend the lawmakers and the other parties involved who worked hard to bring the legislation to fruition," said Walt Frankiewicz, president of Bendix Spicer Foundation Brake. "These laws address key environmental needs and, most importantly, bring greater attention to the commercial vehicles used on our nation's roadways."

California's law limits brakes to no more than 5% copper beginning in 2021 with the limit slated to be reduced to 0.5% by 2025. Washington's law also places a 5% limit for 2021 and an advisory committee will consider lowering it further in subsequent years.

Bendix says its drum brake linings already contain less than 5% copper and are nearly compliant with California's 2025 restriction. The company's disc brakes are also compliant with the 2021 requirement. □



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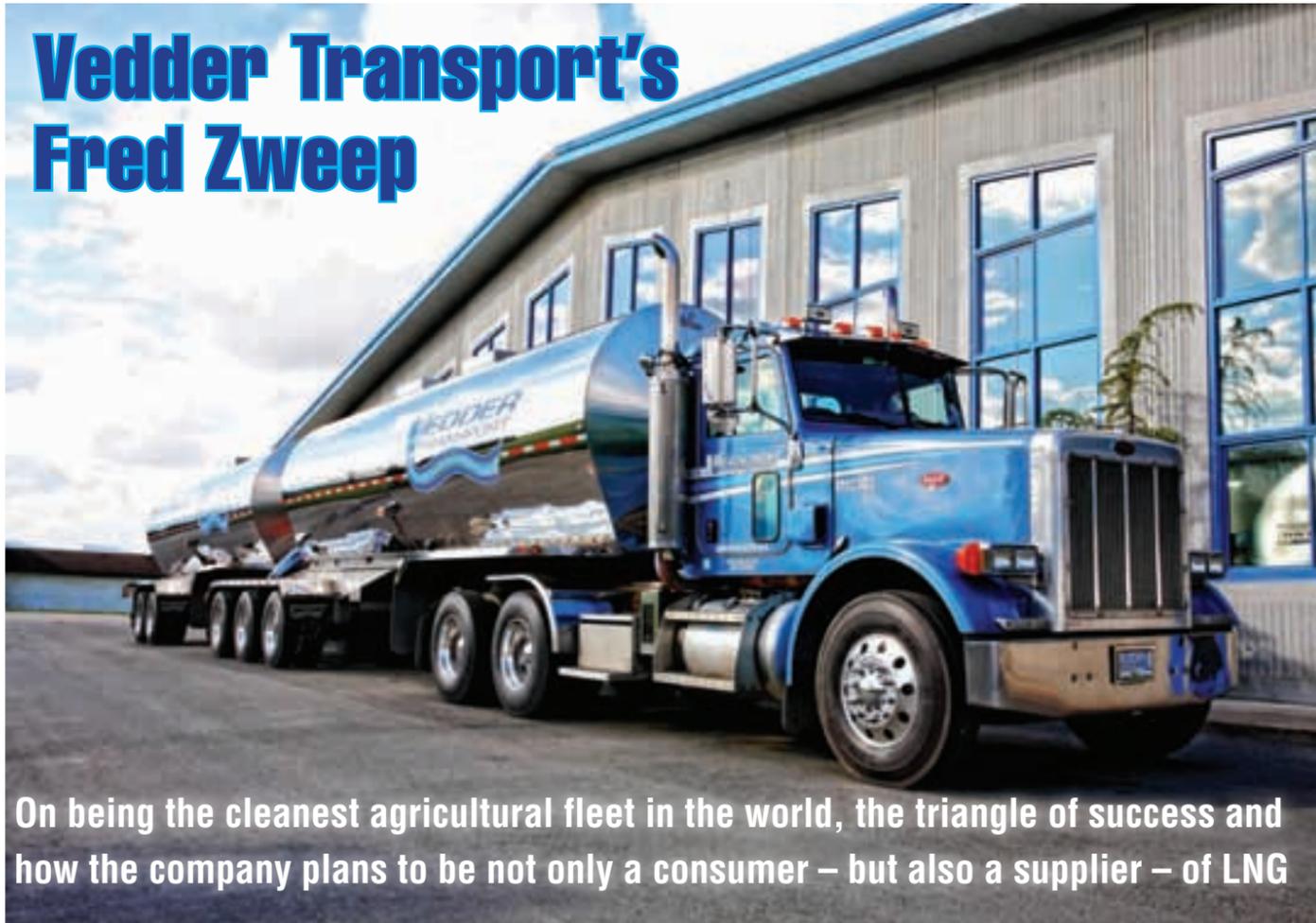
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EXECUTIVE VIEW

Vedder Transport's Fred Zweep



On being the cleanest agricultural fleet in the world, the triangle of success and how the company plans to be not only a consumer – but also a supplier – of LNG

By James Menzies

ABBOTSFORD, B.C. – As Vedder Transport president Fred Zweep sees it, the company's recent order for 50 liquefied natural gas (LNG)-powered Peterbilt Model 386s is only the tip of the iceberg. Already, the fleet is bidding on a job that would require the purchase of an additional 25 LNG-powered trucks and through a partnership with natural gas supplier Terasen Gas, Vedder will not only consume gas – but supply it as well.

In subsequent phases of Vedder's foray into the world of natural gas-powered transportation, the fleet will build and operate commercial cardlocks, retailing gas to other carriers, making natural gas-powered trucks more viable for fleets operating in the Lower Mainland of B.C. and eventually into Alberta. Zweep is quick to credit Claude Robert, chair and CEO of Robert Transport for "instilling the vision" of a Canadian transportation network that's fueled by natural gas. Robert ordered 180 LNG-powered trucks last fall.

Truck News executive editor James Menzies caught up with Zweep to learn what was behind Vedder's move to natural gas and what the future may hold for this promising alternative fuel.

TN: As a mid-sized trucking company, Vedder may seem an unlikely pioneer when it comes to natural gas. What prompted the company to be an early adopter?

Zweep: I think there were a number of reasons. One of them is that on the food grade side of our business, we serve the agricultural industry and they're forever asking what we are doing to become greener as an organization. When we did our research on LNG technology, it certainly told us we'd be a pioneer – which makes us nervous, by the way – but at the same time it would also put us at the forefront with our customers.

One of our largest clients is the B.C. Milk Marketing Board and we are probably the largest milk hauler in all of Canada. We pick up 1.4 mil-

lion litres of milk every 24 hours, going on and off the farms locally here in B.C., so it certainly provides us with the opportunity to reduce our carbon footprint in excess of about 27% and it puts us at the forefront of being a leader. I believe we will be cleanest agricultural transporter in the world.

TN: Are your customers willing to pay a premium for that?

Zweep: When we looked at it from a financial perspective, one of the reasons why you want to invest in the technology is the opportunity to be able to balance your fuel management program.

Having lived through when Wall Street ran up the barrel of oil to \$120-\$140, and paying \$1.35-\$1.45 per litre (for diesel), we were looking at ways how can we manage that more prudently.

We have an abundance of natural gas, not only in Canada, but particularly here in B.C. In the northeastern part of our province, we have a 100-year find of shale gas that once goes it through the fracking process will be available to us. Looking at countries around the world, although we may view them as oil barons, you look at Dubai; Dubai operates the majority of their transport infrastructure on natural gas and exports their oil. So when we took a look at that, it gave us an opportunity to say: 'You know what, we may be able to manage our exposure to the significant fluctuations and what happened with the barrel of oil (in 2008).'

TN: What kinds of savings do you expect to see over the life of the vehicles?

Zweep: Over a 20-year history, there has always been a spread between natural gas and diesel. When you break it out to a distillate litre cost, there has never been a convergence. When oil was \$120-\$140 per barrel and we were paying \$1.35-\$1.45 per litre at the pump, natural gas was at its peak as well and there was still a significant spread between diesel and the equivalent in natural gas.

TN: Can you describe the duty cycles these natural gas trucks will be performing under?

Zweep: The equipment is going to be broken into three business units. Twenty-five are going to be bulk milk hauling in B.C. in super-train applications with a 140,000-lb GVW.

Ten of the vehicles will be utilized in a flatdeck, short-haul super-train operation in B.C. and the Pacific Northwest and that will also be in a 140,000-lb GVW.

Then, we'll be operating the remaining 15 units in the Lower Mainland in an 80,000- to 105,000-lb GVW.

The 50 units are all return-to-base pieces of equipment. They go out and return to base every 12-14 hours. Some of the equipment we'll be double-shifting. In conjunction with the purchase, we have developed a relationship with Terasen Gas to build a commercial cardlock for natural gas on our property here in Abbotsford.

TN: Who will fuel the trucks? Will the drivers be trained on fueling the equipment?

Zweep: With our vision of having a retail commercial cardlock operation, we'll have that manned 24 hours a day.

TN: The weights you described are quite heavy. Has natural gas been tested at those GVWs?

Zweep: Yes, they have. Back in 2006 the equipment was operated by Challenger on a garbage haul. They would take 140,000 lbs and go to Michigan every day. They were quite impressed with it. The technology is not the issue; it's the distribution and the fueling network that's the challenge with LNG.

TN: First Robert, and now Vedder. You both made significant investments in LNG-powered trucks and it seems Peterbilt is winning the majority of the business here in Canada. Why is that? Have you always been a Pete guy or is there something about Peterbilt that makes them appealing from a nat-

ural gas perspective?

Zweep: When we did our due diligence, I spent five months with our CEO Larry Wiebe travelling through North America learning as much as we could about the technology, who has adopted the technology and the pros and cons of the technology.

We visited over 17 different transportation organizations and probably half a dozen retail commercial cardlocks in the US and we found ourselves in some interesting places.

What we found was there are three ingredients to success in transitioning from a traditional diesel fleet to an LNG fleet. It's a triangle of success. You need to have two suppliers and a willing participant to implement the technology.

As the transporter, we're the willing participant. Then, you require a very good dealer network because the dealer has to take on the responsibility of maintaining the technology and they have to educate themselves on the technology so they understand it when it comes into their shop.

And then the third participant has to be the supplier of the technology, in this case it's Westport. What we found in all the locations we went to was (if there were problems), one of the three didn't work. What we found in our research was, where LNG was slow to get out of the gate it was because an organization didn't put the resources forth in terms of training and education of the fleet or the dealer didn't put forth the effort in training and bringing their technicians up to speed. The constant we always found was Westport's desire to make the technology work and to educate people.

The technology is durable, it's bearable and it functions well. Will there be hiccups? Yeah, we're pretty sure there will be. But if you have a relationship – it's no different than you do with your diesel equipment suppliers – you will find common ground and work through those things. But you have to have a triangle of relationships. When something didn't work in the US, one of those three or two of those three didn't work.

To answer your question, why Peterbilt? We've been a very large user of Peterbilt, but in our fleet what we found was Peterbilt and its sister company Kenworth, although both owned by Paccar, have different philosophies.

Peterbilt is a one-truck/one-build mentality. When building a truck for you, it's very much like an owner/operator, so a fleet like ours or like Robert, we're an oddity to them. We're going to buy more than one vehicle from them but their culture is around that owner/operator model so it's a one-truck/one-sale mentality, so every truck they sell is extremely important to them right down to the detail.

It's nothing against Kenworth, but they're more of a mass producer, so we found with the culture within Peterbilt they would pay particular attention to what our needs and desires were going to be when we bring this equipment into the fleet, and it has proven to be true.

Peterbilt Pacific in B.C. took it upon themselves – without us asking – they contacted Westport and

they went down and spent time with Peterbilt's engineering team in Denton, Texas to educate themselves on what LNG was going to be and whether it was something they wanted to invest their dealership in.

Why are we taking this leap of faith? We do believe in the technology. We are so traditional in our thinking in this industry. We have to be open-minded or we will never progress. There are a number of great fleets throughout Canada that have phenomenal entrepreneurs and interesting engineering minds who at one time or another have taken a leap of faith from a trailer perspective or tractor perspective. Although we're nervous, we're nervous because we're pioneers and it's out of our typical realm.

Sometimes the stars do line up for you and they've lined up for us. It's a Richmond-based technology so if we have an issue, we only have to drive 40 miles and we are face-to-face (with Westport), our dealer is two blocks from our property and we sit on 36 acres of prime property here in the Fraser Valley in the Lower Mainland of B.C. and we have a terrific parcel of land we can develop into a commercial retail cardlock operation.

TN: Your vision then, is to be not only a consumer of natural gas but also a retailer?

Zweep: Yes, as other fleets come on-board, they have the opportunity to come use that facility because it's a joint venture between us and Terasen Gas.

TN: Is Terasen also assisting you with the purchase of the equipment in any way?

Zweep: Yes, they have an energy efficiency program that allows for them to provide funding to entice people to transition to LNG technology.

TN: Are your drivers and mechanics nervous about the switch or are they excited about it?

Zweep: They're excited about it for a couple of reasons, and this is where one of the stars lined up. Where this equipment is being deployed, traditionally it's going to locations that are longstanding establishments that aren't necessarily conducive for the type of equipment we take on and off their properties.

With the Peterbilt 386 set-back axle (SBA), we've been able to purchase a tool for our driving fleet that will enable them to have more versatility getting on and off our clients' properties that we visit every day. In the demonstrations we had on our property, (drivers loved) the quietness of the engine. The tractor is so quiet. We spoke to people in the US who told us they felt half as tired at the end of their shift because they didn't have that noise level bothering them.

TN: How's the torque?

Zweep: The truck will still run on diesel, that's what creates the ignition. The natural gas creates the energy to keep the piston moving but it still does have that diesel.

The only performance difference we found was at lift-off from a dead stop, you're going to have a slight hesitation for a split second.

In North America, we love hav-

'You look at Dubai; Dubai operates the majority of their transport infrastructure on natural gas and exports their oil.'

Fred Zweep, Vedder Transport

ing horsepower and we want to get from zero to 60 very quickly and a diesel engine is built that way, as soon as you press the accelerator you have response immediately whereas with natural gas you'll have a slight hesitation.

Drivers also found, because the engines were so quiet, they realized they actually learned how to operate a diesel tractor initially by observing the tach and over time it was by ear. What we found in our test cycles was that our drivers were over-revving the equipment substantially because it was so quiet. They'd look down and realize they need to shift at 1,450 rpm and they're sitting at

1,800-1,900, so that's going to be one of the challenges we have. We've laid out the groundwork, we have a training module in place and we have the resources in place to train the folks who will be driving them.

We are going to implement the equipment over a period of time where all 50 of those vehicles will be up and running before Dec. 31, 2011.

TN: You're obviously a big believer in natural gas. Do you foresee a day when it will be practical for linehaul applications in North America or will it always be a regional solution?

Zweep: We're bidding on an

opportunity here for quite a significant haul, the tender was released yesterday and the requirement is that you will have approximately 25 vehicles in a 140,000-lb GVW configuration and the requirement is that you'll be LNG.

It's going to take time, there's no question about it. We're excited about it, we've done our due diligence and put a tremendous amount of time, effort and resources into looking at the technology and understanding the infrastructure and the restraints of the infrastructure.

We look at it in three phases. Phase 1 is what we're doing today with the acquisition of these 50 vehicles. For Phase 2, we operate a significant fleet of equipment that operates between B.C. and Alberta and we're committed to, within the next three years, to build our own cardlock operations to fuel LNG vehicles to go up and over the mountains. The third phase will be to build our own infrastructure for the operations we serve in Alberta. □

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Mark Dalton: Owner/Operator

An eye for an eye

By Edo van Belkom

Mark was driving westward through Saskatchewan when his cell phone rang. He checked the number on his phone, saw that it was Bud calling and put the call onto his hands-free device.

"Hello?" he said.

"Hi Mark," said the caller, then a pause.

"Who's this?" Mark said. He knew it was Bud, but he couldn't resist giving his dispatcher a hard time. Bud had the same caller ID technology as Mark did, but that didn't stop him from playing the "Mark who?" game every time he called. Now it was time for a little payback.

"C'mon Dalton, you know it's me."

"Me who?"

"Me Bud."

"I don't know any Mebud," Mark said. "I have ear buds, and an iPod, but no Mebuds."

"Smarten up Dalton, this is important."

The smile immediately disappeared from Mark's face. It was all funny stuff, but maybe not the right time for it. "What's up?"

"I need you to head up to Prince George to pick up a load that's stranded there."

"One of your drivers bailed on you?"

"No, I wish it was just that."

"What could be worse than a driver quitting on Bud in the middle of a load?" Mark wondered. Whatever was left of Mark's playfulness was suddenly gone. "What's going on?"

"You remember a guy by the name of Earl Purcell?"

"The name rings a bell."

"He's an older guy, over 65 but still drives a couple of times a month for me, you know, for a bit of extra money and something to do."

"Is that the guy who drove the flowers for your daughter's wedding all the way from South Carolina?"

"Yeah, that's him. Did it in one shot. He already had a load and went two hours out of his way to pick up the flowers. I offered him money, but all he wanted was a piece of the wedding cake."

"I know who he is now... gave me a litre of oil once at a truck stop when everything was closed. I still haven't given it back to him."

"Well here's your chance to pay him back."

"Why? What happened?"

Bud took a deep breath and let

out a sigh. "He was on the highway heading north toward Prince George when some guy on the side of the road flagged him down looking for help."

"A trucker?"

"No, some guy in a car," Bud said. "Earl can't pass someone in trouble so he pulls over and gets out of his truck to see what he can do." A pause. "And that's when they jumped him."

"Who?"

"Three guys. In addition to the guy out on the highway, there were two more in the car. As Earl's looking under the hood, one of them hits him with a tire iron and once he's on the ground all three men wail on him... punches, kicks, the iron."

"I heard about that attack on television. It was everywhere... on TV, the radio, newspapers. I had no idea the guy was one of your drivers."

"One of my best and most experienced drivers. These thugs left him on the side of the road for dead, but he's a scrapper. When he was found a while later, he was taken to the hospital in Prince George, but he was in such bad shape they couldn't do everything he needed done. He had to be airlifted to Vancouver where they reconstructed his face."

"Is he going to live?"

"Yeah, he'll live, but who knows what the damage will be to his brain, his eyes? He might have to learn everything all over again."

"Will he drive again?"

"I doubt it," Bud said. "Who would want to after something like that?"

"I hear you," Mark said, understanding completely. He'd once stopped on the side of the road to help a girl who looked as if she were being harassed by a bunch of goons. He stopped to help and wound up in the hospital for his trouble.

And to make matters worse, Mother Load had been trashed to the point where he almost had to buy a new truck. Luckily for him, the girl's father was rich and paid to get Mother Load repaired.

But even though everything worked out all right for him in the end, Mark never passed a motorist on the side of the road without first wondering whether something bad might happen to him if he stopped.

He hated to admit it, but there had been plenty of times in which he'd



Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

just driven on by thinking that he probably couldn't help the person in trouble or that they'd likely already called somebody and help was on the way.

It wasn't a good feeling, looking the other way and driving on by, but it was safe.

"Now, I'm not naive enough to think that if I give you Earl's load, you'll just pick it up and deliver it without a lot of fuss and bother."

"Who, me?"

"Yeah, you'll probably end up in the thick of it, looking for the guys that did this to Earl or doing something nice so his family won't have to suffer."

"That does sound a little bit like me."

"Well, just so you know, the Canadian Trucking Alliance and the British Columbia Trucking Association have each put up a \$10,000 reward for anyone who helps catch and convict the men responsible for this."

"Twenty grand, eh? You know I'd do it for nothing."

"I know that, but with that much money as an incentive, there are going to be dozens, if not hundreds of truck drivers playing detective out there."

"Might not be a bad thing," said Mark. The money will put the capture of these criminals at the forefront of everyone's mind and with thousands of drivers on the lookout for clues, it might only be a matter of time before the thugs were caught and brought to justice.

"Yeah, well, just be careful whatever you do."

"Awe, Bud. I didn't know you cared."

"I've already got one driver in the hospital, I don't need another one."

Mark understood.

Bud gave Mark the information he needed to get Earl's load out of the yard in Prince George. "The load is already a day late, but I called the receiver and explained what happened, and he's giving us a couple of day's grace. But only a couple."

"Where's it going?"

"A warehouse in Oregon."

"I'll get it there."

"I know that," Bud said. "I just don't want you doing anything stupid before you get it there."

"Bye, Bud," Mark said, hanging up the phone.

Mark continued heading west. Even though the load he was supposed to pick up was already late, he'd head up to Prince George tomorrow.

Today he had to reach Vancouver to drop off his load and visit a hero. □

- Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 2 of An Eye for an Eye.

Did you know that there are two full-length novels featuring Mark Dalton?: Mark Dalton "SmartDriver" and Mark Dalton "Troubleload." For your free copy register with ecoENERGY for Fleets (Fleet Smart) at fleetsmart.gc.ca. Both are also available in audio book format.

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OPINION

Entering the smart phone era

I've never been one to rush into anything. Traditionally, I won't make any major buying decision without researching the ying-yang out of it.

This hasn't always been the case. I'm the proud owner of an original Betamax hi-fi machine that hasn't seen the light of day in decades. At the time, I was convinced Betamax was the way of the future.

If Sony hung its name on it, so should I. We all know the rest of the story. VHS became the technology of choice and I got burned. For years, I left it under the TV. It was a great conversation piece that usually involved laughter followed by 'I can't believe you bought that.'

It sits to this day below a staircase in the back room. Rest its soul.

That misinformed buying decision has played on my mind throughout the years.

This leads me to my most recent purchase. For some time now, the sales and editorial staff of *Truck News* have been using smart phones. These handheld devices do so much that it's a little bit scary.

They connect to our server at work, which allows them access to work files and e-mails, they access the Internet, take pictures, tell you the weather, organize appointments...the applications (the cool people refer to them as "apps") are endless.

I can't tell you how many times I have been asked why I don't own a Blackberry or iPhone. A few of my

Publisher's Comment

ROB WILKINS



clients have asked me how I manage to do business without one? The fact is, it can be done. Mind you, it's getting harder since e-mail has taken over as the preferred method of communication.

My problems started when I was on the road. Without e-mail access I knew I could be missing something of significance. Even when I had my cell phone, it wouldn't be much help since it can't access my e-mails. It was time I considered my options.

After much consideration, and flashbacks of an old useless BetaMax player, I jumped into the 2000s. I'm now an iPhone man.

I've had it now for two months and have found it's an amazing piece of technology. I'm not going to embarrass myself by telling you what this baby is capable of. Most of you already know that, but for all the hold-outs out there, it's time to embrace the technology. You'll be shocked.

My only challenge now is when to turn the iPhone off for the day. It's not as easy as you may think. □

— Rob Wilkins is the publisher of *Truck News* and can be reached at 416-510-5123.



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Current Drivers License: Do you have a Commercial License? Yes No

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Has your license ever been suspended? Yes No Total Truck Driving Experience _____ /yrs

Last Employer _____

Name _____ Company City _____ Prov/State _____

Tel _____ Start/End Date _____

Job Description _____ Reason for Leaving _____

Certification/Training:
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Can you lift 50lbs? Yes No

Cross Border Travel: I am able to cross the Canada/U.S. border to haul International loads Yes No

I am willing to cross the border Yes I am FAST approved Yes No

Would you like to be contacted by driver agencies? Yes No

By filling out and signing this application, I agree to abide by Driverlink's terms and conditions and consent to the use of personal information according to the Driverlink privacy policy.

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TSQ

BOWMANVILLE, Ont. – The US-based Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration has proposed a new string of changes to its Hours-of-Service rules, including the possibility of dropping the maximum daily driving time from 11 hours to 10.

Both times are currently under consideration, though FMCSA officials have said they currently favour a 10-hour limit.

Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has said the group is working towards an HoS rule that “will help create an environment where commercial truck drivers are rested, alert and focused on safety while on the job.”

But would drivers endorse the proposed changes? We went to the Fifth Wheel Truck Stop in Bowmanville, Ont. to see if drivers would support a similar change to Canada’s rules.

Tim Broad, a driver with Cooney



Truck Stop Question

Do you think Canada should reduce its maximum daily driving limit?

ADAM LEDLOW



Tim Broad

Transport out of Toronto, says the current daily driving limit of 13 hours in Canada is tough enough to deal with already without lowering it.

“You have to do 13 hours in a

16-hour day. You have traffic, dispatch issues and load issues. To drop it like they did before, guys were complaining about not getting enough hours and drive time in. You have to shut down in the middle of wherever if you run out of time,” Broad said.

“Canada should stay the same because if you drive more hours then it’s more money. They bumped up the sleeping hours to 10 hours instead of the eight, so you are gaining two on both ends.”

Alan James, a driver with Air Heat Supplies in Mississauga,

Ont. says the current 13-hour rule “is not overextending it or anything,” so he’s fine to keep things as they are.

“For me it doesn’t matter because I only work eight to nine hours a day anyway. I don’t drive for 13 hours straight, but I break it down into two stops. I still feel fine; it’s not a problem. You are in that zone and you just go.”



Keith Taylor

Keith Taylor, a driver with Flanagan Food Service out of Kitchener, Ont., says Canada is too sparse a country to be lowering driving time for truckers.

“We’re too sparse. We’re wide open. Right now, all the service centres are closed along the 401 and there are no rest stops. If you cut the guys’ hours back, they are going to get halfway between here and nowhere with no place to stop,” Taylor says.

“What are you going to accomplish? They are going to have to break the law to get someplace where it is safe. Just leave it alone.”

As an ex-truck enforcement officer, Taylor acknowledges the FMCSA’s argument about reducing driver fatigue, but notes that truckers are not the only problem in this area.

“You pick on the trucker, but what about the guy commuting into the city to work an eight-hour day in the city and he’s got a three-hour commute both ways? They don’t say anything about him. He is the one that is falling asleep and causing the accidents.”



Cody King

Cody King, another Flanagan Food Service driver, but based out of Brockville, Ont., says the weather in Canada is harsher than the US and truckers need that extra time to get from stop to stop.

“Down in the US, they don’t have as much snow as we have up here, and as it is we’re getting 13 hours and we’re hardly having enough time to do what we need to do,” he told *Truck News*. “That doesn’t accommodate accidents or construction, and they don’t leave any time for anything else. If they (lower daily driving limits), there are going to be a lot more loads not being delivered on time and a lot more trucks using parking lots.” □

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