

TRUCK NEWS

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Boom and bust

Trucking in northeastern Quebec and Newfoundland is being driven by the Muskrat Falls development.

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Jim Bray tests the new Sprinter 4x4 on some mucky B.C. logging roads. Could he get it stuck?

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Trucking illustrated

On a desolate stretch of Ontario highway a new industry hero is born in living colour.

All the rage at MATS

From old classics to futuristic concept trucks, here's what caught our attention at the Mid-America Trucking Show

By James Menzies, with files from Sonia Straface

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

They say you can gauge the health of the North American trucking industry based on the turnout at the Mid-America Trucking Show. If that's the case, then things must be pretty rosy.

It seemed no floor space went unoccupied and the aisles were packed with visitors eager to check out the latest equipment. If you couldn't make the show yourself, don't worry, we've got you covered. Here's a complete report on what caught our attention at the show.

The outlook

Top executives speaking at the Mid-America Trucking Show were universally upbeat about the year ahead. Strong Class 8 truck demand is expected to continue through 2015, with production climbing 15-20% over 2014's healthy volumes, according to Joe

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Electronic stability control, as demonstrated here by Bendix, is likely to be required on tractor-trailers. The only question is, will Canada or the US be first to pass legislation?

Driving a safety mandate

Transport Canada is moving forward with mandates that would require the use of electronic stability control and electronic logging devices

By Sonia Straface

TORONTO, ONTARIO

After a roundtable meeting with Canadian Trucking Alliance carrier members March 19, Federal Transport Minister, Lisa Raitt announced she would push forward mandates for electronic logging devices (ELDs) and electronic stability control (ESC) systems in order to improve road safety.

"What I told everyone (in the roundtable) is that you have my personal support to ensure that we have something like this in the legislation in Canada and we want to mimic what's going on in the US, but we also want to be mindful of the fact that sometimes we can move the United States in a direction and I think when it comes to safety, this is incredibly important," she told *Truck News* following the meeting.

The Minister said she believes the US will be coming out with its rule on mandatory ELDs and ESC in the fall (see related story, pg. 14), and that she has Transport Canada geared up as a result, to get Canada in a position where ELDs and ESC can be mandated in this country, too.

"We believe that for safety reasons electronic logs is the way to go and we are going to be discussing this again," she added. "I've already talked to (Ontario Transport)

Minister Steven Del Duca on this topic as well...and now that means we just need that one last push to make sure it's mandatory in Canada. I'm taking it seriously and I'm going to keep working to get it done."

She claimed that accidents on Canadian highways are sometimes the result of human factors, like fatigue.

"If you can eliminate or mitigate the human factors associated with fatigue as much as possible...then it makes good sense and it blends in with everything we're trying to do in our government," she said. "So I'm going to continue to ensure that (mandating ELDs and ESC) is top of mind and a top priority in Transport Canada and bring it to a close in the coming months."

As far as stability control goes, the Minister said implementing that is not just about safety, but about the traffic rollovers caused in busy areas like Toronto.

"There's lots of work between ourselves and the United States on it (stability)," she said. "We also have to work provincially on those matters so that's another which just makes a lot of sense with safety and preventing accidents that can really jam up a place like downtown Toronto."

The Minister agreed that working with the US to har-

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Editorial Comment

JAMES MENZIES



The dawn of the 'uncrashable' truck

One of my key takeaways from the Mid-America Trucking Show in March was the ongoing evolution of active safety systems, which continue to add new crash-avoidance and fleet monitoring capabilities.

I left the show wondering if we'll ever in our lifetime see an uncrashable truck. You won't hear any OEMs or safety system suppliers use the term 'uncrashable,' as none of the systems that exist today can guarantee the elimination of all crashes.

It's the same reason they don't use the term crash 'avoidance'; they prefer 'collision mitigation' because at the very least, they should be able to reduce the impact and damage incurred in a collision, if not prevent it altogether. And the last thing you want to do is instill in drivers the thought the vehicle they're piloting can't be crashed.

However, even if you took all the active safety systems available on the market today and combined them on a single vehicle, you'd have to work pretty hard to wreck that truck. The most common types of crashes - rollovers and rear-enders - have solutions in the

market today that will all but eliminate them.

Electronic stability control intervenes when a rollover is imminent, applying the appropriate brakes to bring the tractor-trailer back under control and to keep the rubber on the road. Similarly, radar-based systems that monitor following distance provide constant reminders to the driver to maintain a safe distance and if necessary, will apply the brakes to prevent a rear-end collision.

A new Overspeed Alert feature added by Bendix to its new Wingman Fusion safety system incorporates a camera that reads roadside speed limit signs and notifies fleet managers when the driver was exceeding the posted limit by 10 mph or more. A total of 20 seconds of video is captured when speeding occurs, providing context for follow-up discussions between the driver and safety manager.

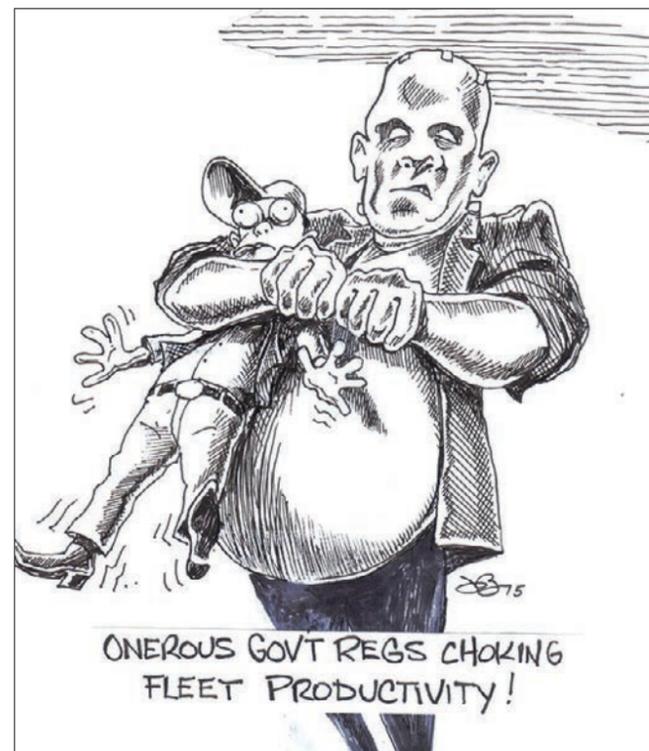
Of course there are still gaps in coverage that these safety systems do not yet address. For example, Overspeed Alert will help address speeding, but will do nothing to warn of drivers who

are travelling too fast for conditions, assuming they're still driving below the posted limit.

And the radar systems used to monitor following distance still don't have the ability to recognize wildlife - unless such creatures happen to have metallic antlers.

Still, it's amazing to me how far this technology has advanced in just the past decade or so. And lawmakers are noticing, too. As you can read in this month's issue, Canada has committed to mandating stability control and the US is expected to publish its own mandate any week now. A discussion is occurring in the US right now about mandating other active safety systems as well.

Now that the technology exists to greatly reduce truck crashes, and to, if not develop an uncrashable truck, at



least something close to it, you can expect government to take even greater interest in seeing these technologies deployed. And is that a bad thing? ●

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The view with Lou

LOU SMYRLIS



Stay the course on natural gas

When it comes to the future viability of natural gas the naysayers are having their day right now as uncharacteristically low crude oil pricing is raising doubts about the wisdom of carriers who began to invest heavily in natural gas a few years ago.

For certain, the enthusiasm about natural gas - and other alternative-powered vehicles - that was everywhere just a couple of years ago is on the wane.

Well, the naysayers can keep on talking, as I'm sure they will, but just like a cold winter or wet summer don't mean global warming is not for real, the current state of cheap crude doesn't mean natural gas is not a good long term bet.

The current drop in oil prices has

much more to do with a game of political chicken among oil-producing nations - basically the Saudis are keeping production high and reducing pricing in the process as an aggressive play for market share.

Canada and the US are so far not backing down. There is more crude finding its way into the market from the Canadian oil sands. How?

Expansions to existing pipelines have increased delivery capabilities by 2,030,000 barrels per day (bpd). Crude moving by rail on its own is projected to increase from the 200,000 bpd in 2013 to 700,000 bpd by 2016.

Canadian exports of crude to the US are at record levels - 3,260,000 bpd. I don't know who will be the first

to blink in this game of "low price" chicken but surely someone will. And then crude oil pricing will once again start to rise.

In the meantime, fleets such as C.A.T, which is investing in 100 natural gas-powered trucks, are staying the course.

Last year 18,000 new natural gas vehicles were deployed in the US, almost half of them of the Classes 7/8 variety. The fuelling infrastructure - one of the greatest stumbling blocks to making the move to natural gas - continues to be developed. A new fuelling network connecting Montreal, Que., to Laredo, Texas, for example, should be completed this year.

Of course I've been around this industry long enough to remember that

natural gas and other alternative fuels had looked full of promise before, only to see interest wane due to a combination of infrastructure issues, equipment hurdles and dropping diesel pricing. Why should it be any different this time around?

The sheer volume of natural gas production going on and expected to continue into the future thanks to the deep reserves of natural gas pockets discovered in the US and Canada is the difference that can't be ignored. Such bountiful supply is sure to keep pricing of natural gas at advantageous levels compared to diesel.

And that will continue to make natural gas an enticing alternative to a growing number of fleets, particularly as infrastructure and equipment hurdles are overcome. ●

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Heroic pro drivers honoured by Goodyear

By Sonia Straface

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Goodyear named its 32nd Highway Hero at the Mid-America Trucking Show. The newest hero is Clinton Blackburn of Morehead, Ky. He earned the award after he saved a law enforcement official from being strangled by a prisoner last year near Elizabethtown, Ky.

While driving, Blackburn noticed something was suspicious after he watched a sheriff's cruiser lurch towards the highway median and then come to a sudden stop. He pulled over to investigate and saw Spencer County jailer, Darrell Herndon, was being

strangled from behind by a prisoner. Blackburn got into the car and mediated the situation even after the prisoner got a hold of Herndon's gun.

"Clinton's brave, decisive actions ensured that Darrell would be home with his family that night," said Gary Medalis, marketing director, Goodyear Commercial Tire Systems. "Clinton acted without regard for his own safety, literally putting himself in harm's way to save another person. His decision to get involved is a powerful example of the selflessness and courage exhibited by professional truck drivers. He has earned the right to be called a Goodyear Highway Hero."



Gary Medalis (far right) congratulates Goodyear's latest Highway Hero, Clinton Blackburn (centre), who helped save Darrell Herndon's (far left) life after he was attacked by a prisoner while driving his sheriff's cruiser.

When announced at MATS that he was the winner, Blackburn got choked up as it came time for him to say a few words.

"It's kind of hard to talk about what

happened," he said. "I want to thank Goodyear because we don't get a lot of spotlight as truckers and it's a real good thing for Goodyear to do. I didn't expect to win...these guys here (the finalists on stage) deserve it too."

Herndon, who is still in touch - and friends - with Blackburn, also made the trip to MATS for the special announcement.

"Whether he won this or not, he's my hero," he said of Blackburn's win.

Blackburn will take home a \$5,000 cash prize, along with a Highway Hero award ring and a Highway Hero trophy. Runners up, David Fredericksen, a driver from Windermere, Fla. and Mack Guffey, a driver from Gainesboro, Tenn., received a trophy and \$1,000 cash. ●

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Driver turnover gap between small and large US truckload fleets narrowing

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

Driver turnover at US truckload fleets dropped 1% in the fourth quarter of 2014, to 96%.

Smaller truckload carriers experienced turnover at a rate of 95% in the fourth quarter.

"We're seeing the turnover gap between small and large carriers narrow to levels we haven't experienced in some time," said American Trucking Associations' chief economist, Bob Costello. "This is likely the result of larger fleets raising pay, offering bonuses and attracting more and more drivers from smaller fleets to fill seats."

For the year, large truckload turnover was 95%, down 1% from 2013. Turnover at small fleets was 90% on the full year, up 11% from 2013.

"These figures show us that the driver shortage - which we now estimate to be between 35,000 to 40,000 drivers - is getting more pervasive in the truckload sector," Costello said. "Due to growing freight volumes, regulatory pressures and normal attrition, we expect the problem to get worse in the near-term as the industry works to find solutions to the shortage."

The turnover rate at LTL fleets was 10% in the fourth quarter, down from 13% in the same period in 2013. ●

Canada and US sign border pre-clearance agreement

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Canada's Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Steven Blaney and US Secretary of Homeland Security, Jeh Johnson signed a pre-clearance agreement, which is paving the way for changes to the way people and goods will move across the border.

CTA president David Bradley was present in Washington, D.C. for the signing and showed his support for the pre-clearance, saying, "Today's news is a major step forward for both governments and the trucking industry. While legislation is required in both coun-

tries to fully implement the agreement, we're now on a path toward a fully-functioning pre-clearance policy where and when it makes sense.

"The agreement reflects the hard work of many people in the Canadian and US Governments," he said. "The yardsticks have definitely moved down the field."

The Beyond the Border Action Plan in 2011 made both governments consider such an agreement, though plans to put one in place were put on hold many times, despite the fact that two pre-inspection pilots in both B.C. and Ontario have acted as precursors to the

recent agreement.

In 2013, at the Pacific Highway crossing, trucks were required to stop twice. Once in Canada to speak with US CBP and then again on the US side. Then, in Fort Erie, Ont. a second pilot established two pre-inspection booths.

The CTA has maintained that the two pilots primarily tested "pre-inspection" and not full pre-clearance.

"True pre-clearance would see a truck fully cleared by Customs before arriving at the border," said Bradley. "This would allow a truck that has been pre-cleared to cross the border without having to stop at all. This is where the

potential for real-world efficiency lies.

"Today's Canada-US formal pre-clearance agreement provides a legal framework for more fulsome discussions to implement a permanent model of true pre-clearance." ●

Sharp decline in tonnage 'not a surprise': ATA

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

US for-hire truck tonnage declined 3.1% in February, reaching the lowest level since September 2014.

However, tonnage was still up 3% compared to February 2014. That, though, was the smallest year-over-year gain seen since June of last year and below the 2014 annual increase of 3.7%.

"The February drop in truck tonnage was not a surprise," said ATA chief economist Bob Costello. "Retail sales, manufacturing output and housing starts were all off during the month, so the tonnage decline fits with those indicators. The surprise would have been had tonnage increased with all of those sectors falling."

Winter weather also played a role, affecting retail, manufacturing and housing starts. ●

US trucking industry wants hair-testing for drugs approved

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The US trucking industry is calling on Congress to approve bipartisan legislation that would allow the industry to perform drug tests using hair testing.

"ATA is committed to improving highway safety, including doing all we can to prevent individuals who use drugs or alcohol from driving trucks," said ATA president and CEO Bill Graves.

"ATA was an early advocate of mandatory drug and alcohol testing of drivers before it was required, and has since promoted improvements such as hair testing and the creation of a national test results clearinghouse. ATA's advocacy has resulted in a steady decline in the small percentage of drivers who use drugs, and hair testing is the next logical step."

The Drug-Free Commercial Driver Act of 2015, introduced in the Senate and in the House would give fleets the option of

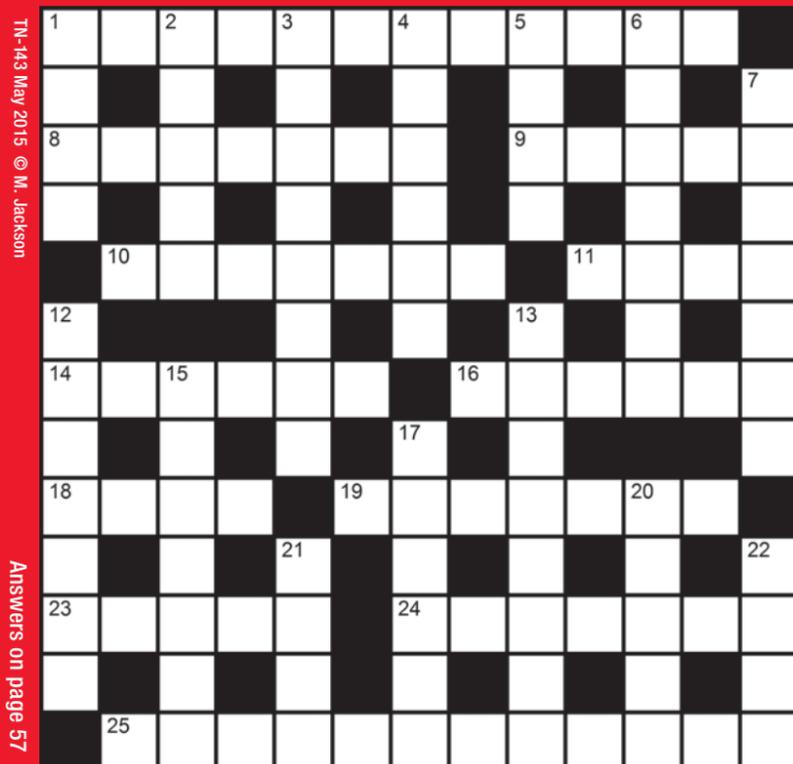
using hair tests, as an alternative to traditional urine tests, to meet federal requirements.

"Leading employers in a variety of industries around the world have recognized that hair testing is a superior method to detect drug use," said Dean Newell, vice-president of safety and driver training, Maverick USA, Little Rock, Ark. "Hair tests are difficult to evade or subvert and provide a better window into an applicant's potential history of drug use."

The DOT currently does not accept hair testing as meeting federal testing requirements, though some fleets conduct testing in this way voluntarily in addition to other approved methods.

"Though the trucking industry's positive testing rate is remarkably low, Congress should provide a means for fleets, as part of the DOT testing regime, to further identify and eliminate from the industry those who don't share the industry's commitment to highway safety," said Graves. ●

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



TN-143 May 2015 © M. Jackson

Answers on page 57

Across

- 1 Truck-value decrease
- 8 Urban-courier's pre-GPS tool (4,3)
- 9 '68-'87 GMC cabover
- 10 "The Hockey Song" singer Tom
- 11 City-street pattern, perhaps
- 14 New-truck extra-cost item
- 16 New-truck odometer reading (1,1,1,1,1,1)
- 18 Rock-band ride, ____ bus
- 19 Shifter selection
- 23 Alcoa or Budd product
- 24 Mack vocational model
- 25 Big-rig engines, often (5,7)

Down

- 1 Loading and unloading platform
- 2 Canadian pumps name, ____-Canada
- 3 Landtran and Rosenau HQ city
- 4 Truck goods into Canada
- 5 Driver pair
- 6 Hwy. 401 spans it
- 7 Slow driver in fast lane (4,3)
- 12 CB slang for Calgary (3,4)
- 13 Truck-insurance policy terms
- 15 "Fuddle duddle" Prime Minister
- 17 Exited the onramp
- 20 Air-____, fifth-wheel type
- 21 Super ____, a.k.a., multi-lane hwy.
- 22 RPMs, informally

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SEE OUR AD PAGE 56



APTA blasts diesel tax increase

DIEPPE, NEW BRUNSWICK

Truckers in New Brunswick, who already pay among the highest diesel

taxes in Canada, will have to shell out even more. The provincial budget released March 31 included a hike in diesel taxes, which will generate \$28

million in additional revenue. The Atlantic Provinces Trucking Association (APTA) reacted angrily.

"Aside from British Columbia, we have the highest diesel tax in the country, and it will have a devastating impact on every consumer as they will

pay more for their goods going forward," said APTA executive director Jean-Marc Picard.

He suggested the province is looking to take advantage of the drop in diesel prices by increasing taxes. The fuel tax went up 2.3 cents per litre Apr. 1. ●



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Boom and bust

A hydro mega-project keeps trucks rolling into northeastern Quebec and Labrador

By Carroll McCormick

BLOOM LAKE, QUEBEC

When work began on Labrador's \$7-billion Muskrat Falls hydro-electric project in 2013, who could have guessed that two years later, two iron ore mines in Wabush and Lac Bloom (Bloom Lake) would close, throwing a reported 1,000 people out of work?

The mine closures have stung carriers, but the action at Muskrat Falls, 500 kilometres east of Wabush, near Happy Valley-Goose Bay, is a welcome consolation.

Wabush sits just across the Labrador border from Quebec. Bloom Lake is 40 kilometres southwest of Wabush, on the Quebec side of the border.

"Muskrat Falls is saving our asses," said one carrier manager.

"For TST the two mines were not our main customers," says Javier Iturriaga, terminal manager, TST Overland Express, for Wabush, nearby Labrador City and Happy Valley-Goose Bay. "For us it wasn't a direct impact, but for all the transport companies, it is all the business related to the companies; for example, machinery, food for the camps, grocery stores. Where we used to move seven trailers a day we are now moving three or four. We are starting to see business go down, but we are getting more business from Goose Bay. There is a lot of work around Goose Bay. We are working too with Muskrat Falls."

TST has a five-door terminal in Lab City, and a three-door terminal in Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

According to Iturriaga, carriers have moved 3,500 containers to Muskrat Falls in the last two-and-a-half years. "For wide loads and flatbeds there has been a 40-50% increase. In the beginning (of the Muskrat Falls construction) it was 200% more."

Not long after the mine closures, Groupe Morneau and its northern transport division, Morneau Sego, opened a three-door terminal in Wabush. Groupe Morneau has a two-door terminal in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, which it opened in 2013.

Speaking with the optimism and patience of a third-generation carrier owner, Andre Morneau, president, Groupe Morneau, says this about the mine closures: "The volume is reduced a lot for many carriers, but we were a little bit lucky. We didn't have a lot of freight for those two destinations. We operate a big volume for Arcelor Mittal. We have not been able to improve our volume up to now, but we are in Muskrat Falls with a lot of freight. (It's given) us the opportunity to maintain our volume and improve it in the north."

(Arcelor Mittal operates an iron ore mine in Fermont, Que., 23 kilometres southwest of Lab City).

Durocher International is also picking up business from Muskrat Falls.

"We're transporting hardwood mats that are laid down in the woods for the equipment to travel on. There are a lot of those mats to be trucked up there. We truck them from Vermont, Maine

and New Hampshire. We also truck cargo ranging from wire to steel structures to cement," says Steve Lamontagne, general manager, Durocher International, in Chibougamau.

Lamontagne's view of the aftermath of the mine closures is grim, although he, like Morneau and Iturriaga, is sanguine about the cyclical nature of the resource sector.

"Well, it is pathetic. It is bad. There is not that much left in that region. It is a big problem for the municipalities

in the area. There was a big boom and they put up a lot of infrastructure. In 2012 the sky was the limit. But everybody left. It will come back...I don't think it will be much longer before it goes back up," Lamontagne says.

Carriers are losing lanes and downsizing, says Lamontagne, and competition is heating up. "There are other trucks coming up here and fighting for the business. The pricing is going down and the costs are going up."

While maybe not quite slapstick, it sounds like some southern carriers riding the money wave into Muskrat Falls are unprepared for the road conditions and almost surreal distances. Quebec City to Goose Bay is almost 1,600 kilometres. Route 389 is a candidate for the Miss Congeniality award, and one joke goes that the road is so twisty that you can see your own tail lights.

Rigs and drivers need to be specially prepared for the 530-kilometre Hwy. 500 from Lab City to Goose Bay, but at least it has been much improved, according to Morneau, halv-

ing the travel time of three years ago.

"In 2012 we went through Arcelor Mittal building an addition to their mine. They brought stuff all the way

"Muskrat Falls is saving our asses."

up from Mexico. We had guys from Texas, for example, who got into big trouble. Some came up in the winter with summer tires. Muskrat Falls is also bad, getting 3PL companies involved and using anybody. They get stuck. We get calls from companies that come to the North Shore and ask us if we can bring the freight the rest of the way," Lamontagne says.

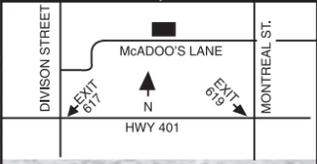
Carriers are making the most of a mixed situation, but hopefully, the iron ore market will rebound before the heavy lifting for the mega-dam project wraps up in 2017-18. ●

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 1987 JOHN DEERE 750B Nice working machine, 9900 hours \$18,000.	 2013 IH 5900i Maxforce 13, 450 hp, 18 spd., 20/46 axles, branded irreparable.	 2004 IH 4300 DT-466, 6 spd., 12/23 axles.
 2014 IH PROSTAR Maxforce 13, 12/40's, 26,000 kms. No Brand. For Parts.	 2013 IH 7600 Maxforce 9, auto trans., 20/40 axles, No Brand.	 SERVICE BODIES Dual and single wheel. Good Condition.
 1993 HITACHI 8781 hours, LX200C, 26.5 x 25.0 tires, water in engine oil.	 2011 PETERBILT 388 ISX 525, 18 spd., 14 & 46 axles. Whole or Parts.	 1994 CAPACITY SHUNT IH diesel, fleet maintained, 21,012 miles, S#RS247940, works good \$8500.

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Trailcon donates tractor-trailer to Mohawk College

BRAMPTON, ONTARIO

Students at Mohawk College who hope to be a technician one day received a practical gift from Trailcon Leasing in March.

The company recently donated an up-to-date tractor-trailer for the students who are learning to repair, test and maintain the complex systems of trucks and trailers, just like the one recently donated.

"The students benefit from working on a trailer that has up-to-date technologies, excellent diagnostics, and works with our scan tools," said Angelo Cosco of the motive power group at Mohawk.

"We can do air brake training, wheel services, body work, and panel replacement. There is even a working temperature controlled unit, so we can train refrigeration specialists,

which are in huge demand."

Trailcon's vice-president, sales and marketing, Mike Krell said: "We're always thinking about ways to build for the future. The aging workforce and resulting labour shortage is on everyone's mind. That's why we support educational partners like Mohawk and contribute to students through scholarships offered by the Toronto Transportation Club and Ontario Trucking Association."

Cosco added that the college liked to say that graduates from there are "future ready," partly because they are trained on actual equipment from the field.

"We need vehicles and components that give our students the best possible experience," he added. "The Trailcon trailer does that for us. It helps our students say to future employers, 'Yes, I can do that.'" ●



Trailcon donated this tractor-trailer to technician students at Mohawk College this past March.

Shippers getting mixed reviews from drivers in Operation UpGrade surveys

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Professional drivers responding to the Ontario Trucking Association's Operation UpGrade survey of the best and worst shipper practices are so far split on the performance of the industry, according to early results.

Half the shippers rated so far have

been given Honour Roll status while the other half were assigned to the Detention Hall.

Drivers have indicated many shipping facilities must do a better job of turning around drivers in a reasonable time and removing waste from the system.

Drivers indicated their appreciation of shippers who do a good job provid-

ing an environment free of harassment and discrimination.

Here are the key findings of the first month of survey results:

- "Providing an environment free of harassment and discrimination" is the top attribute of the good shippers rated, followed by allowing access to shipper facilities (ie. washrooms). Bad ship-

pers scored lowest in terms of retention times, responsiveness of dockworkers and honouring appointment times.

- Overall, 72% of shippers/consignees recognized as 'good' were shippers, while only 20% were receivers.

- More than half (54%) of the 'bad' customers were receivers/consignees; only 35% of shippers fell into this category.

- Distribution centres and warehouses were well represented among Honour Roll companies, representing 36% and 40% of facility types, respectively. Retail locations lagged, representing just 5% of 'good' customers.

- Most responding drivers (83%) have been driving for more than five years.

OTA plans to analyze the complete results later this year. The survey will run for at least six months and then a full report will be published.

To complete the survey, visit www.OnTruck.org/ShipperSurvey. ●

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CN to build \$250M intermodal hub

MILTON, ONTARIO

CN has announced it plans to build a \$250-million intermodal and logistics hub in Milton, Ont.

The new hub will be adjacent to its main line in Milton.

"CN's advanced intermodal and logistics facility in Milton will help us efficiently handle growing intermodal traffic," said Claude Mongeau, CN president and CEO.

"The new hub will benefit our customers and the regional economy by improving central Canada's access to the key transborder market as well as the Pacific and Atlantic coast trade gateways we serve, generating new supply chain efficiencies in the GTHA, and creating well-paying local jobs."

CN's intermodal business is one of the company's fast-growing segments with 2014 revenues hitting more than \$2.7 billion. CN transports more than C\$250 billion worth of goods annually, the company claims. ●

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Canada willing to take lead in mandating safety systems

Continued from page 1

monize the coming regulation is best, though she believes Canada took a big leap forward in saying that mandating these technologies is the way to go.

The Minister couldn't say for sure when Canada would be mandating

both technologies though she said that her announcement was to reassure the industry that "This will be mandatory in Canada at some point in time. The timing it takes to get to that point is a function of Ottawa and I can't put a time on it."

The provincial associations, as well as Ontario's Transportation Minis-

ter, were pleased with the roundtable discussion, as well as the Minister's support.

"We're very pleased with Transport Canada's support for ELDs," said Louise Yako, BCTA's president and CEO in a press release.

"BCTA also supports an ELD mandate as the single most important op-

portunity to transform the trucking industry to ensure companies and drivers are paid for all their work, including waiting time. ELDs replace paper logbooks, so truck drivers using the technology will no longer need to fill these in manually. ELDs also provide convenient, reliable records to support compliance with rest breaks and on-duty driving time. And that means enhanced road safety – always a top priority for BCTA."

Del Duca, Ontario's Transport Minister, added: "I am pleased that federal Transport Minister Lisa Raitt will be supporting the use of electronic logging devices and electronic stability systems for Canada's trucking industry. Ontario supports using ELDs as an effective tool for monitoring hours-of-service compliance by commercial motor vehicle drivers. Thank you to the Canadian Trucking Alliance and their partners for helping draft a proposed ELD standard for Canada. We will continue working with Transport Canada to support increased safety for road users and the trucking industry through the use of these devices."

Minister Raitt concluded her announcement stating the Canadian trucking industry is one that truly cares about road safety.

"Canadians care about safety – if it's in air, if it's in road, if it's in rail. That's what they care about and I know that's what they care about. And this is the only time I've ever seen an industry asking government for regulation so we know that the industry cares about safety very much too." ●

More safety-driven regulations coming: Bendix

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

With Canada ready and willing to create a mandate for electronic stability control, the US seems poised to move ahead with its own regulation soon.

Fred Andersky, director of government affairs with Bendix Commercial Vehicle Systems, said the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is promising a rule May 7, however, previous deadlines have come and gone.

"I'll be happy if they get it out before the end of the second quarter," Andersky said at the Mid-America Trucking Show, adding he's more optimistic than ever that a mandate will be announced this year.

The US mandate will require full electronic stability control and will be implemented in two phases, with tractors affected in 2017. The debate about whether roll stability will be accepted under the mandate appears to have died out.

Andersky said ESC is outselling RSC by a ratio of 3:1, up from about 3:2 in recent years.

"In 2014, we saw roll stability control sales go down from the previous year, while ESC sales increased," Andersky not-

ed. Bendix itself has seen demand for its ESC grow 35% last year.

"Most fleets that recognize the value of stability, are choosing full stability," Andersky said.

Also on the regulatory front, Andersky said NHTSA has been petitioned to create a rulemaking requiring collision mitigation systems. The agency has 120 days to grant or deny the petition, but "We think they're going to grant it," Andersky noted.

A notice of proposed rulemaking mandating collision mitigation systems would not come out until mid-2017, with full implementation not expected until the end of the decade.

Bendix also is pushing government to grant permanent windshield clearance exemptions for safety devices. Currently, devices can't be placed within the wiper sweep area of the windshield without an exemption.

Those exemptions expire every two years, with Bendix's needing renewal in November. The company would like such exemptions to be made permanent so it's easier for enforcement agencies to recognize what can and can't be placed in the windshield and to eliminate the work involved in pursuing exemption renewals. ●



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Canadian Pallet Council to be shut down

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Members of the Canadian Pallet Council have voted to shut the program down effective May 29.

The decision was reached during a vote March 23 at a special general meeting held in Toronto, Ont.

"The closure is the result of the loss of members over the last few years, and most significantly, the recent loss of all major distributor support. There is no longer a viable network of members willing or able to exchange CPC pallets," the organization wrote in a notice to members. "Immediate steps are being taken towards the closure of the CPC with the expectation that all active operations will cease by the end of May 2015."

The CPC offered the following timeline for the discontinuance of services:

April 30: CTSWEB will cease to operate. If you are using CTSWEB and wish to extract your data, you must do so prior to this date.

April 30: CPC Office will close.

May 29: CPC Operations & Member Support will cease.

The organization will continue responding to members while services are wound down. It will also continue selling Bills of Lading while inventory lasts. For more info, contact 905-372-1871 or info@cpccpallet.com. ●

Fuel additive gets attention with strong showing at PIT's Energotest

By James Menzies

CALGARY, ALBERTA

When PE Fuels Solutions approached Performance Innovation Transport to get its fuel additive included in the popular Energotest trials of fuel-saving products, company president Christine Teschl was initially greeted with some skepticism.

Fuel additives don't have a good track record at achieving positive results using the organization's stringent test procedures, she was warned.

"PIT said save your money, we don't see many that work," Teschl recalled in an interview with *Truck News*. It's a good thing she wasn't easily dissuaded.

PE Fuels Solutions can now boast a 'PIT Power 5' rating for its FCS-27 bio-based additive, after achieving a fuel economy improvement of 5.2%. PIT's testing is highly regarded in the industry, as it adheres strictly to the SAE J1321 Joint TMC/SAE Fuel Consumption Test Procedure - Type II protocol. A positive verification from PIT earns a product instant credibility among the many fleets that look to the organization for validation of potential fuel-saving products and techniques. And with that report now in hand, PE Fuels is looking to make itself known to the industry.

"We've been trying to stay low on the radar," Teschl told *Truck News*.

The company has quietly been setting up a distribution network for its FCS-27 fuel additive, which it says works by boosting cetane, increasing lubricity and generally improving the combustion process.

"Our technology is based on compound catalysis derived from bio-based ingredients and specialty improvers, leading to the highest fuel saving and GHG emission reductions confirmed by SAE J1321 test protocol performed by PIT," Teschl explained.

In its report, PIT granted the prestigious PIT Power 5 designation. This represented a surprisingly strong result, given the performance of other additives in the past.

"Fuel consumption tests conducted by FPIinnovations in previous Energotest campaigns with other fuel additives, or special formulated fuel, showed up to 2.86% improvement in fuel economy... However, the result obtained by the FCS-27 additive, 4.9% fuel savings, is superior to the performances shown by the tested fuel additives," PIT concluded.

(Different formulas are used to calculate fuel savings and fuel improvement. The PIT Power score is awarded based on fuel economy improvement).

"It should be mentioned that the tests were conducted with test vehicles having high mileage (as it was requested by the supplier), of a particular make and model, and equipped with a particular type of engine. This result refers only to the vehicle and specimen of technology tested according to the procedure and conditions described in this report. In order to fully demonstrate the potential of the technology for a larger spectrum of vehicles representative for the actual fleet population, we recommend conducting additional testing on vehicles with lower mileage, of different make and model, equipped with different engines, and with different Diesel Particulate Filter (DPF) regeneration strategy."

The tests were conducted in 2014, using 2012 Peterbilt 388 tractors powered by 450-hp Cummins engines. Teschl said the two-year-old engines are a good rep-

resentation of the current vehicle population in use today. While thrilled with the validation earned through PIT's Energotest, Teschl said the results didn't come as a surprise to her, and were actually short in comparison to on-road tests conducted with Canadian fleets.

"What we have found is, on average transport companies are seeing a 9% reduction in fuel consumption, even in newer vehicles," she explained.

One of the fleets testing the additive in its operations is Groupe Trans-West. Results presented by PE Fuels to *Truck News* show an average fuel economy improvement of 9% over 95,000 kilometres of testing. Teschl said FCS-27 includes cold flow improver, which also has improved reliability in the extreme winter weather. The company is headquartered in Calgary and the additive is manufactured in Saskatchewan. ●

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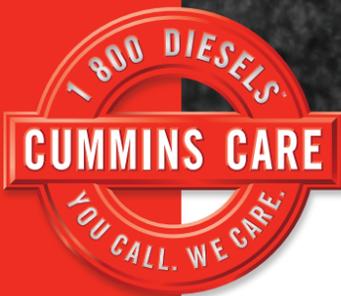
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Tax
Talk

SCOTT TAYLOR



What to do with your tax refund

I love the commercials this time of year telling you how to spend your income tax refund.

Before you blow your windfall on a flat-screen TV or book a trip to Disney World, consider what your refund represents.

It's the government giving you back the change after you overpaid or had too much tax withheld during the previous year.

Nearly 58% of individual taxpayers received refunds after filing their personal income tax returns, with the average refund being almost \$1,700.

All told, Canada Revenue Agency paid out more than \$28 billion in income tax refunds in 2014. That's a

Before you blow your windfall on a flat-screen TV or book a trip to Disney World, consider what your refund represents.

heck of an interest-free loan.

It's a rush getting money back after you file your taxes, especially when the refund is more than you expected. Before you run to the mall, casino, or Space Mountain, take a few steps in a different direction:

Check the math

Your Notice of Assessment confirms that your tax return was accepted as filed or outlines any changes made by CRA. For your personal return, it will list your taxable income and any carry-forward amounts you can apply for 2015, as well as the amount you can contribute to an RRSP or tax-free savings account this year.

Check CRA's assessment against the information filed on your tax return. If there's a discrepancy, or you disagree with CRA's findings, contact the tax centre that processed your return (better yet, call your accountant). You have one year from the filing deadline of the return in question to make an appeal.

Save it

Some 20% of Canadians expecting a refund plan to invest the money in an RRSP or Tax Free Savings Account, or otherwise invest the money.

One idea is to build up your emergency fund. Put your refund in a savings account specifically for financial emergencies, like a major repair that you'd otherwise put on a credit card. You don't want to be paying for that engine rebuild for the next 10 years.

Pay debts

Nearly 58% of Canadians say they will use their refund to pay down debt. In some cases, they'll have no choice. If you have a government debt like student loans or EI overpayments, have

any outstanding GST/HST returns from a sole proprietorship or partnership, or garnishments for child support, the CRA will use your refund to pay those obligations before passing any remainder on to you.

Be patient

CRA says it processes paper returns in four to six weeks. It's faster (as little as eight days) when you file electronically (EFILE and NETFILE). You can check the status of your tax refund online by logging in to CRA's My Account service.

If you owe tax

If you owe tax and money is tight, think twice before you call your RRSP administrator about an early with-

drawal.

An RRSP is a long-term savings plan. The idea is that by the time you retire you'll be in a lower tax bracket than you are now, when you're working and earning income. Funds withdrawn at that time will be taxed at a lower rate.

Generally, you must close out your RRSP by the last day of the year in which you turn 71. But if you take out funds from your RRSP for anything other than retirement, post-secondary education expenses for you or your spouse, or to buy your first home, you'll pay an immediate withholding tax of 10% on withdrawals up to \$5,000; 20% on withdrawals of \$5,001 to \$15,000; and 30% when the amount exceeds \$15,000 (in Quebec,

the tax is 21%, 26%, and 31%, respectively).

The amount you take out is considered taxable income so you'll not only pay more tax, the withdrawal amount may bump you into a higher income tax bracket.

Also, the withdrawal amount is not added back to your unused contribution room. Once you take money from the RRSP, you can't put that sum back in. If you're getting a refund from the government this year, ask yourself why. You can't escape paying what you owe but there are better places to put your extra money. With planning and professional help, you can adjust your tax payments during the year so they're not too small, not too big, but just right - and perhaps have cash left over for that trip to Disney World. ●

Scott Taylor is vice-president of TFS Group, providing accounting, bookkeeping, tax return preparation, and other business services for owner/operators. Learn more at www.tfsgroup.com or call 800-461-5970.

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Private
Matters

MIKE MILLIAN



Railways should face tighter crude rules

Several high-profile derailments have proven that railways and crude oil can be a dangerous mix. Accidents near Gogama, Ont. on Feb. 14 and March 7 both led to explosions which leaked crude oil and burned for days. There were other rail accidents in Northern Illinois and West Virginia this February.

Each situation involved CPC-1232 tank cars built since 2011 – a model that has reacted like the Class 111 tank cars involved in the Lac-Mégantic railway on July 6, 2013.

The Lac-Mégantic accident on its own spilled 1.5 million gallons of crude oil and killed 47 people. The heart of the town was decimated.

We've been fortunate that the most recent derailments and explosions occurred in remote areas and avoided human casualties.

But there is no overlooking the remaining damage to the environment, waterways and surrounding infrastructure.

The trucking industry is well aware of the dangers involved in hauling dangerous goods, and we have an enviable safety record in this work. Trucks haul the largest share of dangerous goods that move across the country, according to Statistics Canada. Accidents and spills are more likely to happen during handling rather than during transit.

Most recently we have embraced changes that harmonized the ways dangerous goods are identified in Canada and the US.

But the volume of crude oil shipped along Canada's iron highways continues to increase. Railways moved 200,000 barrels per day in 2013.

The numbers increased to 700,000 barrels in 2014, and volumes could surpass the million barrel per day mark by the end of this year, depending on how lower commodity prices affect production levels.

There should be little wonder why the communities established along different rail lines are raising concerns.

To their credit, railways have been taking steps to address the dangers.

The National Transportation Safety Board asked Transport Canada to en-

sure railway safety management systems exist, are working, and are effective.

There was a recommendation to put more physical defences in place to prevent runaways. Emergency response assistance plans are now created when large volumes of liquid hydrocarbons like oil are shipped. Other recommendations called for strategic route plans and enhanced operations for all trains carrying goods.

Since 2011, Class 111 tank cars like the ones involved in the Lac-Mégantic disaster have also been built to the tougher requirements of CPC-1232.

Most recently, Transport Canada has announced plans to enhance the CPC-1232 standard.

The new TC 117 standard will require changes such as protection for top fittings, an outer cover to provide thermal protection, and 9/16-inch steel compared to the existing 7/16-inch standards.

It is all great to hear. Transport Canada should be commended for taking action.

But the older 111 cars will continue to haul crude oil until May 2017. The CPC-1232 will be in place until July 2023. The amended regulations will not require superior Electronically Controlled Pneumatic (ECP) brakes, either.

Transport Canada is expected to include this in operating requirements instead.

It begs an important question: How do we improve public safety in the years leading up to these deadlines?

Don't get me wrong. I understand and respect that rules need to be phased in over time.

It is impractical and impossible to remove the older rail cars from service immediately.

It would be no different if changes had to be made to any trailers hauled by on-road fleets.

But in the short term, the operational practices that are followed when hauling dangerous goods – specifically, crude oil – should be scrutinized by the federal government with a goal of recommending and implementing the steps that railways are required to take.

Train speeds had already been re-

duced to 97 km/h along the Northern Ontario routes where the derailments occurred.

In some areas they have been further reduced to 56 km/h. Early investigations have also led to questions about track conditions.

Perhaps the track maintenance procedures, and the related oversight, needs to be enhanced.

Changes like these can surely be

introduced before the equipment itself is renewed and replaced.

It is clear that Transport Canada needs to conduct a broader study to determine the cause of these derailments and the practices that could reduce the likelihood of future situations.

The goal of protecting the public and our environment deserves nothing less.

Mike Millian is president of the Private Motor Truck Council of Canada, the only national association that represents the views and interests of the private fleet industry. He can be reached at trucks@pmtc.ca.



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Open your eyes to warning signs of glaucoma

clogged drainage canals in the eye to help fluid drain more easily.

Another possible surgical option is placing drainage implants in the eye to aid in the flow of fluid.

Although it is not possible to completely prevent glaucoma, there are a few things you can do to reduce your risk. First of all, eating a healthy diet including fresh fruits and vegetables and getting adequate physical activity will help maintain overall eye health.

Also, limiting the amount of caffeine intake may also help maintain normal eye pressure.

Keep these simple tips in mind and you will be well on your way to healthy eyes.

Until next month, drive safely. 🚗

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

A common misconception about glaucoma is that it is a single eye disease, but in fact it is a group of eye conditions that eventually lead to optic nerve damage.

In most cases, abnormally high pressure inside the eye due to fluid build-up is what causes the damage.

Glaucoma is one of the leading causes of blindness in North America. Early detection and treatment can greatly reduce or even prevent optic nerve damage.

Unfortunately, the signs and symptoms of glaucoma progress gradually and often individuals do not notice any loss of vision until the disease has significantly progressed.

Therefore, it is very important to have your eyes examined on a regular basis.

There are several types of glaucoma, each with completely different symptoms.

I will not go into detail regarding the different types of glaucoma as it is beyond the scope of this article.

However, the symptoms of glaucoma may include: eye pain; blurred vision; halos around lights; loss of peripheral vision; and tunnel vision.

If you experience any of these symptoms or other changes in your eyesight, it is important to seek medical attention.

In some cases of glaucoma the exact cause is unknown, thus it is termed primary glaucoma.

When the cause of glaucoma can be explained by such things as eye injuries, medications, eye conditions and diabetes it is called secondary glaucoma.

The goal with all forms of treatment is to reduce the pressure within the eye. The treatment of glaucoma usually begins with medicated eye drops.

It is important to use these eye drops exactly as instructed by your doctor, as improper use may lead to further eye damage.

The eye drops are designed to reduce the pressure within the eye by decreasing the fluid present inside the eye.

If eye drops are unsuccessful, oral medications may be prescribed. Surgery is only considered if all other forms of treatment fail.

One type of surgery involves using a high-energy laser beam to open

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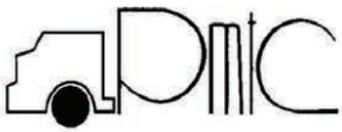
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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17

8:30 a.m. – Registration & Coffee

9:30 a.m. – Seminar I: Distracted Driving

The Transportation Health & Safety Association of Ontario will discuss one of the bigger driving safety issues in the industry today. As technology improves, so do the safety devices present on a lot of our vehicles. While these devices greatly improve road safety, they also come with the possibility of ever increasing distractions to the operator. This program examines distracted driving hazards, explains how to implement preventative measures, looks at current research such as the concept of inattention blindness, and examines legal implications under the Highway Traffic Act and the criminal negligence provisions of the Criminal Code of Canada.

10:30 a.m. – Seminar II: Transportation Trends and Private Fleet Benchmark Study

In this seminar Lou Smyrlis, an award-winning writer with more than 15 years of experience reporting on transportation issues, well known for his insightful writing and meticulous market analysis, and a leading authority on industry trends and statistics, will discuss some of the biggest trends seen in the Transportation Industry in the last year. Lou will also briefly discuss the newly completed Private Fleet Practices Benchmark Study.

11:15 a.m. – The Conference Exhibitors' Showcase

Visit with our conference exhibitors and network with fellow registrants. Meet old friends, make some new ones, and see products and services that can make your fleet more effective.

12:15 p.m. – PMTC – Huron Services Driver Hall of Fame Luncheon

Every year we induct up to four professional drivers who have compiled outstanding safety records over the course of their career. Recognizing their individual achievements is always a conference highlight.

1:45 p.m. – Seminar III: Driver Shortage and Retention Strategies

A panel of PMTC fleet members discuss hot issues and topics of the day, and what their fleets do to address these issues. This free-sharing of strategies that make fleets successful is one of the greatest benefits of PMTC membership. Our panel will discuss the issue that just never goes away - driver shortage and retention. PMTC member fleets will discuss the recruitment and retention strategies that they employ at their fleets to combat the shortage, and how retention is part of their recruiting strategy.

3:15 p.m. – Seminar IV: Ontario Tractor Trailer Voluntary Apprenticeship Program

This session, led by Kim Richardson president of KRTS Transportation Specialists Inc., will give an overview on how to grow your fleet and improve retention by participating in the Ontario Tractor Trailer Voluntary Apprenticeship Program.

4:15 p.m. – Networking and Reception in the Exhibitors' Showcase

Another opportunity to network with your peers, continue conversations, and visit with exhibitors as we prepare for the Fleet Safety Awards Dinner.

5:30 p.m. – The Chairman's Dinner: PMTC Private Fleet Safety Awards

Recognizing private fleets with exceptional safety records is an important part of the conference. Join us for the presentation of the 2015 awards and dine with the private fleet community.

6:45 p.m. – Volvo Scotch and Tractor Showcase Reception

We've added yet another exciting opportunity for socializing and networking to the conference. Join us on the patio after dinner for a scotch while strolling around the new tractors on display.

THURSDAY, JUNE 18

Registration and Coffee

8:15 a.m. – Seminar V: Legal Update - What You Need to Know

Gowling Lafleur Henderson LLP will provide an insightful presentation on legal changes that have occurred in the last year and how they have impacted the Transportation Industry. This seminar will also touch on the Federal vs Provincial regulated carrier debate. This is a debate that seems to come up on a routine basis, and one that is not always clearly understood.

9:45 a.m. – Seminar VI: The 6 x 2 Axle Configuration Debate

6 x 2 axle configurations have been a widely debated topic in the North American Trucking Industry in the last year or so. While these configurations have been widely adopted, and successfully used in Europe for over a decade, uptake has been slow in North America. Market penetration has been increasing in the USA and fuel savings have been proven. While traction has always been cited as a concern, recent technology developments have addressed a lot of these issues. This presentation will discuss the benefits of the technology and the appetite for regulatory acceptance in Canada.

10:45 a.m. – Seminar VII: The Trouble with Trucks

The Trouble with Trucks is a presentation covering Canada's history with road transportation, the evolution of truck weight and dimension regulations, and the role of the national Vehicle Weights and Dimensions Task Force in guiding the regulations. This promises to be a very informative and interesting look at the history of the weight and dimensions regulations in Canada and what has got us to where we are today.

11:30 a.m. – Exhibitors' Showcase Reception

Relax in our reception area, chat with friends, and inspect the products and services on display that can make your fleet even more effective.

12:30 p.m. – Annual Meeting & PMTC - 3M Vehicle Graphics Awards Luncheon

Following the business session you'll be treated to a video display of some of the best truck graphics to be found anywhere. These fleets are proud of their image and so they should be. Always a highlight of the conference, the fleet graphics awards luncheon wraps up the conference.

Conference Adjourns

PMTC 2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

3 WAYS TO REGISTER: 1. EMAIL TO INFO@PMT.CA 2. ONLINE AT PMT.CA 3. FAX TO 905-827-8212

REGISTRANT INFORMATION

Name: _____

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Phone: _____ Email: _____

Additional registrants:

1. _____ Email _____

2. _____ Email _____

Non-PMTC members please complete the following:

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INDICATE HOW MANY WILL ATTEND EACH EVENT

WEDNESDAY

- _____ Seminar I: Distracted Driving
 _____ Seminar II: Transportation Trends and Private Fleet Benchmark Study
 _____ The Conference Exhibitors' Showcase
 _____ PMTC - Huron Services Driver Hall of Fame Luncheon
 _____ Seminar III: Driver Shortage and Retention Strategies
 _____ Seminar IV: Ontario Tractor Trailer Voluntary Apprenticeship Program
 _____ Networking and Reception in the Exhibitors' Showcase
 _____ The Chairman's Dinner: PMTC Private Fleet Safety Awards
 _____ Volvo Scotch and Tractor Showcase Reception

THURSDAY

- _____ Seminar V: Legal Update - What You Need to Know
 _____ Seminar VI: The 6 x 2 Axle Configuration Debate
 _____ Seminar VII: The Trouble with Trucks
 _____ Exhibitors' Showcase Reception
 _____ PMTC - 3M Vehicle Graphics Awards Luncheon

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Note: Those cancelling prior to June 1, 2015, will be entitled to a refund less a \$50.00 processing fee. No refunds will be offered after June 1, 2015.

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ROOM RESERVATIONS

Reservations can be made by calling the Kingbridge Centre directly at 1-800-827-7221.

Be sure to mention you are with the Private Motor Truck Council Conference.

The room rate is \$180.00 per night plus tax.

Rooms are allocated on a first-call, first-served basis, so reserve your room as soon as possible.

If you have any questions regarding room reservations, please contact Kingbridge directly.



Preventive
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KAREN BOWEN

The great taste
of springtime

Winter's snowy coat has melted away. Finally, our environment is turning green with spring plants sprouting buds and leaves. This is the time to take advantage of asparagus season. Enjoy this nutrition-packed spring vegetable, freshly cut, straight from the field.

Asparagus, a perennial plant native to Northern Africa, western Asia and much of Europe, is now grown in much of North America. Historically, asparagus – a distant cousin of garlic, onions and the lily – has been grown both as a vegetable crop and as a medicine. Although Egyptian artifacts dating back to 3000 BC include depictions of asparagus, it was only introduced to North America around 1850.

Well known for its unusual, strong savory flavour, asparagus is available in many varieties. Whether you prefer the green British and American variety, the white Spanish and Dutch variety, or the purple French variety, the nutrition packed into each serving of asparagus will deliver health benefits throughout your body.

Asparagus can help your body flush out free-radicals through a variety of anti-oxidants, such as: flavinoids, glutathione, a molecule composed of a combination of three amino acids (glycine,

glumatic acid and cysteine), manganese, selenium, zinc, Vitamin A (beta-carotene) and Vitamin C, which lowers blood pressure, improves your healthy immune system, and helps your body resist age-related ocular diseases like cataracts and macular degeneration.

Asparagus provides these anti-inflammatory flavinoids: isorhamnetin, laempferol, quercetin and rutin, as well as asparagus saponins, which can reduce the effects of asthma, arthritis and autoimmune diseases. Since chronic inflammation has been linked to a variety of cancers, they may also reduce the risk of developing bladder, bone, breast, colon, larynx, lung, prostate and ovarian cancers. The anti-inflammatory and anti-cancer properties of asparagus' saponins may help reduce your blood pressure, regulate your blood sugar, and balance your blood fat levels.

The B-complex group of vitamins (thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, vitamin B-6, pantothenic acid, and folate) found in asparagus helps keep your cellular enzymes and metabolic functions running well. Folate has other benefits, too. It helps maintain blood sugar levels, retains proper DNA formation, and supports your cardiovascular system by regulating your amino acid homocysteine. Folate, interacting with Vitamin B12, helps maintain cognitive functions during the aging process. According to a university study, older people per-

formed better on tests requiring mental flexibility and a quick response when they maintained adequate folate levels.

Asparagus is also good for your bones. Its Vitamin K helps your body synthesize osteocalcin, a protein that strengthens your bones and helps prevent calcium from depositing in other tissue, reducing your risk of developing atherosclerosis, cardiovascular disease and/or stroke.

Asparagus aids digestion. Inulin, a carbohydrate in asparagus, encourages the growth of Bifidobacteria and Lactobacilli – two healthy bacteria found in your digestive tract. These bacteria improve your body's ability to absorb nutrients and also prevent unfriendly bacteria from settling in.

By helping maintain healthy digestion, asparagus lowers your risk of food allergies and colon cancer. In addition, asparagine – an amino acid found in asparagus, which acts as a natural diuretic, effectively treats swelling, general water retention, arthritis, and rheumatism. According to one medical journal article, the continual flushing process caused by asparagus' diuretic properties can help prevent the development of kidney stones. They also deliver relatively high levels of these essential minerals: calcium, iron, phosphorus, copper, and potassium.

Considering these facts, asparagus is a good vegetable to include in your diet.

Although one cup of asparagus contains only 43 calories, it delivers a significant percentage of your daily requirements in the following: Folate, 66%; Vitamin C, 30%; Vitamin K, 114 %; Protein, almost 10%; and Fiber, 11%. Asparagus' combination of nutrients, protein and fiber could help you maintain your weight, stabilize your digestion, and curb your appetite, while maintaining stable blood sugar levels and preventing constipation.

If you decide to stock up on some stalks of fresh asparagus, look for straight spears, without twists or bulges. Most bunches consist of 15-25 spears, held together by an elastic. Select bunches with uniform, bright green stems and pointed dark green or purple closed tips.

Asparagus is best eaten immediately, but can be stored well for up to four days. Since it spoils easily, store with care. First, wrap a damp paper towel around the base of the stems to keep them moist. Then, keep the spears clean, covered and cold in the fridge or another cool dry storage area.

Before cooking, rinse well; then, steam, boil or grill. Although thin spears do not require peeling, the tougher, stringy skin of thicker spears can be removed after cooking, along with the tough bottom third of each spear.

Of course on the road, eating asparagus is much simpler.

Since many restaurants serve fresh asparagus in season, you now have a few months to enjoy farm fresh quality with no fuss! 🍷

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

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COMMIT WITH CONFIDENCE

Industry
Issues

STEVE LASKOWSKI



The case for policy partnership

The way governments make policy has changed substantially over the last several years. Gone are the days when government policy shops had legions of engineers, lawyers, mathematicians, and economists.

The penetration of government policy into your businesses may have expanded in recent years, but the number of bureaucrats behind these rules and procedures has shrunk dramatically – particularly in the case of transportation and infrastructure policy.

As an operator, why should you care about the shrinking of transportation expertise within government bureaucracies? Many in our industry would likely agree that the fewer government officials we have, the better. But when you lose that much experience and expertise in our sector it inevitably also brings the consequences of policy neglect.

As such, it becomes even more important that trucking industry leaders get more involved in their association, which is undoubtedly an investment in time and includes a financial commitment.

So, what sort of expertise are we talking about with regards to infrastructure improvement? Are there, for example, off-ramps to your customers' facilities that need improving; or is there lane-widening required on a congested part of the provincial highway that you travel?

Government at times will ask for our input in regards to design requirements. So, it's trade associations and their members that must make the case for infrastructure investments in these areas. There are some good government people left in freight transportation planning, but they are few. In other words, without your voice and input we can be left with substandard roadways for transporting freight.

The same could be said for the establishment of municipal truck routes, roundabouts and freight delivery plans. Ideas are put forward and implemented by municipal planners and politicians with little knowledge about our vehicle needs and customer demands. Once again, there are some good people throughout the municipal freight policy arena, but they are stretched thin with little resources from which to draw.

These realities have changed how the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) serves its members. Trade associations must not only prepare a list of issues and solutions for government, but they must also be prepared to put together a detailed action plan, along with all technical and legal analysis, that would allow government to put the right solutions in place. This approach to lobbying requires two major factors to be successful: industry input and involvement; and financial resources to develop the technical and legal documents to sup-

port member positions.

Two areas in which this approach was recently put into play include the long combination vehicle (LCV) program and municipal roundabouts.

The Ontario government was ready to move on LCVs but was not willing to dedicate engineering or computer system resources to the program. The message from government was simple: If industry wanted this program, we would need to design and pay for it.

When government requests changes on an annual basis to improve safety parameters of the program, it's OTA that pays for them to be put in place. Seven years and close to \$1 million of OTA investments later, the LCV program is a resounding success. It took significant funds to create this program; but, more importantly, it was industry members dedicating their financial resources, time and expertise to lead program design changes that truly drove this achievement. A similar policy reality was seen in the municipal arena with the construction of roundabouts. The practicality of such road designs is certainly debatable, but membership is unanimous in our petition to cities and townships that if they are going to build roundabouts, they must work for all commercial vehicle configurations.

Once again, it was OTA membership, along with contracted engineers, who got involved and designed a standard round-

about configuration for all trucks – a private sector-led and financed municipal infrastructure policy. Without this effort by OTA members and financial investment by the OTA Board, it's highly doubtful this engineering blueprint for roundabouts would ever have materialized.

The industry is faced with a similar challenge in 2015. The City of Toronto is struggling to find fair solutions for all the freight service sectors with regards to a freight delivery plan that assists in reducing congestion, but also meets the realities of customer demands.

OTA is working on a solution that represents a unified vision for meeting the city's requirements while at the same time accommodating various sectors' operational needs. To achieve this goal, a number of private-sector entities will need to get involved and provide input. Once again, this will require time commitments and financial resources from both transportation and shipper/receiver organizations. The new challenge facing OTA is not only about dealing with government on the solutions that will need to be implemented, but also reaching out to private-sector partners and convincing them to come aboard. Without a unified effort from the private and public sectors, we will continue to spin our wheels in achieving effective transportation policy which reflects the operational realities on the ground. ●

Steve Laskowski is senior vice-president of the Canadian Trucking Alliance and Ontario Trucking Association. He has been involved in various files including environmental and cross-border matters, domestic and international taxation of trucking activities and intermodal relations.



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UNIROYAL



You say tomato I say tomahto

MARK LEE



Weak Loonie puts APU plans on hold

My plan to buy an auxiliary power unit (APU) has been put on hold. Fortunately, the mild weather at this time of year means that I wouldn't have seen much benefit from having one anyway.

The reason I've put it on hold is the price; because of the disparity between the US and Canadian dollar the price has jumped a whopping \$3,000.

However, that doesn't mean it's not happening, but I'm having to think outside the box a little.

I mentioned to the salesman that I was considering the electric APU and he was not overly enthusiastic about them at first, because he wanted my purchase to be the right one for my operation.

The electric APU has limitations; not unexpected really as it runs on batteries which only have a certain amount of power before they run out of juice. The diesel-powered versions will run for much longer as long as there's a larger supply of fuel available.

The electric versions also don't have an in-built engine heating feature, which is achieved by the diesel-powered ones by circulating coolant. Obviously the electric version doesn't charge the vehicle batteries either; if it could do that it would be a perpetual motion machine and that has yet to be invented.

My operation involves running back and forth across the Prairies, so I'm not going to need air-conditioning as much as I would if I ran to the southern states.

With a little bit of forward planning I'm convinced that an electric APU would more than meet my cooling requirements.

If I get the cab nice and cool before I shut down the big engine for the day and use the cab curtains to keep the sun out, the draw on the electric system will be much less than flicking a switch and letting the machine do all the work.

Heating will not be a huge issue either.

I have a bunk heater which keeps me nice and toasty, but when temperatures drop there comes a point when it cannot put out enough heat.

That point is not too far away from the time when a diesel-powered APU alone is not enough and I would be running the big engine anyway, so again I think I could manage.

The thing that puts me off is the cold starting ability.

As I said earlier, there is no coolant circulation, so the engine will be cold, the batteries will be in reasonable shape, apart from the cold which reduces their effectiveness. But I have a good set of deep-cycle batteries and I could invest in one of those starter modules that claim to be able to provide enough cranking amps from batteries that are only holding six volts and in temperatures as low as -50 C. They're not cheap, but you get what you pay for.

An independent diesel-powered engine block heater will solve the cold engine problem.

They run off battery power too, but

if it's wired to draw from the electric APU then it should keep my truck batteries healthy enough to provide sufficient amps for easy starting and those block heaters get the engine up to normal operating temperature in a reasonably short space of time, so the load on the truck batteries will be minimized.

Of course I could just hook up an extra set of batteries, fit a split charging

diesel-powered versions.

Now, as I've said there are limitations to the electric version and this did not please the drivers at the company involved.

Their work led them to the hotter parts of the US and they were having to run the truck after five or six hours as the batteries were drained trying to keep the truck cool.

The drivers, fed up with waking up

The reason I've put it (purchasing an APU) on hold is the price; because of the disparity between the US and Canadian dollar the price has jumped a whopping \$3,000. However, that doesn't mean it's not happening.

system and MacGyver everything else to fit my needs.

There would inevitably be a cost savings in doing this, but I have another trick up my sleeve, thanks to the APU salesman.

He had sold a number of electric APUs to a fleet that already had the

in a red hot truck halfway through their 10-hour break did what anyone would do in that situation and just ran the truck all night.

This led to the company removing the electric APUs and refitting the diesel-powered versions.

To me it means that there are a

bunch of nearly new electric APUs sitting in the corner of a shop somewhere.

The salesman is trying to get a hold of one of them for me and although prices have yet to be discussed, I'm sure there will be a significant savings involved for me.

It will also help the original purchaser of the electric APUs as they will make a little bit of money back (hopefully very little) and the salesman is looking after his existing customer and getting me the best deal possible - that's not a story we hear often anymore.

I'm optimistic that this could actually work out in my favour.

Apart from replacing batteries and maybe topping up refrigerant levels every few years, I will have zero running costs.

I will have to buy an engine heater and possibly the starting module and I'm going to speak to my dealer to see if there's any way I can get the factory system that fires up the engine when the batteries get low, fitted to my truck.

Such a system does exist and I'm thinking that I could have that in conjunction with the electric APU, engine block heater and starting module and have a system equal to a diesel-powered APU for a fraction of the cost. Time will tell. ●

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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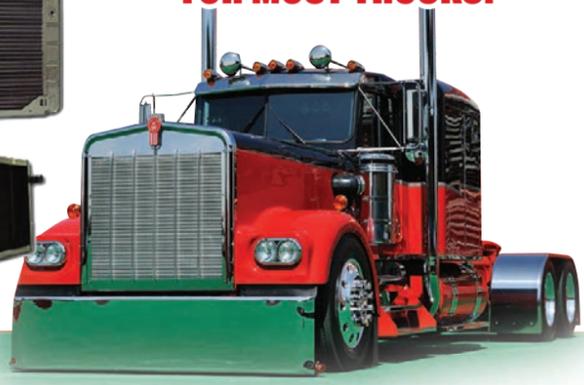


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Kriska buys JMF Transport

PRESCOTT, ONTARIO

Kriska Transportation Group (KTG) has announced the acquisition of JMF Transport, a 65-truck fleet out of Valcourt, Que. Kriska announced JMF will continue to operate under its current management team, including general manager Stephan Brizard.

"Since the formation of KTG in late 2014, we have been actively looking at acquisitions in Eastern Canada that fit our model of safe, well-managed, and financially-disciplined companies," announced Mark Seymour, president and CEO of Kriska. "Stephan Brizard and his team at JMF have built a company that meets all of these requirements, and I couldn't be happier to have JMF join the KTG family. As we stated when we formed KTG last year, we believe the truckload market in

Eastern Canada will continue to experience significant consolidation, and that our shareholders, employees, and customers will all benefit from the stability and leverage that a larger organization offers."

"Joining KTG offers the best of both worlds to the employees and customers of JMF Transport," added Brizard. "We look forward to enjoying the economies of scale that KTG can bring to our company, while still being able to operate our business in the independent manner that has made us successful since our inception in 1967."

With the acquisition, Kriska now operates 535 tractors, 1,650 trailers and employs 750 people including owner/operators. ●

Investment firm buys Jardine Transport

FREDERICTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

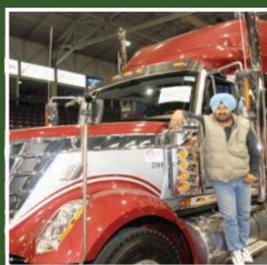
Private investment firm SeaFort Capital has announced the purchase of Jardine Transport.

Jardine is a Fredericton-based long-haul trucking company specializing in flatbed and drop-deck services.

It was founded in 1978 by Robert Leonard and serves customers in Ontario, Quebec, Atlantic Canada, Western Canada and the Northeastern US. Dion Cull has been named the new president of the company and Leonard plans to retire.

"Jardine is a well-run business with excellent employees," said Rob Normandeau, president of SeaFort. "The company has been servicing an impressive base of loyal customers for decades. The addition of Dion Cull to the management team will provide an orderly transition of leadership. Mr. Cull is a skilled operator and a proven leader. We are very pleased to partner with him on this opportunity."

SeaFort is backed by the Sobey and McCain families and is based in Halifax, N.S. ●



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Quality Move wins Allied award

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Quality Move Management has been recognized for the eighth consecutive year as Allied Van Lines' Cross-Border Agent of the Year.

The award recognizes the Allied agency with the highest volume of US-Canada cross-border tonnage, among more than 400 agents, the companies announced. Quality Move hauled more than 5.5 million pounds across the border in 2014 to earn the award. It also received a quality score of 4.57 out of 5.0.

"QMM continues to be one of the most recognized agents in our network. The Cross Border Agent of the Year award demonstrates QMM's ability to service all types of customers and moves with exceptional customer service and quality," said Lesli Bertoli, vice-president of Allied Van Lines. ●

Over the Road

AL GOODHALL



Using social media to teach, not shame

Using social media to humiliate others seems to be all the rage these days. I heard an interview on the radio with author/reporter Jon Ronson about his recently published book: *So You've Been Publicly Shamed*. It really got me thinking about how we treat our fellow drivers.

A few days before I heard the interview I had watched a video of a trucker damage his truck in a manner that was painful to watch.

The comment thread attached to the video was nothing short of derisive.

There was no shortage of commentary mocking the driver, but only a few comments that tried to get at the root cause of the driver's actions.

Let me give you a brief outline of the video.

A driver approaches a bridge with a 10-foot clearance on a narrow two-lane road, so he stops.

On his right is a four-foot high retaining wall and on his left is a steep embankment. The distance between the two is maybe 40 feet.

The video starts with the truck jackknifed across the road. The cab is up the embankment on the left and the rear passenger side of the trailer

is jammed against the retaining wall on the right.

Despite the fact there is no physical possibility of turning a 53-ft. trailer around in a 40-ft. space, the driver gives it his all.

He tears off the front bumper, rips the fairing off the cab on the driver's side, damages the nose of the trailer and also the rear passenger side of the trailer on the wall.

There is debris strewn all over the road. The driver exits the cab and his body language says it all.

He holds his head in both hands and bows up and down as he surveys the damage.

You've probably heard the expression, 'If you want to get out of a hole then stop digging.' This driver finally put down the shovel.

I don't know his story but it seems pretty obvious that he was in over his head and simply panicked in a tough situation.

Even the best truck driver training schools have to graduate students with about 200 hours of training time. The worst schools will graduate students in a fraction of that time.

Think about that in comparison to the past.

Our old-school drivers will tell us about the countless hours they spent shunting trailers in a yard and work-

ing on the dock before they even had an opportunity to do a local delivery under supervision.

In the past, most drivers accumulated thousands of hours learning the ins and outs of handling a rig in tight quarters before they took to the open highway.

This is why I feel we need a minimum two-year apprenticeship program that gives new drivers the confidence they need to succeed.

Obtaining a licence from a high-quality truck driver training academy should be the first step in a driver's training – not the only step.

Here is the predicament we face today.

On one hand, we all recognize that the training methods of the past lead to a successful career and we bemoan the fact that many drivers lack the necessary training to do the job safely.

But then we turn around and shame new drivers across social media when they are most in need of a mentor.

A mentor is by definition a wise and trusted counsellor or teacher. Is mentoring becoming a thing of the past in our industry when we need it the most?

When videos and pictures are put up online they are put up with a

certain intent.

We need to move away from shaming drivers for the mistakes they make as our default position and start using social media to share these mistakes as teaching moments.

Although I feel that an apprenticeship program is the best solution, I am not so foolish as to think this will happen overnight – if it even happens at all.

But as experienced drivers we can share our wisdom and experience with new and novice drivers through social media.

There are some Facebook groups that are doing a great job with this approach.

When a group is set up with the intent to bring back the camaraderie and welcome new recruits by encouraging them to participate and ask dumb questions (there is no such thing as a dumb question when it comes to learning new skills) friendships build quickly and the knowledge spreads around the group like wildfire.

It's a joy to witness.

So the next time you witness one of those "Gotcha!" videos, take the time to try and understand the root cause of the driver's failure rather than just holding him in contempt. Maybe we can build a better workplace one social media post at a time. ●

Al Goodhall has been a professional long-haul driver since 1998. He shares his experiences via his 'Over the Road' blog at <http://truckingcrosscanada.blogspot.com>. You can also follow him on Twitter at @Al_Goodhall.



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Why the industry is hopelessly screwed

I recently got into an argument with a complete stranger on a trucking industry online chat board. Hard as it may be to believe that I would publicly disagree with someone I don't even know, the lively discussion that followed cemented a long-standing theory of mine: This industry is hopelessly screwed.

The discussion started when a driver raised the hourly pay issue. Several people threw in their opinion that hourly pay would solve the industry's problems.

Numerous people added comments, but one former driver made a lot of points that, initially, I agreed with. He didn't like hourly pay, for the simple reason that it's hard to properly regulate such a thing in unsupervised circumstances. This is one of the same reasons I doubt it could ever work for anything other than scheduled day trip work.

He preferred percentage pay, using the theory that it "weeds out the slackers." I agree with that too, for owner/operators.

At that point, in my mind, this gentleman went off the rails, and after we responded back and forth a couple times, he stopped answering. It's incredible how many people end a debate at the first sign that their argument doesn't hold water.

He went on a rant about driver pay, and how trucking companies really couldn't be expected to raise driver remuneration. Constantly increasing government regulations, increasing tax liabilities, and, to quote him, "overhead, overhead, overhead!" made margins so tight that higher pay was next to impossible.

And that's when he lost me. I asked a simple question: Why are margins so tight? Whose fault is that? Even pre-2008, in a solid economy, carriers with a shortage of drivers were constantly underbidding each other, to attain even more poor-paying freight.

I was on the receiving end of this equation, losing work to carriers whose gross rates were comparable to what my owner/operators were paid, making the customers question why my rates had been so high.

Blame shippers all you like, but you don't have to haul their freight if it doesn't pay, so ultimately, low margins are the fault of the trucking companies, period.

I challenged the former driver to tell me one other industry, either in manufacturing, distribution, or service, that self-absorbs increased overhead. I challenge readers to do the same.

While this industry will spend millions researching the latest fuel-saving techno-toys so we can lower operating costs - therefore working for the same rates during times of increased overhead - every other industry simply raises their prices accordingly.

If the latest gizmos show operating cost savings, the company considers that a bonus, possibly offsetting slow sales, but not offsetting the cost of doing business.

When mad cow disease struck, the price of beef went up.

The summer of 2014 saw a disease that attacked pigs, and the price of

pork went up. If the price of wheat goes up, so does the price of your breakfast cereal. When property taxes and heating fuel prices increased, our local truck repair shop raised the door rate \$5 per hour.

I could go on forever, but I've made my point.

Ours is the only industry that seems determined to work for such painfully slim margins, and then justifies it with foolish arguments.

In the discussion, as always, someone raised the tired argument that increased freight rates would raise consumer prices and stall the economy. Always an impressive argument, and always a complete line of crap.

Does anybody ever do the calcula-

tions on that statement? I did. Take any freight rate, and add \$1,000 to a truckload. Your big screen TV will cost between \$2-3 more. The lumber and brick for a typical new \$200,000 home will raise the cost to \$202,000.

Take measurements of any product on skids, and you'll find similar insignificant increases, like the aforementioned box of cereal, increasing by about 16 cents.

A typical sized load of new cars translates to your new wheels costing \$90 to \$120 more.

Would any of these examples bring the economy to a screeching halt, or even slow it down? Of course not. Larger price fluctuations than this occur every day, just due to market

influences.

However, I can argue all I want and those with more control of this industry than I'll ever have will either dismiss it or refer to analysts' reports that state otherwise.

I, like most of you, don't work in a world where analysts run the show. I deal in the real world, where I have to respond to the cost of doing business with comparable pricing to still remain profitable, and not just in incremental numbers.

The whole idea of starting my own business was to make a living, at a level reflective of the investment and risk involved.

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Cummins has new Canadian leaders in the east and west; Groupe Morneau promotes GM; And National Truck League names new rep.

Cummins has introduced a pair of new Canadian presidents.

Charles Masters took over the post as president of Cummins Western Canada effective Apr. 1 and will be relocating to Vancouver from the US. He most recently served as executive director, sales, for Cummins Turbo Technologies. Masters has been with Cummins since 2003. He will be relocating to Vancouver in the second quarter of this year, Cummins announced.

Jeff Van Poucke is taking over as president of Cummins Eastern Canada as of May 1. The 18-year Cummins veteran most recently served as general manager of field sales and support for the North American engine business. He is a Canadian citizen based in Columbus, Ind. but will be relocating to Toronto in the June 2015 timeframe, Cummins announced.

Groupe Morneau announced that **Danielle Brouard** is the new general manager of Morneau Solution.

In her new position, Brouard will be in charge of the division's operations. She will also maintain the division's compliance with laws, values, policies and procedures while working out of the Anjou terminal in Montreal, the company announced.

Kari Rihm, president and CEO of Rihm Kenworth in St. Paul, Minn. has

been named the fifth annual winner of the Influential Woman in Trucking Award.

The award, sponsored by Navistar, goes to a woman in the trucking industry who makes or influences key decisions, has a proven record of responsibilities and mentors and serves as a role model to other women. It was developed by Women in Trucking with Navistar in 2010.

Rihm has managed the dealership since the passing of her husband in 2010. It has been in his family since 1932. She has expanded the dealership from three locations to five and has increased staff by more than 50%.

The company has been named Kenworth's Medium-Duty Truck Dealer of the Year three of the past four years. It is the only 100% woman-owned Kenworth dealer in the US.

National Truck League has appointed **Harjeet Dhadda** as transportation insurance specialist. The announcement was made by the company's president, Rod Stiller.

Dhadda is a certified professional driver improvement instructor for the Canada Safety Council. He is also an instructor for the Ontario Safety League in the transportation of dangerous goods.

In this new role, he will be focusing on building customer relations and working with the NTL team. ●

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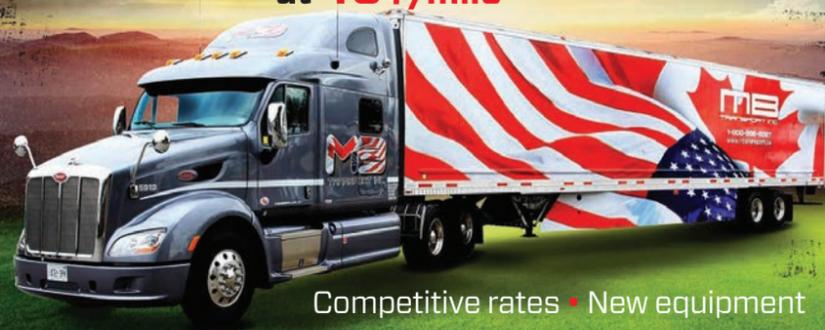
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Kenworth honours W900

Continued from page 1

McAleese, chairman, president and CEO of Bendix. However, he also predicted this year will mark the cyclical market peak, with a drop of 5-15% to follow in 2016.

“So we will not have a dramatic drop, just a little softening,” McAleese said during his press address. Every economic indicator Bendix looks to for hints of future Class 8 truck demand is currently in positive territory.

“The overall economic climate our fleets are operating in is a very good economic climate,” McAleese said.

The pullback McAleese projects for 2016 is based on the fact 2014 orders finished the year strong, putting pressure on truck production. Despite his upbeat market outlook, McAleese said there are three things keeping him awake at night. These include: the worsening driver shortage, with no end in sight; the impact regulatory changes will have on fleet operating costs and the acquisition costs of new vehicles; and the slow pace of the industry’s acceptance of new safety technologies.

Still, McAleese concluded, “2014 was one heckuva year and 2015 is shaping up to be more of the same.”

Preston Feight, Kenworth general manager, suggested 2015 could be the second best year on record for Class 8 orders.

Daimler Trucks North America CEO Martin Daum, speaking to truck journalists at a roundtable event, predicted NAFTA Classes 6-8 truck demand will grow about 10% this year. This means between 411,000 and 453,000 new vehicles could be required. However, Daum acknowledged there’s a lot of uncertainty in the Canadian market, due to the poor exchange rate and the slow-down in the oil and gas sector. Daum said he expects DTNA to achieve market share comparable to 2013, recovering what was lost in 2014. Its share of the NAFTA Classes 6-8 market is 36.3% year-to-date, a 4.6% improvement.

To meet this demand, Daimler has increased production by 16%, and is still in the process of training and deploying 2,300 additional workers since last summer. The company is planning to build 27,000 more trucks this year.

“I have absolutely no fear those production slots will go empty,” Daum said. “In fact, I have a feeling it might not be enough and we might do some more.”

The trucks

Trucks from both ends of the efficiency spectrum were on display at MATS and it was difficult to determine which was the bigger crowd-pleaser. What’s old was new again at the Kenworth display, where a new take on a classic favourite, the ICON 900, was front and centre. The ICON 900 is a limited edition, classic-styled truck based on the W900.

It features stainless steel fender guards, upgraded headlights, headlamp covers, under door panels and sleeper panels, grille close-out panel and large sun visor.

It is available with a 72- or 86-inch sleeper and up to 600 hp. Each ICON 900 comes with a unique signature number badge.

From a tribute to yesterday, to a



The Kenworth ICON 900

glimpse at tomorrow, Freightliner showcased its \$80-million SuperTruck. The SuperTruck produced a 115% improvement in freight efficiency, more than twice the original goal. This was achieved using a mix of current and futuristic technologies, some of which have already been applied to the production model

Continued on page 37



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Freightliner's SuperTruck improved freight efficiency by 115%.

Freightliner shows off SuperTruck

Continued from page 35

Cascadia Evolution.

Derek Rotz, principal engineer on the project, said the experience was invaluable, as it allowed engineers to explore new technologies that otherwise would not have been feasible to test. The truck achieved 12 mpg.

"The SuperTruck was a playground for our engineers to explore ideas and come up with things we wouldn't have been able to do otherwise," added Diane Hames, general manager of marketing and strategy with DTNA.

One of the coolest features was an articulating grille, with levers that open up at slow speeds and when pulling a grade to allow air into the engine compartment for cooling, and then close at highway speeds to provide a smooth, more aerodynamic front end. Other technologies include camera-based mirrors, waste heat recovery, predictive shifting, an integrated powertrain and the use of lightweight materials.

Both Mack and Volvo came out with a new take on the 6x2 axle configuration. Mack's 6x2 with Liftable Pusher Axle, and Volvo's Adaptive Loading, raise the foremost drive axle when empty or lightly loaded to provide the efficiency of a 4x2. This spec', however, may not pass muster with Canadian regulators, who continue to take a dim view of current generation 6x2 technologies, despite the proven efficiency benefits. So check with your local regulators before placing an order.

Mack also added a new Load Logic spec', which locks out 12th gear when the trailer is fully loaded, to operate in the more efficient direct drive configuration. Top gear is given back to the driver when the trailer is empty or lightly loaded, to maximize efficiency. Load Logic is intended for applications in which the trucks go out full and return empty, or those hauling diminishing loads.

And Volvo presented a new XE powertrain package dubbed XE Super Direct Drive, available in mid-2015.

Freightliner announced a slew of new options for its Cascadia and Cascadia Evolution, including factory installation of the Bose Ride System II truck seat. It also announced availability of the Bendix SmartFire tire pressure monitoring system and a new flatscreen TV mount. New efficiency options include the AeroSmart and SmartAdvantage packages. AeroSmart includes the latest aerodynamic components while the SmartAdvantage combines the Cummins ISX15 engine with an Eaton Fuller Advantage Series 10-speed automated transmission.

International showcased its ProStar ES, with new enhancements said to

improve fuel economy by 2% compared to the original ES launched late last year. The ProStar ES with ISX15 power gains efficiency thanks to Cummins' new ADEPT package. More on that in a bit. The ProStar ES with the Navistar N13 engine gains

Continued on page 39



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Active safety systems evolve

Continued from page 37

efficiency thanks to Eaton's new Neutral Coast functionality. More on that in a bit, too.

The telematics

Paccar companies got on-board with remote diagnostics, offering their own platforms, SmartLinq from Peterbilt and TruckTech+ from Kenworth. Both will initially monitor fault codes from only Paccar MX engines, with additional coverage to come later.

These systems monitor engine-generated fault codes and advise the truck owner or driver on the most appropriate course of action.

Navistar announced its open-architecture remote diagnostics platform OnCommand Connection is now a standard, no-charge feature on all new International trucks. It is integrated with 11 major telematics platforms and can cover all makes of vehicles. The company also claims it monitors more than 4,000 fault codes - 20 times more than competitive systems. The company also unveiled a new Web site for the system: www.OnCommand-Connection.com.

Volvo announced at the show that its Remote Diagnostics platform now covers fault codes generated by the I-Shift transmission, following on the heels of a similar announcement from Mack that its GuardDog Connect monitors fault codes from the mDrive.

Cummins, meanwhile, announced its Connected Diagnostics program is

now available through Omnitracs and PeopleNet telematics platforms.

The safety systems

Bendix announced a significant update to its Wingman collision mitigation system, with the introduction of Wingman Fusion. The new system combines camera and radar technologies to add new capabilities, including the ability to read speed limit signs and notify the fleet of speed violations.

Wingman Fusion can also apply the brakes to avoid contact with stationary metallic objects detected by the radar. Lane departure warning, following distance alerts and now, over-speed alerts are all offered by Wingman Fusion.

Cameras read speed limit signs and issue an audible warning to the driver when the posted limit is exceeded by 5 mph. When the driver exceeds the posted limit by 10 mph, 10 seconds of video are captured - five from before and five after the threshold was crossed - and then transmitted back to the fleet manager for evaluation. A total of 20 seconds of video are captured if the fleet manager wants more evidence, but only 10 seconds is transmitted to reduce data usage.

Wingman Fusion also introduces Alert Prioritization, which in the event multiple warnings are issued will prioritize and warn the driver of only the most urgent one. Navistar was the first to announce availability of the system

Continued on page 40



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Cummins squeezes more efficiency out of ISX15

Continued from page 39

on its International ProStar, but it's available to all the OEMs immediately.

Wabco introduced OnGuardActive, its "most advanced mitigation system to date," according to Nik Varty, Wabco president, Americas. It provides active braking on moving, stopping and stationary objects and features a new radar with a 30% longer and wider range. Wabco says the new version works better in adverse weather, including fog, heavy rain and blinding sunshine, thanks to its use of a 77 GHz radar sensor.

The tires and wheels

Yokohama unveiled at the Mid-America Trucking Show a new Web site fea-

turing tools fleets and owner/operators can use to more effectively select and maintain tires. The Web site, now live at YokohamaTruck.com, offers tire comparison calculators and tools to help end-users ensure they're running the proper inflation.

"YokohamaTruck.com has a lot more than just our full line of commercial tires on it," said Rick Phillips, YTC vice-president of sales. "It features several business-driven tools like the new Tire Inspection Guide that helps fleet customers identify the most common tire issues and fixes to keep their trucks on the road. The more we can help minimize downtime, the more productive - and thus profitable - fleets can be."

Yokohama is currently in Phase 1 of executing an aggressive growth strategy for the North American commercial market. It is opening a new Mississippi tire plant this fall that will produce one million tires per year. Phase 2 will involve the construction of another million-tire plant in the US, however timing of the second phase will depend on market conditions, Phillips told *Truck News* in an interview at the Mid-America Trucking Show.

"If the market keeps going like it's going now, we'll grow with it and initiate Phase 2 within the next couple years," he said.

Once the second US plant is constructed, Yokohama will be able to serve 90% of the North American market domestically. But even construction of the first plant alone will help it better serve this market, Phillips said.

"Production in Mississippi is going to give us quicker time to market," he explained. "Right now we have to order 45-60 days out and once we have domestic production, we'll cut that time to about two weeks."

In conjunction with its 100th anniversary, General Tire announced it is coming to market with three new highway truck tires.

The first tire is the General HS tire. The HS is a highway long-haul steer tire that features an enhanced tread design, fuel-efficient compounding and a new casing platform. It has a five-rib tread pattern that promotes even wear.

"We've seen an increase in mileage and an increase in durability (from the older General highway steer tire)," said Alex Chmiel, director of marketing, commercial vehicle tires, Continental.

The second tire revealed at MATS was the General HD long-haul drive tire. The tire has a deep closed-shoulder tread design that offers high mileage and fuel-economy.

The last tire rolled out was the General HT, long-haul trailer tire. This tire has a stone-repellant tread pattern in order to extend the casing life and sustain demanding applications, the company said.

Alcoa introduced a new Dura-Bright EVO truck wheel, which it claims to be its brightest, lowest-maintenance wheel to date. The company said it's 10 times more resistant to corrosion than its predecessor and requires no polishing. Washing can be done with mild soap and water.

"Dura-Bright is not a coating, but a surface treatment that penetrates the aluminum and becomes an integral part of the wheel," explained Alcoa's

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Victor Marquez. "It is also three times more resistant to chemicals found in the toughest truck wash cleaning agents and it stays cleaner for longer."

The independents

Independent component manufacturers Cummins and Eaton both had news to announce at MATS.

Cummins announced it is planning to "redefine efficiency" and one of its first steps is to release a new technology package dubbed ADEPT, which it says can improve fuel economy by up to 3%. It will debut this summer. The ADEPT package includes a suite of electronic features, which together sense vehicle load, speed and grade and then use the capabilities of the ISX engine and Eaton automated manual transmission to modify the speed, power and gear to maximize efficiency.

The system takes advantage of the truck's momentum to conserve energy and reduce fuel consumption.

"This will help reduce driver-to-driver variability and make each and every driver more efficient and more consistent and turn the fleet operation into a more consistent and efficient operation," explained Jim Fier, vice-president, engineering, medium-, heavy- and light-duty engine business.

One of the features will be SmartCoast, which will disengage the transmission when the truck is travelling downhill, reducing drag on the engine and improving fuel economy.

Additional features and technologies will be added later, Fier said.

Cummins is also planning noteworthy enhancements to its 2017 ISX15 engine, which will be available with engine ratings from 400-605 hp. It will be offered in two packages: one aimed at fleets looking for efficiency and another designed for fleets and owner/operators who want maximum performance and power. Fier said Cummins is revamping its combustion recipe, developing a more responsive and efficient turbocharger and reducing parasitic losses from within the engine.

This will allow for greater downspeeding, he added. The 2017 ISX15 will undergo nine million miles of testing - equal to 4,000 trips from coast to coast within the US.

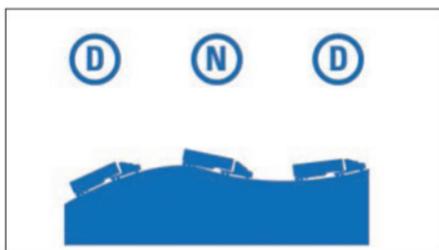
A new ISB6.7 is also coming to the market, featuring an enhanced torque rise, increased fuel efficiency - especially in stop-and-go applications - and greater powertrain integration, as well as natural gas availability, Fier announced. Cummins will be showcasing the 2017 ISX15 during a coast-to-coast US/Canada road show.

Check www.CumminsTour.com for dates.

For its part, Eaton has enhanced its automated transmissions to save more fuel, by disengaging the driveline when the truck is on a slight downhill grade and dropping engine speed to idle.

Eaton claims doing so improves fuel economy by up to 1%. Neutral Coast Mode is being added to Eaton's full line of Fuller Advantage Series and UltraShift Plus automated manual transmissions. Each of the OEMs to offer it has applied its own branding: SmartCoast with Cummins; Fuel Efficient Coast with Navistar; and Neutral Coast with Paccar.

"This new option promises to bring fuel efficiency improvements to line-haul fleets typically travelling on roads where hills and grades are present," said Ryan Trzybinski, product planning manager, Eaton. "The gains will vary depending on the amount and severity of grades encountered."



The transmission exits Neutral Coast Mode when: the brakes or accelerator are applied; cruise control is cancelled; a mode other than Drive has been selected; cruise high or low set speeds are exceeded; maximum vehicle grade is exceeded; or there's a request from the adaptive cruise system.

Eaton also announced at the Mid-America Trucking Show, an expansion of its Fuller Advantage Series line to include nine new offerings. Three are manual transmissions with new direct drive gear ratios, two are automated models with new direct drive gear ratios and four are automated transmissions with new overdrive ratios. All are 10-speed transmissions. ●

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Daimler's SuperTruck helping in pursuit of 10-mpg truck

Traffic congestion the greatest barrier to improved truck efficiency, DTNA CEO says

By James Menzies

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

It was a gratifying Mid-America Trucking Show for Martin Daum, president and CEO of Daimler Trucks North America, who in one of his first addresses in that role in 2010 projected a 10 mpg truck would become a reality.

Daum recalled taking some flak for that statement, made at the Heavy-Duty Manufacturers Association's Mid-America breakfast. However, today some customers are achieving that ambitious goal of 10 mpg under perfect conditions with the Cascadia Evolution and the proof that it will

soon be more widely attained sat in Freightliner's booth.

Daimler's \$80-million SuperTruck project has been completed, with designers doubling the original goal of a 50% improvement in freight efficiency. The SuperTruck actually improved efficiency by 115%, achieving 12.2 mpg in real-world testing.

More importantly, however, Daum noted 60% of the technologies required to reach that level of performance can be and are being applied to today's trucks.

"If you look at that, we come pretty close to 10 mpg," Daum said during a media roundtable.

Still, Daum expressed concern



DTNA's CEO says the GHG17 requirements for heavy trucks should consist of a single standard for complete vehicles, to reward integration.

about the one impediment to truck efficiency that the OEMs can't control: traffic congestion.

"One traffic jam eradicates all the

technologies we have spent millions of dollars on," he said. "It will be blown out through the tailpipe if the truck sits for 10 minutes in a traffic jam. Free-flowing traffic is the biggest thing the government can do (to reduce emissions and improve efficiency). It is an often overlooked item when we talk about environmentally-friendly and fuel-saving trucks."

Daum said the industry needs a combination of "smart" regulations, research and infrastructure if it's to greatly improve efficiency.

"Regulations shouldn't limit free markets," he added. "They should support and foster free markets."

One of the most immediate regulations to be dealt with are the Phase 2 greenhouse gas/fuel economy standards for heavy trucks, which are slated to be phased in beginning in 2017. Daum said he's confident DTNA will be the first truck maker to be certified once the rules are published.

While the details of GHG17 are yet to be fully disclosed by government, Daum said Daimler has its own vision for the program.

"We advocate a complete vehicle standard," he said. "There are a lot of technologies, which will today and in the future save fuel working together with other parts of the truck. So if you single out one component, it's not necessarily optimum. It limits our ability to optimize the entire package."

Daum also stressed the importance of reliable testing procedures, which reflect real-world conditions.

"You can always optimize an engine to a test cycle," he said. "Most engines are in trucks, not on test benches...Any test cycle the EPA has, has to mimic the real world."

Daimler also wants to see new technologies needed to meet the new standard deliver a payback to the end user in 18-24 months.

In addition to the satisfaction derived from seeing his prediction of a 10-mpg truck edge closer to reality, Daum had other reasons to smile as well. Truck orders are expected to remain strong this year, Daimler has seen its share grow year-to-date, and demand for its DT12 automated manual transmission has been especially strong.

Daum said the transmission is "sold out" with 44,000 units sold this year, well above initial projections. When production of the transmission moves to the US next year, Daimler will be able to build significantly more units and even then, Daum said it may be necessary to continue importing units to keep pace with demand.

"The sky is the limit" with the DT12, he said. ●

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Shell to fund development of hyper-efficient Class 8 truck

By Lou Smyrlis
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Looking to go where no one has gone before on fuel economy gains – and gain insights into the impact on fluid performance in the process – Shell Lubricants is partnering with a pioneering truck designer to develop a new hyper-fuel mileage Class 8 tractor-trailer. Shell Lubricants is providing the financial support to allow Bob Sliwa, owner of Airflow Truck Company, to bring his next generation concept truck design, nicknamed the Starship, to life. Dave Waterman, North American marketing manager for Shell Rotella announced at a special event at the Mid-America Trucking Show.

Waterman explained that as industry and societal requirements evolve in terms of fuel efficiency expectations, and governments respond with higher standards, Shell wants to ensure it plays a role in future innovations, although it has no plans to profit from the new truck design.

“This just a great opportunity to help an industry innovator...The ultimate vision was very intriguing... Where he is going is not that safe space we are all used to,” Waterman said.

Initial designs call for the Starship tractor and trailer to join together into a single integrated unit as a way to address aerodynamic drag and loss of efficiency resulting from the gap between the tractor and trailer. The tractor and trailer will also have newly designed side skirts, hood, front end and custom interior. The tractor to trailer aerodynamics gap sealer and the trailer side skirts will all retract below 35 mph or when coming up on obstructions such as a railway crossing.

As a former race car driver, Sliwa’s passion for pushing the fuel efficiency envelope on truck design dates back more than three decades when he built one of the very first highly aerodynamic and fuel efficient Class 8 trucks in the world in 1983. The truck included an aerodynamic hood and side fairings long before they became commonplace in the industry. That truck averaged 10.54 mpg, Sliwa said.

Through the Great Recession he worked on a truck design that would push the limits of fuel efficiency even further. His Airflow BulletTruck, built in 2012, and driven coast to coast at 65,000 lbs GVW, averaged 13.4 mpg.

Sliwa is confident he can go further still with his next design, which he hopes to start testing on regional runs in the third quarter of 2016 with cross-country testing completed in 2017. As Waterman colourfully added, this truck will be no “trailer queen,” referring to concept vehicles that travel on trailers from show to show but are never driven in real-world situations.

The Shell Lubricants team will provide technical consultation on engine and drivetrain components and recommendations for lubricant needs for use in the Starship truck. ●



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44 MATS REPORT

Dana's concept axle converts to 6x2 at speed

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Dana revealed at the Mid-America Trucking Show, a new dual range disconnect concept tandem axle that disconnects the inter-axle shaft at highway speeds to provide greater efficiency. The AdvanTek Dual Range Disconnect was designed for Class 8 linehaul applications utilizing downspeeding. It provides the traction of a 6x4 configuration but the efficiency at highway speeds of a 6x2. Dana is claiming the new axle can provide a 2-5% fuel economy improvement over conventional 40k tandem axles paired with overdrive transmissions.

At startup, on grades and at low speeds or while backing, the Spicer AdvanTek Dual Range Disconnect allows the tandem axle to operate as a 6x4 with a traditional starting ratio. As the truck reaches highway speeds, an ECU in the axle causes the inter-axle shaft to disconnect from the power divider, allowing the axle to operate in a more efficient 6x2 mode. It also shifts the forward axle to a faster ratio that enables the engine speed to decrease to as low as 900 rpm for highway cruise operation. A prototype of the system has been in testing for the past 2.5 years, Dana announced. It will begin field tests within OE chassis this year. ●

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Goodyear brings Smart Fleet program to Canada

By James Menzies

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Goodyear's Smart Fleet program, launched in Canada in March, gives owner/operators and small fleets the big-fleet treatment.

The program has seen double-digit monthly growth since its launch last year in the US. Now it's available in Canada. Jose Martinez, Goodyear commercial digital and solutions manager, told *Truck News* at the Mid-America Trucking Show that the main benefit for members is published pricing that's better than any O/O or small fleet could negotiate on their own. There's no cost to join the program.

"The main purpose of the program is to give the owner/operator some of the same benefits we're giving the big fleets," Martinez said. "When they sign up, they become a national account of Goodyear, dealing directly with Goodyear. They get published pricing on tires, tire-related services and retreads."

Members also enjoy consistent pricing across Canada, so they won't get taken advantage of if they suffer a blow-out in a remote location. Goodyear also waives the dispatch fee for roadside assistance through its fleetHQ program for Smart Fleet members.

All program literature and support is available in both French and English, Martinez noted. Currently the Canadian and US programs are not integrated,

but the hope is to soon combine them so that the benefits members from both countries enjoy can be offered right across the US and Canada.

"We're working on a way to manage cross-border transactions so it becomes a North American program," Martinez said. "We're testing the systems to make sure everything works. We believe by the middle of this year this will be a North American program."

Anyone with a truck can qualify. Fleets with up to 100 trucks will likely be able to lower their tire and service costs, Martinez said. Fleets with more than 100 trucks may be better served by creating a national account with Goodyear. Martinez said most members in the US have about five or six trucks.

Martinez stressed there is no cost to join - at any time. It takes a couple weeks for Goodyear to process new applications, so customers would be better off signing up before they need tires, to ensure the lower pricing is available on their next purchase. To entice people to join, Goodyear is also offering \$25 per tire off the initial purchase made under the program, on up to 10 tires. So members can save \$250 off a 10-tire purchase, beyond the lower published price they'll be buying them at.

It must be redeemed within six months of joining, Martinez added. That promotion was launched at Expo-Cam in April.

Customers can sign up for the program at www.GoodyearTruckTires.ca.

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Two-wheel road warriors

Back-road adventurer or urban sightseer, there's a fold-up bicycle for every truck driver

By Harry Rudolfs

When are two wheels better than 18? When you're parked in some forsaken industrial park and your truck is going to be tied up in the dock for hours – if not until tomorrow – and you want to get something to eat and maybe a little exercise, and there's nothing within walking distance. And maybe later, instead of flaking out in the bunk, it would be nice to cycle over to a nearby park and watch the sun set.

I've always thought that a bicycle can be a good friend to a truck driver. Health issues are a big problem in our profession and getting a daily cardio workout can often be a real challenge. But since off-duty hours are mandated these days, there's usually some time in every 24-hour cycle for physical activity – and a good little bike could save your life.

I don't think it's surprising that the Wright Brothers, fathers of aviation, were bicycle mechanics. For me a bicycle represents freedom – an instantaneous adventure awaits the minute you pump the pedals. Bicycles can take you to places where cars or trucks can't go, and you never have to worry about parking, traffic jams or the price of gasoline. Plus, riding a great cycle that's finely tuned can be an ecstatic, almost mystical experience, providing the zen-like state of being at one with a great piece of technology, so that your vehicle becomes an extension of your body and the physical world. Truck drivers understand this.

Sure, you can probably stuff any old bike behind the bulkhead of your tractor, but leaving it outside continuously is hard on any bike, especially if it's a high-performance model. However a well-designed fold-up bicycle will fit between the seats even if you're driving a day cab, or tuck nicely in the corner of a sleeper bunk.

I've owned a variety of portable bikes over the years, some of which were cumbersome when folded and others that were terrifying to ride. Not so with my two test cycles. Both the Strida and Montague Paratrooper come equipped with mechanical disc brakes and delivered comfortable, secure rides. And both can be compacted into carrying mode within seconds.

Besides the disc brakes, both bikes weigh about the same (29 lbs), and both have won design awards, but that's where the similarity ends. Strida's EVO is primarily an urban vehicle that can move almost seamlessly between streets, trails, sidewalks and public transit, while the Montague Paratrooper is designed to be dropped out of airplanes, and folds out to become a bona-fide mountain bike complete with front shocks, 26-inch wheels and a choice of 24 gears.

The Strida EVO

The Strida EVO is an odd looking bird that will certainly raise some eyebrows. It's an urban bike designed for people with minimal storage space. The 18-inch wheels make it legal to ride on sidewalks in most municipalities, which is handy when travelling alongside busy roadways or transitioning to public transport.

The aluminum tubular frame is a very cleverly designed triangle that collapses into three poles that knit together and are secured by a magnet, so no fasteners are required. The handlebars drop down and the pedals tuck away sideways, so the compressed version is about the size of a golf bag with the wheels at one end. When folded, the rider can roll the bike on its wheels, a big advantage compared to other portable velos that have to be carried.

Unfurled, the EVO rolls along pretty well. It's not quite as stable as a big-wheeled bike, but the ride is smooth and the unit is quite responsive in



Jacob (left) and Art Lucs, a father and son who are both about 6'5" and 260 lbs, found the bikes to be comfortable and practical.

tight situations with an amazingly sharp turning radius. This is not a racing bike, but the three-speed Sturmey-Archer rear hub gear system works well on a variety of terrains. Shifting is accomplished by pedaling back-

wards one quarter turn. The handlebar height and seat are adjustable so it can accommodate different body sizes. Truckers can weigh-in on the heavy

Continued on page 49

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Continued from page 47

side, so I asked a 260-lb-each father and son team to check out the bike. The six-foot-five-inch pair reported no problems with ride-ability or comfort.

One unique feature is the belt drive on the Strida, eliminating a greasy chain that could slime up your upholstery or the cuff of your pants. Belts are quieter, lighter, don't rust, last longer, and are pretty much maintenance-free. They're made from the same material as timing belts, and other bike manufacturers are starting to use belt-driven drives. Strida inventor Mark Sanders was a pioneer in this regard. He originally collaborated with an engineer from Gates Corp. on the prototype, and Gates continues to supply belts for Stridas.

The bike began as a project for Sanders' thesis when he was an industrial design engineering grad student in London in the mid-1980s. It was originally manufactured in England and later Portugal. Tens of thousands have been produced but the bike has had little exposure in North America.

These days Stridas are manufactured in Taiwan by the Ming Cycle company. Apparently the bike has a cult-like following in parts of Asia, with riding clubs of Stridas taking to the roads and trails on weekends and holidays. It's big in Japan as well, where some enthusiasts have customized them by converting the hub shift to five- or seven-speed variants.

The Strida EVO comes with plastic fenders and a small rack below the seat. I would recommend that anyone buying a Strida procure a couple of spare 18-inch tubes, as these are not often stocked in a typical bike store. If you're concerned with economy, the single speed EVO version with 16-inch wheels is available for about half the price.

The Montague Paratrooper

The Montague Bicycle Company of Cambridge, Mass., builds a wide range of full-size bicycles that fold up – that's an important difference. Other manufacturers give up some amount of performance and stability with smaller wheels, but I think that if you could ride the Paratrooper blindfolded, you wouldn't be able to tell it isn't a full-size bike. These bikes fold by swinging in half around the seat post tube, the front wheel pops off in seconds, and the entire unit fits in my trunk or truck.

The Paratrooper comes with 18- and 20-inch frames and is a no-frills, super-durable mountain bike that was originally designed for airborne use. I don't know anyone who parachutes with a bicycle but YouTube videos show the bike strapped to the skydiver in a carrying bag. Just before touchdown the package is released on a tether and it takes a few good bounces when it hits the ground.

The Paratrooper's beefed-up frame and suspension can handle almost

any sized trucker, and extra care has been taken to secure the cables and guides so they won't get frayed or damaged when the bike is folded (or dropped out of a helicopter). The Paratrooper has solid accessories, all standard and widely available, so you'll never lack for parts for this bike. If you're really game you can step up to the Paratrooper Pro, which gives you

more gears and a slightly better front suspension.

Montague originally developed the Paratrooper in conjunction with the US military's DARPA program, and has also worked on an electric-powered version. Fold-up bicycles have been used for decades by infantry and airborne divisions and the technology continues to improve. I suspect most

truckers will like the military styling and Cammy Green paint job.

I got to try the Paratrooper out on a few Niagara Escarpment trails just as the spring ice was abating – loved the disc brakes and smooth shifting. The only thing I have to compare it to is my Norco Storm, and it's head and shoul-

Continued on page 51



Model	Strida EVO	Montague Paratrooper
Price	\$1,195 from StridaCanada.ca	\$1,110 on sale at Beagle Bicycle Company, Burlington, Ont.
Colour	Many available, including polished aluminum	Matte Cammy Green
Weight	29 lbs	29 lbs
Frame	7000-series aluminum alloy	7005-series aluminum
Tires	High-performance, high-pressure all-weather tires with reflective strip	CST, knobby, front- and rear-specific, 26" x1.95"
Brakes	Mechanical disc brakes	Promax front and rear mechanical disc brakes w/ pad adjustment. Alloy Levers.
Manufactured	Taiwan	Vietnam

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Travel bikes

Continued from page 49

ders above that – more agile, quicker, nicely balanced, begs to be ridden hands-free.

The Paratrooper is assembled at a factory in Vietnam and that's the norm these days. That part of the world has been making our high-performance bikes for some time now and there's no stigma there. I have heard that close to 90% of the bicycles sold these days are manufactured in the Far East. A friend of mine was trying to buy a bike that wasn't made in Asia and discovered he would have to pay \$4,000 for an Italian-made frame alone.

So which bike is better for the average trucker? It really depends on the application.

The Strida is more of a shorter distance, urban/commuter bike. If I was travelling from the suburbs to downtown Montreal I might prefer the Strida because it gives me the option of riding on the sidewalk and folds up into a rolling walking stick when taking the metro or bus. As well, Porter Airlines and Air Canada allow passengers to bring along fold-up bikes on their flights at no charge if they meet certain spec's and the Strida is compliant in this regard.

But fitness enthusiasts would no doubt prefer the Paratrooper for long-distance or off-road riding.

The bike comes with a set of knob-tires that I would probably trade for something a little less aggressive since most of my riding is done on pavement, while still allowing for off-road riding. I would also consider installing a carrying rack that bolts directly onto the rear of the seat post.

It's interesting to note that a major US carrier, Prime Inc., of Springfield, Mo., offers Paratroopers for sale at its company store and includes bike riding as part of its annual fitness challenge. Evidently, they have achieved terrific results with their driver fitness and weight-loss programs.

Indeed, it would be great to see more carriers offering fold-up bikes to their drivers as part of a sign-on bonus. It's a win-win for everyone. Happy trails! 🚛

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Fleets still see benefits of alt-fuels, despite cheaper diesel

By James Menzies

INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

'Regret' was not a word heard spoken by fleets at this year's Green Truck Summit, even though cheaper diesel has cut into the cost savings projected by many early adopters of alternative fuel technologies.

Chuck Diehl, fleet manger, Smith Dairy Trucking in Orrville, Ohio, backed his company's decision to transition to compressed natural gas (CNG), though he acknowledged there were lessons learned along the way. The first of those lessons was that not all natural gas is the same, and that Utica Shale gas is wetter than most.

"We've experienced a lot of water," he said.

While SAE J1616 regulates the water content in CNG, on-road engines require less than the seven pounds of

water per million cubic square feet the standard allows, Diehl pointed out. The company had to install two dryers at its fuelling station and on some days has seen water content as high as 35 lbs per million cubic square feet.

Even so, Smith Dairy's decision to install a public-access fuelling station proved popular, with outside demand exceeding expectations.

"Within six months the public volume outgrew our private volume," Diehl said. "And the public volume has consistently outpaced our private volume ever since."

The fuelling site's location near an industrial park has proven ideal to attract CNG-fuelled vehicles from around the area, Diehl indicated.

The other surprise Diehl shared during his presentation was that there's strong demand for used CNG-fuelled trucks. Smith Dairy first deployed trucks with the 9L Cummins-

Westport engine and will soon begin taking delivery of trucks with the ISX12 G. However, in the meantime, it has been buying used CNG trucks.

"I'm here to tell you that yes, there is value in used CNG trucks," he declared. "We're putting them into service. You might be happy with the purchasing power you have with a used CNG truck."

Tony Eiermann, North American fleet asset manager, Coca-Cola Refreshments, was similarly upbeat about his company's hybrid-electric vehicle fleet, even if interest in hybrids has seemingly cooled. Coke has 738 hybrid-electric delivery vehicles deployed. Eiermann likes them because they carry their infrastructure with them.

"Hybrids are great for us because you can deploy them everywhere," he said, noting natural gas and fully-electric vehicles can only be deployed where the fuelling infrastructure exists.

In addition to hybrids, Coca-Cola also uses natural gas in some regions and has six Navistar eStar all-electric trucks, including one in Canada. It also finds propane to be well-suited to Canada.

Whatever the alternative fuels strategy you choose, Eiermann said it's important to train drivers if you expect to see the full benefits. Coke has developed an eco-driving program for drivers that trains them on the techniques required by each of the alternative fuels in the fleet.

"It made a huge difference," he added.

If hybrids are Coke's thing, all-electric vehicles are Pepsi's. Coca-Cola boasts North America's largest fleet of hybrid-electric trucks while Pepsi claims to have the biggest all-electric commercial fleet. However, in Canada it had to pull out its only electric vehicle because of challenges related to cold weather.

Steve Hanson, director of engineering with PepsiCo, said his organization implemented a formal alternative fuels strategy between 2008 and 2011.

"We started with the vision, we wanted to be the most fuel-efficient fleet," he explained. "We've taken millions of gallons of fuel out every year through this process."

In addition to all-electric vehicles, PepsiCo also uses natural gas, last year running 20 million miles on the fuel. The company is currently transitioning from the 9L to the 12L natural gas engine.

The key to making an alternative fuels strategy work is to communicate your agenda to front-line workers including drivers, Hanson said.

"You've got to manage to the front line," he said. "Over-communicate. Engage drivers and technicians... there's a big payoff in the end if you do it right."

For the City of Fort Wayne, Ind., biodiesel has been the answer to reducing fuel costs and emissions.

Larry Campbell, director of fleet management, said the city began running B20 biodiesel in 2003 because it was an alternative fuel that could be quickly implemented. Today, all 480 of the city's diesel-fuelled vehicles are running B20, including emergency vehicles such as fire trucks.

While there were some initial problems in cold weather related to glycerin and bacteria accumulating in the storage tanks, the city was able to overcome this by ensuring its tanks were clean and allowing new fuel to settle for a couple hours before fuelling vehicles with it.

"For some reason it would stir up the glycerin," he said of bulk fuel deliveries.

Campbell also said it's important to work with reputable biodiesel suppliers.

Utility company Florida Power & Light is also running B20 biodiesel across its fleet of bucket trucks.

These trucks also have hybrid systems on-board to electrify the aerial lift, air-conditioning and other power requirements.

Claude Masters, manager, vehicle acquisition and fuel with the utility company, refers to this approach of combining biodiesel and electrification as "technology stacking."

"We can use things like biodiesel and electric vehicles in the same platform," he said. "A lot of people lose sight of that and they get into this all-or-nothing proposition when they start talking about alternative fuels." ●

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Volvo has made its VNX heavy-hauler available in tri-drive configuration.

Volvo's VNX heavy-hauler now available as tri-drive

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Volvo's VNX heavy-haul tractor is now available in tri-drive configuration.

The latest offering is ideal for heavy equipment hauling, oil and gas applications and timber transport.

The tri-drive offers increased payload and maximum traction, Volvo claims.

The tri-drive can manage up to a 69,000-lb rear axle load and the extra drive axle helps the VNX 630 traverse steep terrain, mud, ice and other off-road conditions.

"Power and performance are two benefits our heavy-haul customers demand," said Goran Nyberg, president of Volvo Trucks North America. "The VNX tridem meets these needs, offering a solution to ensure the easier transportation of heavy-haul loads."

The VNX 630 is available with up to 600 hp and 2,050 lb.-ft. of torque, put out by the Volvo D16 engine. It comes standard with I-Shift.

Truck News test drove the VNX last year. You can read that review and others on our new Test Drive page at TruckNews.com/test-drive.

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Volvo ruggedizes I-Shift for severe-duty

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Volvo's I-Shift automated manual transmission can now be deployed into severe-service applications. A more rugged version of the transmission has been developed and will be available for order in May in Volvo VHD vocational trucks. It can handle on- and off-road construction applications and others that require frequent shifting.

The I-Shift is available on VHD models powered by the Volvo D11 and D13 engines and is standard on VHDs at a certain weight rating. Currently, 75% of Volvo trucks sold in North America are spec'd with I-Shift.

"With this new rugged Volvo I-Shift, we now offer the efficiency and productivity benefits of our automated manual transmission and integrated powertrain to customers operating in tough vocational applications while providing improved uptime and longer component life," said Goran Nyberg, president of Volvo Trucks North America. "Volvo Trucks is committed to delivering solutions tailored to our customers' specific applications."

Suitable applications for the new I-Shift include construction, oilfield, logging, snow plow and heavy-haul. Gears and other hardware have been hardened to take the extra punishment and frequent shifting, Volvo claims. Other enhancements include a high-range hardened cone, improved split synchronizer components and main box parts fashioned from reinforced material.

"The heavier loads, uneven terrain and frequent shifting typical of heavy-duty vocational duty cycles require a more rugged transmission," said Chris Stadler, Volvo Trucks regional haul marketing manager. "The reinforced components and improved serviceability of the I-Shift for severe-duty applications translate to lower maintenance costs and more time on the worksite producing revenue. The transmission also offers customers a broader payload range, which can help enhance the truck's profitability and versatility." ●

Manac considering merger, sale

SAINT-GEORGES, QUEBEC

Manac said in a statement in April that it's initiating a review of strategic alternatives for the trailer maker, which could include a sale or merger of the company.

"Manac has a unique position within the North American trailer industry and this enviable position has significant strategic value," said Michel La-bonté, Chairman of the Board.

It says business activities will not be affected as the strategic review process is underway.

The company also said it has not yet entered into any transactions and that there can be no assurance that the strategic review will result in any significant changes.

It has engaged a financial advisor to assist with the process and won't be commenting any further on the subject until there's something to report. ●

Maxim now distributing SmartTruck

WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

SmartTruck Systems has inked a deal with a new Canadian distributor.

Maxim Truck & Trailer will now offer its trailer aero devices, through its 17 locations and online through www.MaximInc.com.

"We are delighted and proud to welcome Maxim, a company with its own fine heritage and superior reputation, to our North American dealer network," said Stephen S. Ingham, Jr., CEO of SmartTruck Systems. "We are looking forward to a long and successful relationship with our neighbour to the north."

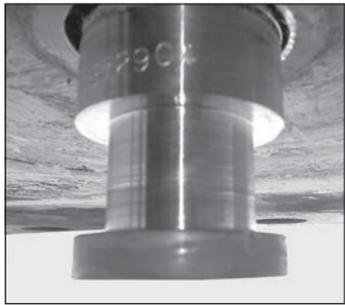
SmartTruck manufactures a trailer undertray device and a TopKit rear drag fairing system.

"Maxim is excited to be offering SmartTruck's line of drag-reducing,



Maxim Truck & Trailer is now selling SmartTruck aerodynamic equipment such as undertray systems and rear drag devices.

fuel-economy products to our customers across Canada," said Steve Young, Maxim vice-president of parts. "Many of our Maxim customers are looking forward to the ability to add SmartTruck's cutting-edge products to their vehicles." ●



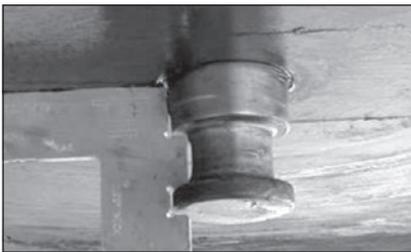
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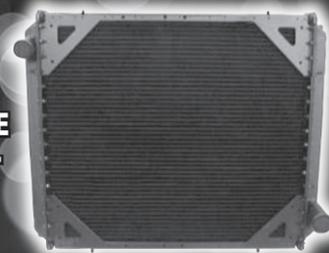
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Mack has extended engine oil and DPF service intervals.

Mack significantly extends service intervals

GREENSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

Mack has extended service intervals for engine oil and diesel particulate filters (DPFs).

The extended intervals cover model year 2011 and newer Mack trucks with MP7, MP8 and MP10 Mack engines and can potentially save owners thousands of dollars, the company announced. Engine oil and filter changes have been extended by 10,000 miles to 45,000 miles in long-haul applications, 35,000 miles in regional-haul and 25,000 miles in heavy-haul. However, operators who idle more than 30% of the time should continue using the shorter oil and filter change interval, Mack warns.

DPFs can now go to 400,000 miles between cleanings for long- and re-

gional-haul applications, up from 250,000.

"These extended service intervals demonstrate Mack's commitment to improving our customers' bottom lines by reducing maintenance costs," said Roy Horton, Mack director of product marketing. "Using data from our EPA 2010-compliant trucks, we've been able to verify that our newer engines produce significantly less particulate matter, enabling us to expand the service window for DPFs and engine oil and filter changes."

The new intervals can save between four and 16 oil drains over a 600,000-mile life, depending on duty cycle, Mack says. Many customers will now have to service the DPF just once over the life of the truck. ●

Espar adopts Eberspaecher name

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Espar has announced it's adopting its parent company's name.

The company will now go by Eberspaecher. It debuted the new name at the Mid-America Trucking Show in March.

It will maintain 'Espar' as a legal business entity. Eberspaecher has been around for 150 years.

"Based on user feedback and our deep-rooted commitment to customer satisfaction, rebranding our company is a logical transition that will enable us to provide you with 150 years of expertise, improved global support and a greater investment in research and development that only a company as large as Eberspaecher can provide," the company said in a press release.

The Web site can now be found at www.eberspaecher-na.com. ●



Espar announced it will go with its parent company's name and logo, seen here.

Tallman Group rebrands

KINGSTON, ONTARIO

Tallman Truck Centre has rebranded as Tallman Group to reflect its broadening scope.

The company, which began as a single International Trucks dealership in 1973, now includes nine dealerships and six associations. Divisions include Tallman Truck Centre, Tallman Truck Leasing, Tallman Trailer Centre, Tallman Collision Centre and Tallman Power Systems. It also owns and operates Bobcat of Kingston.

"With the expansion, both geographically and in terms of the products we sell and service, we felt our Web site and corporate structure needed to be updated to reflect the company we have grown into over the last few years," said Kevin Tallman, president of Tallman Group. "This rebrand allows us to focus on continuing to bring great value to our customers in the transportation industry."

The company also introduced a new tagline: Great People. Great Service. Always There. ●

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2016 WESTERN STAR 4700 c/w 20,000L four comp't aluminum tank, dual pumping/metering, bottom loading, vapor recovery. Stock 2016 WS



2015 INTERNATIONAL TERRA STAR 4x4 c/w 5000L 2 comp't aluminum tank, single set of pumping and metering equipment. Stock 2015 Int



2012 INTERNATIONAL 5000 PAYSTAR 470 hp, 18 spd. c/w 20,000L 4 comp't aluminum tank, dual pumping/ metering equipment, fast pump outlets, bottom load. Stock 2012 Paystar



2004 PETERBILT 378 C15-475 hp, 18 spd., 20,000L 4 comp't aluminum tank, dual pumping/metering equipped, fast pump outlets, bottom load. Stock 2004 PETERBILT



2011 INTERNATIONAL c/w 20,000 litre 5 comp't aluminum tank, dual pumping/metering equipment, Midcom, bottom loading, vapour recovery. Stock 2011 Int



2010 INTERNATIONAL 350 hp, 20,000L 4 comp't aluminum tank, dual pumping/metering equipment, fast pump outlets, bottom load. Stock 2010 Int



2003 STERLING LT9500 c/w 20,000L 4 comp't aluminum tank, dual pumping and metering equipment, bottom loading, vapour recovery. Stock 2003 Sterling



2012 STAINLESS STEEL 2000 gallon tank w/manhole cover, sump sills w/plastic isolator. Stock #T0014



2001 STERLING c/w 20,000L four comp't aluminum tank, dual pumping/metering, B/L, V/R, Midcom, DOT safety, CSA-B620. Stock #7085



2005 INTERNATIONAL 330 hp, 20,000L 4 comp't aluminum tank, dual pumping/metering equipment. Stock 2005 Int



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FLO offers hose connection control system

MISSISSAUGA, ONTARIO

FLO Components announced it is now offering a new Hose Connection Control (HCC) system to monitor grease lines in automatic greasing systems.

"Historically, regardless of the brand of automatic greasing system or operating principle used, one potential weakness has been that a break in a grease feed line (the final length of hose that connects to a bearing) would go undetected if a visual inspection is not conducted," said Mike Deckert, vice-president of FLO Components. "The system would continue to operate without ever greasing the point with the broken line. Ultimately of course, the bearing could fail."

The HCC is designed to check for breaks in the grease hose and alerts the operator immediately if there's a fault in either the main line from the pump or in the feed lines to the bearing points, the company explains.

Deckert says the HCC can "help prevent costly bearing damage and unplanned downtime. It can also significantly reduce the risk of accidents and environmental pollution from leaking grease." The unit can monitor from 10-20 hoses and requires either a 12- or 24-volt power source. ●

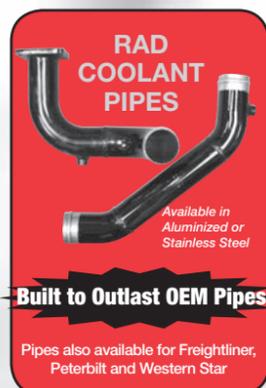
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Chevron introduces new oil for Canadian severe-duty applications

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Chevron has brought its new Delo 400 SD 15W-30 heavy-duty engine oil to Canada. The oil is geared towards severe-duty applications and addresses major shifts in on- and off-highway applications, the company says.

"Whether north or south of the border, the increase in severe-duty operations is due to the same factors: changing driving habits on-highway, including shorter haul lengths, the growth in intermodal delivery, and more stop-and-go operations, while off-highway frequently cycles engines from load to no load," said Rommel Atienza, brand manager Americas marketing with Chevron Products Company. "In just a few months, our US customers leading the deployment

of Delo 400 SD SAE 15W-30 have reported benefits in downtime and engine performance. Given the range of operating conditions that heavy-duty must deal with in Canada, we expect to bring the same benefits to fleets here as well."

Some of the trends necessitating the new oil include idling bans, increased traffic congestion and the towing of heavy loads on steep grades and cycling between fully loaded and unloaded. All these conditions can result in higher operating temperatures.

Benefits of the new oil include: greater protection in severe-duty applications; reduced downtime from exceptional oxidation stability and deposit control; and improved fuel economy over SAE 15W-40 oils (by up to 0.7% in Class 8 long-haul trucks). ●

Cummins debuts single-canister exhaust aftertreatment system

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Cummins is coming out with a new exhaust aftertreatment module that's contained within a single canister, offering significant size and weight savings.

The Cummins Emission Solutions subsidiary developed the smaller package, which reduces size by up to 60% and weight up to 40%.

The EcoFit Single Module also improves emissions reduction performance, according to the company. The smaller size allows for better heat management and retention, while the single-pass exhaust flow design deliv-

ers low backpressure.

"We are very proud to announce this groundbreaking platform, and believe it is a game-changer in the commercial vehicle aftertreatment market," said John Carroll, general manager, global on-highway business. "This product uses innovations in catalyst and urea dosing technologies unique to Cummins Emissions Solutions to deliver an ideal solution in the market."

Cummins also announced it's extending the cleaning intervals on its diesel particulate filters to 400,000 miles. ●

New fleet benchmarking service launched

LONDON, ONTARIO

The management team of StakUp is announcing the formal launch of its Online Performance Benchmarking platform to the North American trucking industry.

Almost 12 months in development, the service enables motor carrier subscribers to benchmark their performance against those of similar companies throughout North America via an intuitive and interactive dashboard. In addition, StakUp includes three organizational engagement tools, which will allow motor carriers to: track their relative performance versus stated internal goals; visualize revenue and cost saving opportunities via a monthly report card; and research relevant and timely operational resources via a resource library called KnowledgeStak.

StakUp is the creation of industry veterans Doug Davis (formerly of Pollock Group of Companies), Ray Haight (formerly of MacKinnon Transport) and Chris Henry (formerly of NAL Insurance).

"We are very excited to be able to provide a tool which can deliver immediate results to our subscribing companies' bottom lines. This platform has evolved from simple benchmarking into a very powerful employee engagement and accountability tool. The feedback from our beta group has been overwhelmingly positive, and we look forward to building StakUp further based on suggestions from member companies," Henry said.

Truck News has partnered with StakUp, as its exclusive Canadian media partner. Truck News will provide content for StakUp's KnowledgeStak resource library. In addition, StakUp will provide a regular feature on key benchmarking issues in sister publication Fleet Executive magazine.

"Being able to benchmark performance against similar companies is critical to understanding the true measure of a fleet's operation and developing sound business strategies. Truck News is excited to be partnered with StakUp and to aid in facilitating such knowledge sharing within the industry," said publisher and editorial director Lou Smyrlis.

For more information, visit www.stak-up.com or call 519-913-2582. ●

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THE STORY SO FAR

With a storm coming, Mark pulls into the Husky in Dryden, Ont. He offers help to a woman driver struggling to install her chains, but she tells him to get lost. Some time later, she enters the restaurant and is teased by a group of men who'd been watching her. She confronts the biggest loudmouth of the group head on and shuts them down, gaining Mark's respect.

Mark ends up talking with the woman, Nancy McEvoy, and realizes she's smart and good at her job. But he also realizes that she's got it tough working in a male-dominated industry and gives her even more credit for being able to compete... and succeed against the men.

On Hwy. 17 near Kenora, Mark comes across two trucks on the shoulder. The lead truck is Nancy's and she's using chains to pull a fellow trucker out of the snow. Further, the guy she's helping was the one who'd been teasing her at the truck stop.

About a week later, Mark was making the return trip back east along Hwy. 17 and found himself stopping at the same Husky in Dryden that he'd visited on his way westward.

The weather had been good the past few days and the mood inside the place was a lot lighter than it had been the last time he'd been here.

But despite the change in atmosphere, most of the players were still the same. Over by the window overlooking the fuel pumps were a bunch of drivers, nearly identical to the drivers who'd been in those seats a week before. One or two - or perhaps even all of them - were different, but as a group they were identical in essence to the ones who'd been so hard on Nancy in the hours before the big snowstorm.

Today the group was subdued, talking quietly amongst themselves about current events, last night's hockey game, and what the weatherman had in store for them in the next few days.

Their silence was curious to Mark because across the room sat Nancy, by herself as usual, but unbothered by the group of men who usually made her life difficult.

"Hi Nancy," Mark said as he approached.

"Hey Mark," she smiled and pulled a chair out for him. "Have a seat."

Mark took off his coat and sat down. Then he gestured across the room at the men by the window. "Do they even know you're here?"

"Oh, they know," she said. "When I first got here they were looking over at me for the longest time. It seemed like they wanted to get into it, but they just ended up going quiet."

"Well, that's a victory of sorts, isn't it?"

"Yes and no. Sure, it's better than being heckled and teased, but being isolated from the rest of the group is a form of harassment, too."

Mark thought about that and agreed. Being cast out from the tribe is considered a form of punish-



Just one of the guys

ment in many aboriginal cultures, and it's also been a legitimate complaint in workplace harassment claims across Canada. "Baby steps," Mark said. "You have to take them before you make that great stride."

"Sure," she said, with a smile.

"Nevertheless, it was great how you pulled that blowhard out of the snow... especially after the way he treated you."

"He needed help, so I helped him."

"I bet he was surprised when he saw you stop to lend a hand."

"Oh, he was shocked, alright. Especially after half a dozen other drivers passed him by."

"How'd he thank you?"

"He said his thanks... And even though it was obviously killing him to say it, he told me he'd buy me dinner the next time we met."

Mark looked over to the group of men by the window. "Too bad he's not here."

She shook her head. "You won't be seeing him here again anytime soon."

"Why not?"

"They all tease him about being pulled out of the snow by a woman."

Mark's shoulders sagged. She was so much of an outsider that helping out someone on the inside pulled him out rather than draw her in. It was so unfair.

"Baby steps," Mark said again.

"I've been taking baby steps for years now and things haven't gotten much better."

"That's because it's happening too slowly for you

to realize there's been any change at all. People are brought up a certain way, or think a certain way and changing that is like changing who they are inside. It's not going to happen overnight."

She was silent for a while, then nodded. "I guess so. When I started out there were men who would expose themselves to me or plant dirty magazines in my truck just to get a reaction. At least that doesn't happen any more."

"No kidding?" Mark said. "How'd you get that to stop?"

"The one guy... I took some pictures of him exposing himself with my cell phone and showed them around to his friends. The other one... I collected up all the magazines, bought a few even more disgusting ones, and dropped them all off at his home with a note that read, 'You left these in my truck, love.' And I signed it, 'Nancy.'"

Mark couldn't help but laugh. This was a woman after his own heart. "So you are making progress."

"Sure," she agreed. "But think of it this way. Women make up 48% of the workforce in Canada, but they're just 3% of truck drivers in Canada."

"I doubt there will ever be that high a percentage of female truck drivers on the road," Mark said.

"Of course not," she replied. "It's not the type of job that's going to attract a lot of women. But think of this... if there are 18% of women working in dispatch in the

trucking industry, then why not that many women working as drivers?"

"One day it might reach that," Mark said. "One day soon."

After Mark was finished his meal, he said goodbye to Nancy and got up from the table.

The men were still by the window and they watched him as he walked toward the exit.

Knowing their eyes on him, and that it was a moment that was too good to waste, he turned back around toward Nancy and said, "Good job driving through that snowstorm."

He glanced over toward the men, then back at Nancy. "I heard some drivers couldn't make it on their own."

She gave him a little wave and said, "Thanks."

"And if you ever want to drive for someone else, I'll take you on in a minute," he continued. "I'm always looking for good drivers who are smart, reliable and who know that being a truck driver means being part of a brotherhood."

She lowered her head and waved him away as if she wanted him gone before it got to be a farce. Mark could have said more, but he was satisfied he had done his part to give Nancy what she'd been missing all these years - the feeling that she was *not* a female driver in a male dominated industry, but rather simply another driver out on the road, just one of the guys. ●

Mark Dalton returns next month in another adventure from the road.



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Pushing the envelope with the 4x4 Sprinter

By Jim Bray

KELOWNA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

It's a utility vehicle a mudder can love. That's the impression Mercedes-Benz gave media attendees at its fascinating introduction to the new 4x4 Sprinters, an event at which the company made it clear that neither rain, sleet, snow nor even deep and wet mud can prevent the vans from performing their appointed rounds. Maybe Canada Post bought their letter carriers the wrong vehicles.

Mercedes-Benz says the 2015 Sprinter is the only 4x4 commercial van available in Canada and they went out of their way to show us how important that 4x4 feature can be to owners, depending on their territory and duties. The demo began at Kelowna airport, where a line of Sprinter 4x4s – some of which were so new they were pre-production models – awaited the assembling writers. We were assigned to vans two by two, like Noah's menagerie, and sallied forth from there to the city of Revelstoke, a journey of up to two-and-a-half hours, depending on traffic and lead-footedness.

In town and on the highway, the Sprinters turned out to be surprisingly driveable. One shouldn't expect sports car performance, but between the 3.0L V6 BlueTEC turbo diesel's 188 horses and 325 lb.-ft. of torque, its efficient five-speed automatic transmission (with a decent manual mode that's handy when descending hills) and a centre of gravity that seems lower than a tall van has any right to be, the vehicles handled the twisty bits of asphalt with aplomb. The highway sections were performed in the vans' default rear wheel drive mode, but the Mercedes-Benz folks had a nice 4x4 whammy up their sleeves on day two of the event: we took the Sprinters some eight kilometres up a snowy, bumpy and, ultimately, extremely muddy and rutty logging road that was a good test of the vans' mettle.

Sprinters are available in a variety of configurations and capabilities, and the samples on hand included fairly Spartan versions you could retrofit to handle just about any type of cargo – or maybe even configure as a camper van – to 12-passenger versions that, while a tad less stable on the highway than the others (perhaps because of the air conditioning unit on the roof), seemed ideal as a customer shuttle or for touring businesses. The vans are also available in 2500 and 3500 versions, the latter of which offers more robust payload capacity as well as dual rear wheels.

According to Curtis Calwell, product manager for Mercedes-Benz Canada, the 4x4 Sprinters are designed to be popular with customers who might have been amenable to the vans' charms, but who couldn't take them all the way to work.

"There are a lot of those customers where it's mandated they have 4x4 on whatever vehicle they're going to have on-site," he said. "Even if they'd love to have a Sprinter, they have to park them off-site and then truck in their tools or whatever else they need. This is going to really help them with a complete solution where they can have their workshop, everything they need, and drive it right on-site."

He envisions the vehicles being popular at such places as the oil patch, construction sites, mines and wind farms.

Calwell said the company has always



The 4x4 Sprinter was surprisingly capable on the hills and in the mud.

promoted the Sprinter as having four pillars: comfort, safety, efficiency and functionality, saying "We feel that offering a 4x4 (version) really kind of satisfies all those pillars that we believe in with the brand."

After having driven Sprinters for hours at a time, I can attest to the comfort part; the seats up front are nicely supportive, the driving position is flexible (thanks to a tilt/telescoping steering column) and the big outside mirrors include a convex portion that's great for helping keep the Sprinter between the lines on the road. A back-up camera would be nice, especially on the versions with no rear windows, and it's available as an optional add-on.

The 4x4 Sprinters offer up to 20% more traction than the rear drive models, but the cargo volume and towing capacity are nearly the same.

"There's not a lot of trade-off," Calwell said. "You get the added functionality but you don't lose the capacity you're looking for in a Sprinter."

He noted the 4x4 technology adds about 270 lbs (most of which is up front) to the vehicle's weight compared to the rear wheel drive version, and the 4x4

One shouldn't expect sports car performance, but...the vehicles handled the twisty bits of asphalt with aplomb.

bodies are about three inches higher at the rear and nearly four inches up front. Axle heights are the same in both versions, however.

"What this does is increase some of the approach angles, the breakover angles," Calwell said. "They're all improved by about 10 degrees, and the wading depth, for those who are going to take it through a shallow creek, is improved by about five inches."

The actual ground clearance, at about eight inches, is the same in both versions. "The body is lifted but the actual driveline isn't changed," Calwell noted. The 4x4 Sprinters do have a slightly smaller fuel tank (93 litres versus 100), however.

The company refers to the Sprinters



as 4x4, as opposed to the 4MATIC moniker it puts on its passenger cars and SUVs, because the systems are different.

"On the 4MATIC, the customer has no way of turning it on and off," Calwell said, "but you have to activate it with the Sprinter, which we think will be good for commercial customers because when they don't need it they're saving a bit of fuel."

The 4MATIC system also features a limited slip centre differential and variable torque split between front and rear axles, whereas Sprinter 4x4s have a fixed torque split of 35:65 front/rear. It also has no mechanical locks, which Calwell said helps keep the system light weight.

"We've kept it pretty simple," he said. "It's really just a differential, transfer case and a few extra parts." The system is basically an extension of Mercedes-Benz' Adaptive ESP system – its Electronic Stability Program – which monitors vehicle load status continuously to "ensure the proper amount of intervention in critical situations." The system is activated via a button on the instrument panel, and the vehicle has to be moving below 10 km/h.

The 2500 series comes standard with a new Crosswind Assist feature (which isn't available currently on the 3500 models) that's activated at speeds over 80 km/h and uses the ABS to help ensure the vans don't behave like big sails when things get blustery. It shuts off if there's steering input, however, which Calwell said is so "you won't have a problem where it brakes too much, you go to correct as well, and then drive off the road."

Mercedes also makes available as options the kind of nanny aids that are becoming popular on passenger cars these days, such as blind spot, lane keeping and high beam assists as well as collision prevention. There's also a low range feature that can be engaged manually via a button on the dash when the vehicle is stationary. Customers can also add Downhill Speed Regu-

lation (DSR) to the low range option. It's push-button activated and works like cruise control, letting you set it at speeds between four and 18 km/h.

Mercedes-Benz has also extended the service interval for 2015 Sprinter vans to 30,000 kilometres. For now, the only engine choice is the 3L diesel.

"It was kind of a choice thing," Calwell said. "When you're bringing something new in there's a lot of testing that has to go into it. It's not to say we won't offer another engine, but to launch it we had to make some decisions."

There are no government fuel economy numbers available for the diesel Sprinters, but Calwell said owners can expect decent efficiency, citing data culled from real-world testing conducted in conjunction with the multinational wind farm company Enercon.

"In the rest of the world they use Sprinters, but (in North America) they had to use pick-up trucks," he said, "so we delivered a van to them and for the last year they've been running it with a GPS uplink system tied straight into our engineers in Germany."

He said Enercon achieved 12.53 litres per 100 kilometres in its real-world trials using fully loaded vans, "not cruising on the highway with an empty van."

I came away from the demo quite impressed with the Sprinter 4x4's performance. Our caravan of utility vans didn't exactly "sprint" up the mountain logging road during that part of the demonstration, but our eight kilometre crawl up and down and over the hills took us through puddles and snow and loose sections where the Sprinters were bottoming out repeatedly, yet they handled the intimidating conditions beautifully. Mercedes' sample Sprinters didn't have a lot of creature comforts on them other than Bluetooth, but you can order others if you want. A \$2,450 luxury interior package, for example, adds stuff like extra insulation and an overhead control panel with two reading lamps, while the convenience package (\$670) adds a multifunction steering wheel with trip computer, a 12-volt power outlet in the driver's seat base, a lockable glove compartment, a hinged lid for the center console storage bin, two extra master keys, an upgraded instrument cluster and cruise control.

I had minor issues with the mounting of the cruise control and signal light/windshield wiper stalks, which extend from the steering column at about 10 and eight o'clock respectively. It's something you'd get used to fairly quickly if you were using the Sprinter every day, but I found myself hitting the cruise control at times when I was trying to signal a turn. This is a hold-over from how Mercedes-Benz did it on its cars and SUVs in the past, though they've now changed it to reflect the more "mainstream" layout so perhaps this will be revisited in the Sprinter's future as well. This wouldn't come close to being a deal breaker were I shopping for such a van, however.

Sprinter 4x4s are on sale now at Mercedes-Benz dealers, production having begun in Germany this past January. Prices start at \$49,900 Canadian (the passenger van version starts at \$57,300), which is about \$6,000 more than the rear drive versions. That may seem like a bit of a premium in this niche, but these are, after all, the Mercedes-Benzes of commercial vans. And that, said Calwell, is their ace in the hole. "The main differences are residual value and fuel costs over the life," he said. "It really depends on the use. If you're going to be putting a lot of kilometres on it and keeping it for a long time it keeps making more and more sense." ●

A New Adventure Begins...

Mark is driving along a desolate northern Ontario highway. It's dark out and it's raining. Up ahead there is a truck pulled over onto the side of the road, warning flares set out behind the truck, four-way lights flashing.



By Edo Van Belkom

Mark slows down to see if he can offer the driver some assistance. As he passes, he sees the driver is waist-deep in the open engine compartment where there is a light shining. He parks Mother Load up ahead and gets out to ask the driver if he can help.



"Are you a mechanic, or the driver?"



"Driver."

He seems to be doing a lot more than checking wires and fluids.

He's got pieces off the engine.

"Do you know what you're doing?" Mark asks.

He answers straight up, "No. Not really."

Mark pulls out his cell phone.

"I can call a mechanic if you like."

For the first time the man pulls himself out of the engine and looks at Mark.

"No, no. Mechanic cost too much. I fix it."

And then he goes back to the engine.

"This is your truck?"

He laughed. "Not mine. This my boss truck."

"So why doesn't he pay for a mechanic?"

Again, the driver pulls himself out of the engine.

"He will say I broke his truck and charge ME for the repair."

"Ever thought of working for someone else, maybe even yourself?"

"Oh, I have dreamed about it."

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy

Mark can't help but like this guy.

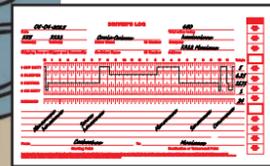
He's out in the rain by the side of the road trying desperately to fix someone else's truck. Imagine what he could do with a truck of his own.

Finally, he pulls himself out of the engine compartment and starts wiping his hands clean with a rag. He shakes his head. "I need parts."

Mark offers him a ride.

The guy accepts and Mark watches the guy get out of his coveralls, change his shoes and lock up his truck. Obviously he takes pride in his work and his truck, even if it is a piece of junk.

When he gets in Mother Load, the man has a knapsack with him. When he sits down he gets out his log book and makes a notation.



Mark asks to see his book.

It is up-to-the-minute and neat. What's more, every day's entry is

compliant with regulations.

Mark hands back the book. "You know, I could introduce you to someone who could find you someone better to work for... a better truck to drive and more money for you."

The driver nods. "I would like that, Yes."

Mark puts Mother Load in gear.

"His name's Bud." "Bad?"

"B-U-D." "Bood."



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Ask the
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KEVIN COLE



Build a sense of security with data

The security procedures that are followed in fleet yards or warehouses are dedicated to exposing criminals who are hiding in the shadows.

It's why lights and video cameras are aimed at parking lots in the first place.

But the underlying threats which require such procedures will be found hiding in the data about criminal activities.

For example, some shipments are clearly more coveted than others. Thieves are always searching for high-value consumer goods such as electronics, alcohol and pharmaceuticals, as well as loads of meat and produce which are easy to sell and difficult to trace.

Even scrap material can be targeted when the value of related commodities begins to surge. Trusted sources including Freightwatch International and local police departments regularly report on the goods that are most likely to be at risk. The operators of neighbouring fleet yards are a source of information, too.

Fleets can identify yards or routes at the highest risk of such thefts by monitoring the Non-Violent Crime Index compiled by Statistics Canada, which gathers data from 232 police services.

After all, cargo crimes are less likely to involve an armed hijacking than someone who simply hooks up to a stolen trailer and drives away.

Personal experience shouldn't be overlooked, either. Fleets that track cases of vandalism or attempted break-ins will be able to identify vulnerable locations around a specific facility. The countermeasures such as extra security teams, refined access procedures and even yard layouts can then be planned accordingly.

The good news is that watchful eyes can extend well beyond the fences around a fleet yard. Today's tracking systems are even able to build a virtual "geofence" around a moving truck, and identify whenever a load strays too far from a scheduled route. Team drivers, meanwhile, can help limit the need to park equipment for an extended period of time.

Other threats can be traced to third parties who interact with the same freight – so the security efforts of every partner in the supply chain will need to be reviewed and studied. Those who participate in initiatives such as Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT), Partners in Protection (PIP), or the pharmaceutical industry's Transport Asset Protection Association (TAPA) program will all need to meet related security protocols.

The collected information can then be used to focus security efforts where they will make the biggest difference. For example, the yards at the greatest risk of thefts will likely benefit from an alarm system triggered if someone cuts through a fence or breaks a window.

The alarms themselves can include warnings for employees on site or even extend to third-party monitoring agencies. Security personnel can be instructed to walk through a site's vulnerable areas at staggered inter-

vals, so thieves will never know when somebody might be nearby.

Drivers can help to thwart future thefts by reporting attempts to bribe them for information, freight that seems to be left in an unguarded area of a loading dock, or an unidentified vehicle in the fleet yard. Even anonymous tips are helpful. The successes of programs such as Crime Stoppers have proven that.

But all too often, employees are slow to raise any questions at all. On many occasions I have tucked a black portfolio under my arm and simply wandered through a new customer's warehouse or loading dock without ever being asked why I'm there. In contrast, the widespread use of com-

pany IDs, security cards and related policies would quickly identify someone who is out of place.

Each and every planned barrier will play a role in deterring thieves. Want to prevent thieves from simply driving into a hidden area of the yard? Consider berms, rocks and other landscaping to limit potential access points.

Need to slow someone's path through a door or gate? Control the keys and codes to any locks. Want to make it tougher to scale a fence? Ensure that any surrounding trees are trimmed.

In addition to locking and sealing trucks and trailers, equipment can be further secured by adding pin or glad-

hand locks. The same systems which latch onto ICC bars and hold trailers securely against a dock will help to keep the cargo secure, as will the empty trailers that are simply parked against their loaded counterparts.

No system is foolproof.

Every step or system can be overcome if a thief is persistent. But the steps that are based on a well-informed security strategy will clearly discourage the criminals who would rather remain in the shadows. ●

This month's expert is Kevin Cole, risk services specialist. Kevin has served the trucking industry for more than 25 years providing loss control and risk management services to the trucking industry. Northbridge Insurance is a leading Canadian commercial insurer built on the strength of four companies with a long standing history in the marketplace and has been serving the trucking industry for more than 60 years. You can visit them at www.nbins.com.

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David Henry: Keeping his cool on the ice roads

David Henry, an O/O for Continental Cartage, has worked in almost all types of trucking. He's pulled turnpikes, done bush roads and has hauled specialized freight. However, his most recent endeavour was a cold one. Two years ago, he agreed to work in Yellowknife on the ice roads and says he hasn't looked back since. Sonia Straface caught up with him recently to talk about his time up north.

For most drivers, anxiety and frustration sets in when traffic has you cruising less than 50 km/h on the highway, but for David Henry, 47, of Landmark, Man., moving slowly is all part of his job.

Henry has been a driver for more than three decades, but recently he traded in

the turnpikes and headed north – way north to Yellowknife, N.W.T. – to drive on the ice roads, where going 25 km/h is commonplace and strictly enforced on most roads.

Making the change from bush roads to ice roads wasn't something he originally wanted to do, until a recruiter at a truck stop let him know what his paycheque could be if he was interested in the gig.

"There was a recruitment open house a couple years ago at the Roadking Truck Stop in Calgary and there was a guy who was telling me about the ice roads in Yellowknife," he recalled. "And I had been to Yellowknife before, and crossed on the ice to get here before there was a bridge, so driving on ice had never bothered me, and the guy convinced me to think about it. The money seemed very attractive and I



David Henry

needed to pay off some bills. When I told my wife, she really didn't want me to go and then I told her how much money I could make and she said, 'So, when are you leaving?'"

After graduating high school and not being able to get into an engineering program (his first career choice) because of residence issues, Henry began working at a feed mill where he got his licence.

"I figured (getting my licence) would be a good fallback if I ever needed a job," he said. "Driving a truck just seemed to be the easiest way to make money or the most profitable way for a Grade 12 education, anyway."

He moved to the US shortly thereafter, where he drove semis for almost three years.

Almost 30 years later now, he's worked with all different aspects of trucking. He's been on bush roads, done heavy hauling and specialized freight and most recently pulled turnpikes in the prairies.

Henry claimed he's been an owner/operator since he started driving because he's a natural entrepreneur, always wanting to run his own show and earn money on his own.

"It's always been my goal to have my own stuff instead of making money for somebody else," he said. "I've been like that from when I was young. Growing up I would cut grass and had my own paper route."

For the last two years, he has been working for Continental Cartage out of Edmonton, Alta. as an owner/operator, and is sent to Yellowknife for ice road season.

"We drive very slow on what I call the Southern Lakes," he said. "On the lower half we run 25 km/h and on the Northern Lakes we run 30 km/h. The fastest we go is when we're empty. There are express lanes we can take and we can get all the way up to 60 km/h on those. And that feels like you're flying."

When on the ice roads, driving slow and in tandem with other drivers ahead and behind you is key. Drivers must stay a minimum of 500 feet back from the driver in front of them so as to not put too much weight in one area. Going too fast or travelling too close to others can cause the ice to break and the consequences of speeding on the ice roads are severe.

"The security up here is tighter than any cop you've ever seen," he said. "If the speed limit is 25 km/h and if you're doing 26 km/h, security will tell you to slow down. If you go 27 km/h, you get kicked off the roads for five days. They don't fool around."

He claims the ice roads aren't for

everyone, even veterans who have accumulated millions of accident-free miles.

"Just because you're a good driver, or you're good at what you do in the rest of Canada, doesn't mean you're going to be a good ice road trucker," Henry said. "You know there's people who come up here who have all the qualifications and who have hauled a lot of heavy equipment and when they get up here they can't handle it and they go home. Some people can't get over the fact that you're driving on ice."

He says his job is nothing as it is portrayed on the TV show, *Ice Road Truckers* and that it takes a very specific type of driver to stick it out and get the job done day after day.

"If you get bored easily then it's definitely not a job you want to do," he said. "You have to be able to take any circumstance and find a solution. You have to be able to get out there no matter what the conditions are and tie your load on or assist somebody else. You have to be mentally very strong. It's very long hours and there's very little sunshine... and all you're doing is driving and loading and unloading."

Though that may seem boring for some, Henry said he is willing to stick it out because of how much driving on the ice roads feels like "old-school trucking" where trucking is a very close-knit community of drivers, and where anyone is willing to lend a hand. In addition, because of the conditions, all of his trucking buddies who are in the convoy with him have to stay on their radios at all times, maintaining communication.

"To pass the time, we spend a lot of time talking to each other most days," he said.

Other than the gorgeous landscape surrounding him, Henry says his favourite part of working in Yellowknife is the respect they pay to the environment and wildlife.

"They work very hard to keep the environmental impact very minimal up there," he said. "That's the one thing that will get you kicked off the ice faster than anything – is if you're caught throwing something out the window or littering. You'll be banned. And not for a day or two – banned for life. If you see wildlife on the road you literally do not approach them – you don't blow your horn, you don't flash your lights. You just stay back and tell security. You stay away from them, and let them live their life. And I think that is really cool."

Henry said he is already convinced to stay the course and drive the ice roads again next year and is looking forward to it. You can view pictures and videos of his time in Yellowknife by following him on Twitter at @crazycanuckdave. ●

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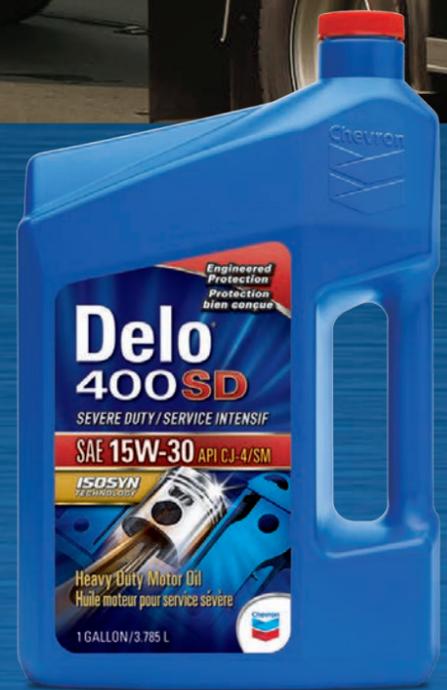




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