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Page 18

A waking nightmare

Restless nights, loud snoring and constant fatigue could be signs of sleep apnea. What are you doing about it?

Page 28

AMTs come of age

We drive an International PayStar with automated transmission to determine how heavy is too heavy.

Page 32

A new Cat truck

Caterpillar has rounded out its line of vocational trucks with the CT680 and we were among the first to drive it.

Page 45

Take a seat

Truck seats are an important – but often overlooked – spec' and maintenance item, Steve Sturgess reports.

More money, fewer miles

Those driving for the Best Fleets to Drive For are making more and driving less. But why?

By James Menzies

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Professional drivers working for the Best Fleets to Drive For made more money on fewer miles last year.

That's one of the trends identified through the evaluation process conducted by CarriersEdge while administering the Truckload Carriers Association's Best Fleets to Drive For competition.

Company drivers working for the 2014 Best Fleets winners earned an average of \$54,897 (all figures US) and drove an average of 115,946 miles. This worked out to an average rate of 47.34 cents per mile.

When surveying the 2015 Best Fleets drivers, organizers found they earned an average income of \$56,330 while running an average of 111,784 miles

Continued on page 15

Careers:
 33, 34, 35,
 38, 39, 40,
 41, 42, 43,
 44, 45, 46,
 47, 48, 49,
 50, 51, 52,
 53, 54, 55,
 56, 57, 58,
 59, 60

Ad Index: 65
 Or go to List of Advertisers at trucknews.com

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Shawn Pietracupa is congratulated by colleagues after a first place run in the single-single division.

A trucking showdown

Top Toronto-area professional drivers faced off at the regional truck driving championships May 30

By James Menzies

BRAMPTON, ONTARIO

With the exception of the occasional nervous glance skyward, all eyes at the Powerade Centre in Brampton, Ont. May 30 were trained on nearly 50 of the most skilled professional truck drivers in the Greater Toronto Area.

They were competing in the Toronto Regional Truck Driving Championships, with hopes of advancing to the Provincials in July and from there, to the Nationals. The competition this year was moved to the Powerade Centre, where a large section of the parking lot was cordoned off for championship activities. Supportive family members, colleagues and curious onlookers lined the course and cheered on the drivers as they navigated the challenging obstacle course that mimicked some of the most difficult scenarios a driver could be expected to encounter.

One of the trickiest of these, drivers in attendance told *Truck News*, was the alley dock, which requires a blindside 90-degree backup between two tightly positioned barriers. In addition to demonstrating their skills on the obstacle course, drivers were also required to complete a knowledge test and a pre-trip inspection, during which they had

to locate planted defects within an eight-minute timeframe while a Ministry of Transportation transport enforcement officer looked over their shoulder. No pressure!

The planted defects were intended to replicate commonly overlooked items MTO enforcement officers see in the field.

"We try to take items that are required to be checked by drivers as part of the pre-trip inspection report and simulate those defects here, so that makes it a real-world competition," explained Mark Bonner, transportation enforcement officer with the MTO. "These are things we hope you don't find (during pre-trips), but you should be looking for."

A couple of examples from the Toronto Regionals included a significantly underinflated tire and a wheel bearing leak on the out-of-sight inside dual. Drivers must also indicate verbally what they're examining as they circle the vehicle, covering all the items that require attention during a regular pre-trip inspection. Bonner said he was impressed by the performance of the drivers on May 30.

"The drivers who come to these events really are the cream of the crop," he said. "We put a lot of pressure on them and follow them around. It's designed to fail. A trac-

Continued on page 12

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Editorial Comment

JAMES MENZIES



This event merits more support

As you'll see on this month's cover, I spent May 30 covering the Toronto Regional Truck Driving Championships. At the event, nearly 50 of the Greater Toronto Area's most skilled drivers competed head-to-head in a variety of competitions, the highlight being an obstacle course that mimics some of the most challenging driving scenarios a pro driver will ever encounter.

These events – some call them Roadeos – are held across Canada and culminate with the National Championships, which will be held this fall in Regina, Sask.

I believe these championships are the greatest showcase our industry has for the skills and professionalism exhibited by our drivers.

Which begs the question, why do so few fleets participate?

Sure, there were about 50 drivers at the Toronto Regionals, but most of them drove for just a handful of fleets. Those who like the championships, like them a lot.

Speedy Transport had eight drivers entered and company CEO Jared

Martin was there to root them on. Likewise, Fortigo Freight was well represented and president Elias Demangos was on-hand to support them. Con-Way, YRC, FedEx...these guys get it.

Most of these drivers arrived in company attire and the level of camaraderie on display is unmatched at any other industry function I've attended. Pride in the profession is front and centre at the championships. They're open to the public and free to attend.

For fleets, it's also a great form of inexpensive remedial training. Drivers spend time preparing for the competition and are forced to complete a written test and also a pre-trip inspection under the watchful eye of an MTO enforcement officer. So why aren't all fleets encouraging their drivers to participate?

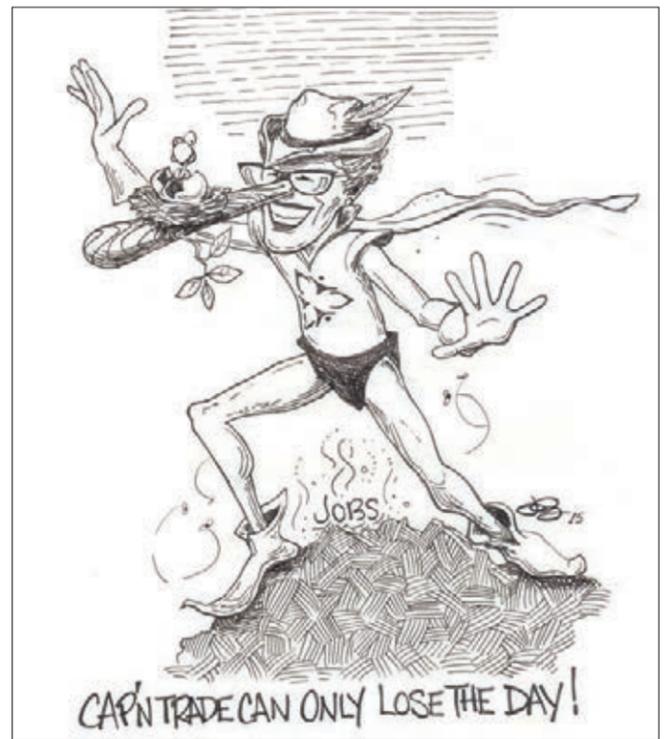
The Toronto Regionals used to attract about 100 drivers just a few short years ago, so participation is clearly waning. Yes, some fleets prefer to host their own, in-house competitions and awards programs – which is

fine – but considering the work the volunteers put into hosting the Regionals and Provincials across the country, why not leverage that to supplement your own internal initiatives.

For an industry that cries bloody murder about its drivers not being recognized as the professionals they are, why is it so few fleets show up to support the best showcase of this professionalism that exists? I just don't get it.

That's not to say the Toronto Regionals were a bust – far from it. The level of competition was top-notch and a strong team of local winners will go on to represent the area in the Provincials and hopefully from there, the Nationals.

Still, it's a shame there aren't more fleets that see the value in taking part



in this event, which some have described as the Olympics of trucking. This is an event that merits more support than it receives.

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The view with Lou

LOU SMYRLIS



See you at the Summit in October

For several years now we, along with our sister publication *Canadian Shipper* and Dan Goodwill and Associates, have taken a proactive approach to improving shipper-carrier relations, by bringing the buyers and providers of surface transportation services under the same roof with the Surface Transportation Summit to discuss and debate key industry issues.

This year is no different and we are proud to open registration for what we think is the best line-up of topics and speakers we have yet put together. This year's Surface Transportation Summit takes place once again at the Mississauga Convention Centre on Oct. 14. Visit www.surfacetransportationsummit.com to register.

We are particularly excited that the Freight Management Association of Can-

ada has jumped on board this year as a partner, helping us attract even more of your shipper customers and potential customers to the Summit. Another new wrinkle this year is the Business Matching program. Those participating in the Business Matching session will be able to pre-select in advance of the conference the companies with whom they wish to meet for private one-on-one 20-minute discussions, allowing both parties to discuss business opportunities in depth.

The Economic Outlook, which starts the Summit, should be particularly interesting this year. The economic recovery stumbled in 2015 as a 50% drop in the price of oil had a dramatic impact on Canada's energy sector but made for cheaper energy pricing for manufacturing. Meanwhile the significant drop

in the value of the Canadian currency (and other currencies) compared to the US dollar is having an impact on north-south traffic flows.

How will these forces play out over the next 12 months? One of Canada's leading economists will provide an economic overview of 2015 and share his insights on where the economy is headed in 2016. He will be joined by a leading equity analyst who follows the transportation sector and will offer his perspective on how the economy will affect truck and rail carriers specifically. And I will also be interviewing carrier executives for their thoughts on the coming year and how they will be shaping their business strategy accordingly.

Another favourite session back this year is The View from the Top, with rail,

trucking, 3PL and OEM executives sharing where they plan to take their organizations in 2016.

This will be followed with the largest Shipper-Carrier Roundtable we have put together. I'm moderating this session, featuring no less than seven key industry executives representing major carriers, shippers and 3PLs and we will leave no major subject untouched. You may want to sit up close, there could be some fireworks with this one.

The afternoon will include sessions on carrier benchmarking, shipper and carrier scorecards, best practices in buying a transportation company and outsourcing. We close with an impactful session on the future of retail distribution in Canada. As mentioned it's an agenda that we are very proud of. I hope to see you there come Oct. 14.

Lou Smyrlis can be reached by phone at (416) 510-6881 or by e-mail at lou@TransportationMedia.ca. You can also follow him on Twitter at [Twitter.com/LouSmyrlis](https://twitter.com/LouSmyrlis).



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We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada through the Canada Periodical Fund of the Department of Canadian Heritage.

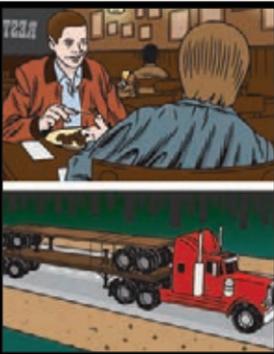


70

The Last Word

Classic Freight's rapid growth comes from doing it the old-fashioned way.

66



Mark Dalton in...

Miles to go before I sleep

3 Editorial

See you at the Summit, and why aren't more fleets supporting driving champs?

8-9 Cross-border

The Dancing Trucker brought his act to Windsor and the US looks to mandate ESC.

10-11 Quebec

A Quebec agency is looking to raise awareness of truck blind spots.

12-14 Ontario

Trison Tarps turns 10 and Ontario fleets urged to 'wear plaid for Dad.'

15-21 Canada

Sleep apnea is a major concern in trucking. Here's an in-depth look at what to do about it.

22 Al Goodhall - Opinion

Too much technology can hurt more than it helps professional drivers.

23 Ask the Expert - Safety

Cutting costs may cost more long-term, especially as it affects safety programs.

24 Bill Cameron - Opinion

Why he prefers to hire O/Os over company drivers.

25 Mark Lee - Opinion

Who said being an owner/operator is easy? Definitely not Mark Lee, who reports on his latest challenges.

26 In-cab cooking

Drivers come together to discuss the best and healthiest ways to prepare meals in the truck.

28-31 Test Drive

Driving C&G Haulage's International ProStar.

32-34 Test Drive

Caterpillar has a new vocational truck and we were among the first to drive it.

35 Mike Millian - Industry

When it comes to winter road maintenance, safety should take priority over savings.

36 Steve Laskowski - Industry

Can Ontario's carbon cap-and-trade scheme actually benefit trucking? The OTA thinks so.

37 Scott Taylor - Tax Talk

Many owner/operators think they can write off all use of their personal car or pickup truck. Scott Taylor shatters that myth.

39 Dr. Chris Singh - Health

If your routes take you off the beaten path, beware poison ivy.

41 Karen Bowen - Health

Signs and symptoms of hard-to-detect oral cancer.

43 Health

We salute the winners in the latest Healthy Fleet challenge.

45-49 Truck Seats

Truck seats are a crucial, but often overlooked, spec'.

51-63 Equipment

Volvo looks at the future of trucking, Peterbilt shows off its latest technology and SAF-Holland comes out with an integrated mechanical trailer suspension.

64 New Products

Mack has introduced a new refuse truck.

67 Fleet News

A pair of Quebec fleets team up to broaden their offerings.

69 Announcements

In every issue

4 Truck Sales Stats

65 Ad Index



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US to require electronic stability control on heavy trucks

WASHINGTON, D.C.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) announced June 3 it will require heavy trucks to be equipped with electronic stability systems, beginning in August 2017.

The agency says the mandate will save up to 49 lives and prevent up to 1,759 crashes each year, producing a net economic benefit of more than US\$300 million annually. The mandate will require the use of full electronic stability control (ESC).

“ESC is a remarkable safety success story, a technology innovation that is already saving lives in passenger cars and light trucks,” US Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx said. “Requiring ESC on heavy trucks and large buses will bring that safety innovation to the largest vehicles on our highways, increasing safety for drivers and passengers of these vehicles and for all road users.”

The final rule calls for the use of ESC on heavy trucks exceeding 26,000 lbs in gross weight. It will take effect for most heavy trucks two years from publication, or in August 2017. The US trucking industry welcomed

“We can save lives by preventing rollovers with ESC technology.”

Dave Osiecki, ATA

the new mandate.

“Ensuring the safety of America’s highways has always been ATA’s highest calling,” said ATA president and CEO Bill Graves. “And we’ve long known the positive role technology can

play in making our vehicles and our roads safer. Today’s announcement by NHTSA will reduce crashes on our highways and make our industry safer.”

“Last month, NHTSA reported to Congress that truck rollover and passenger ejection were the greatest threats to truck driver safety,” added ATA executive vice-president Dave Osiecki. “We can save lives by preventing rollovers with electronic stability control technology, and that’s a positive for our industry. Many fleets have already begun voluntarily utilizing this technology and this new requirement will only speed that process.”

Also voicing approval for the mandate was Bendix, which manufactures electronic stability systems and has long advocated for a full-stability, rather than roll-only stability, requirement. Full electronic stability can help prevent a wider range of crashes.

“At Bendix, we always prefer to let

the market be the catalyst to drive safety technology adoption. We believe ESC stands alone in terms of safety, performance and value. And we have also seen a market acceptance of this technology – over RSC – at a rate of three to one,” said Fred Andersky, Bendix director of government and industry affairs. “This technology is another positive step on the part of our industry toward helping to further improve highway safety.”

Windsor-Detroit bridge to be named after Gordie Howe

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

Canada’s Prime Minister Stephen Harper and Michigan Governor Rick Snyder have announced the new \$2-billion second crossing at Detroit-Windsor will be named the Gordie Howe International Bridge.

Gordie Howe is a hockey legend who played in the NHL for 26 seasons. He was number nine on the Detroit Red Wings and now, his name will bridge the two nations he lived in and entertained for years.

The idea for the name of the bridge came from the Ontario Trucking Association’s David Bradley at a hearing in Lansing, Mich. in 2010.

“It came straight to mind because what other name is there that unites Canada and the US, and specifically the Windsor-Detroit region?” said Bradley, who is also a hockey fan.

“This announcement is about bonding and partnership between our two great nations and Gordie Howe, who has a deep love for Canada as well as the people of Detroit, is a perfect symbol for the enduring strength of Canada-US relations.”

After his suggestion, it wasn’t long before Canadian and US legislators began working to make the name a reality throughout the long, arduous process of getting the public bridge approved.

“It makes my day to think I might have had some small role in all of this,” said Bradley. “It surely didn’t take a genius to come up with the idea; I was just fortunate enough to be part of the lobbying effort for the second crossing and therefore having the opportunity and platform to suggest it.”

He added: “I was told at the time not to get my hopes up – that the naming of something like a bridge is very political and it’s an honour not often bestowed on living beings – so I am thrilled for Gordie and his family that it all worked out. The Prime Minister and the Governor, both of whom have been such great champions of the second crossing, certainly made the right call in my view.”

Howe, 87, is currently recovering from a series of strokes he suffered over the winter.

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By Ron Stang

WINDSOR, ONTARIO

Cincinnati-based Dancing Trucker John Drury's first foray into Canada was fortuitous.

Amidst wind and rain, Drury and his wife Lori crossed into Canada from Detroit and drove to the Petro-Pass truck stop on Walker Road, only to be greeted by a woman driving the exact same car model that Drury's mother had been driving when she was killed by a drunk driver in late April.

"What are the chances the only person that shows up today in a wind storm and a rain storm here in Windsor, Ontario, Canada shows up in a Ford Fusion, same colour?" Drury said after conducting an open air dance class in the parking lot with that woman, Brenda Guarnaschelli of suburban LaSalle.

"There's something going on here today," Drury said amidst an otherwise vacant parking lot. "There's something special going on. I appreciate that, Brenda."

Drury made a point of crossing into Canada after getting requests on social media asking if he could take his Big John's Truckin' Fitness tour beyond the American border.

"They like what I do, they like the message I'm trying to send as far as



Dancing Trucker John Drury leads Brenda Guarnaschelli in a Zumba class in Windsor, Ont. (Photo by Ron Stang)

getting truckers out moving," he said. "They basically said, 'When are you coming to Canada?'"

He chose Windsor because it was closest to a nine-stop American tour he was doing in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana.

After the event, he and Lori turned around and headed back to the US. But he said he could come back to Canada any time if he hears from other Canadians.

"I'm a determined individual, I'm here to spread a message," he said. "I'm here to help people, to empower people."

But Sunday, only Brenda showed, and she wasn't a trucker. "I thought it would be fun," said the woman, who takes Zumba and LaBlast classes.

Drury says women truckers tend to be more responsive to his exercise

through dance message than men and one told him she was going to drive six hours to be there. "But of course the weather played a big role," he said.

Regardless of how many people show up, Drury puts on his show, Lori recording each event.

With Brenda in tow, Drury starts the dance to the tune of Flo Rida's Good Feeling.

He introduces the song and says "My mother's up top and looking down smiling. She was killed by a drunk driver four weeks ago but I'm on a mission and she's smiling down on us right now."

Drury has partnered with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) and will be holding a benefit this October - a danceathon, naturally - in Cincinnati. His mom, Sandy, would have turned 68 on Oct. 17. ●

US truck tonnage declines in April

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

US for-hire truck tonnage has reached its lowest mark since April 2014, falling 3% in April compared to March.

Tonnage was up 1% compared to April 2014, but the year-over-year increase was well off the 4.2% y-o-y gain it posted in March.

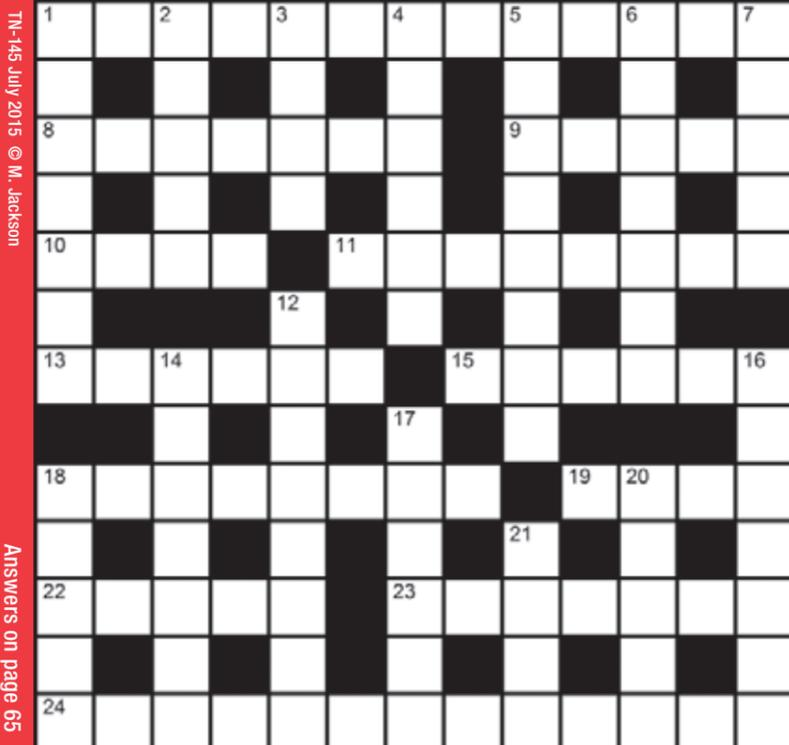
This marks the smallest year-over-year gain since February 2013, according to the American Trucking Associations, which tracks the data. Year-to-date through April, for-hire truck tonnage was up 3.8%.

"Like most economic indicators, truck tonnage was soft in April," said ATA chief economist Bob Costello. "Unless tonnage snaps back in May and June, GDP growth will likely be suppressed in the second quarter."

Costello added that truck tonnage is off 5.3% from its high in January.

"The next couple of months will be telling for both truck freight and the broader economy. Any significant jump from the first quarter is looking more doubtful," he said. ●

THIS MONTH'S CROSSWORD PUZZLE



TN-145 July 2015 © M. Jackson

Answers on page 65

Across

- 1 Scale-equipped highway checkpoints (5,8)
- 8 Trucking-company office department
- 9 Conical traffic diverter
- 10 "Keep the rubber ____ down"
- 11 Winter-road description, often
- 13 Extra-cost new-truck item
- 15 PTO-driven add-on hydraulic system (3,3)
- 18 Hypoid lubricants (4,4)
- 19 Boston, MA, a.k.a. ____ Town
- 22 Van-body portion above cab
- 23 Battery's ____ capacity specification
- 24 Pre-trip inspection items (4,9)

Down

- 1 Engine- and cab-heater brand
- 2 Broke a truck-stop rule, perhaps
- 3 Paint-damaging precipitation
- 4 Dashboard switch type
- 5 Truck's maximum velocity (3,5)
- 6 Diesel-engine incontinence (3,4)
- 7 Canadian Tire money guy, ____ McTire
- 12 Smokey on a Harley
- 14 Big-rig power unit
- 16 Double-axle setups
- 17 Halifax-based ____ Road Transport
- 18 New Hamburg, ON-based carrier
- 20 Driver ____ accident cause
- 21 Fixer-upper truck-ad words (2,2)

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Spotlight on blind spots

Quebec focusing of truck blind spots

By **Carroll McCormic**

MONTREAL, QUEBEC

Aptly called "Angles Morts" (dead angles) in French, blind spots around

trucks have been fingered as the cause of some truck accidents. To increase awareness of them, the Societe de l'assurance automobile du Quebec (SAAQ) launched an awareness program this May directed at cyclists, pe-



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pedestrians and truck drivers.

"We have been working to develop this campaign for over a year," says Eric Santerre, provincial coordinator of media relations and prevention, with the SAAQ. "Without necessarily having striking data of the accidents that may have been caused by heavy vehicle blind spots, this problem has been identified in some accidents. The lack of knowledge of this reality has led us to believe that there was a place for an awareness campaign."

This campaign follows on the heels of a program last year called "100% vigilant." It included "show-and-tells" in which pedestrians and cyclists were invited to climb up in the cab of a truck to see just how restricted drivers views are around their trucks. A survey done last year showed that 72% of the people asked had difficulty locating the blind spots around a big truck.

This May's campaign was launched with an invitation to reporters to visit a drawing of the outline of the blind spots - front, sides and rear - around a truck. Such demonstrations with cones and tape have been done in past years, but, notes Santerre, "This is the first time we have worked with markings on the ground to represent blind spots."

The SAAQ has developed other tools designed to help get the message out. They include portable models, PowerPoint demonstrations, brochures, illustrations, animated shorts and guides on how to use these blind spot kits. The SAAQ believes that the problem is most worrying at intersections in urban areas. This is where most accidents involving cyclists and pedestrians happen.

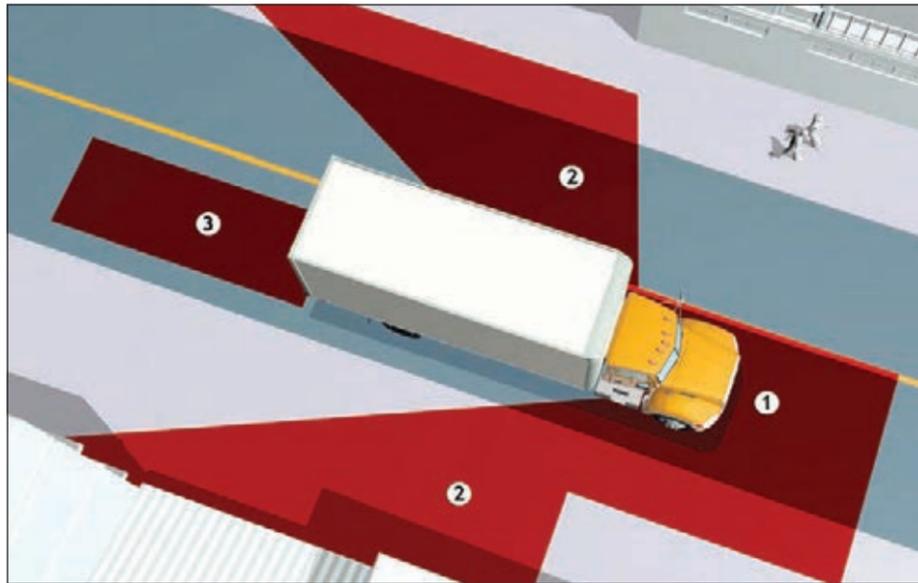
"Pedestrians and cyclists have no protection in the case of a collision. This is why visibility is a determining factor for their safety. Pedestrians, cyclists and drivers have to always establish visual contact with each other before crossing an intersections," reminds Nathalie Tremblay, president and chief executive officer of the SAAQ.

The SAAQ offers this advice to pedestrians and cyclists: Avoid being in the blind spots of heavy trucks. Establish eye contact with the driver. If you have not, assume that he hasn't seen you. Pay attention to the signal lights of vehicles in intersections. Be visible; for example, by wearing bright clothing or reflective stripes.

For truck drivers, the SAAQ reminds them of the following: Watch for and anticipate the movement of people who are circulating around your vehicles. Do not assume that their movements are predictable. Be sure that your side mirrors are in good condition, clean and properly adjusted. In order to see and be seen, keep your headlights on at all times. Signal your intentions in intersections by using your signal lights. Be especially vigilant when making right turns into an intersection and realize that your truck will cut into the adjacent lane or onto the shoulder when making the turn.

The SAAQ announced it will be soliciting the contribution of several partners; ie., transport associations, police and municipalities around Quebec to help get out the message. The SAAQ has also already put on activities at some truck driving schools, and is open to visiting others.

This is not the first time the SAAQ has carried out an "angles mort" program. Way back in 2000, the SAAQ conducted one called "Watch the Blind Spots!" Another such program appears to date to late 2012.



The province of Quebec has launched a program to increase awareness among truck drivers and the public about blind spots.

The English page on the SAAQ Web site, last updated on Nov. 28 2012, has advice for motorists overtaking trans-

port trucks: How to safely overtake a truck (don't return to the right lane until you can see the truck in your inside

rear mirror); how to tell if you are following a truck too closely (if you can't see the side mirrors, you're too close); and don't drive alongside trucks (you want to be able to see the driver's face in the outside rear mirror).

Unfortunately, the original videos on the English page are no longer available.

Good for French visitors to the SAAQ Web site, but unfortunate for English readers, considering the seriousness of the topic, is that the agency updated its French page on blind spots on May 28, 2015. It has graphics showing the blind spots for trucks, transit buses and tour buses, graphics showing people standing in blind spots and an animated short.

The French page also links to more advice to pedestrians, cyclists and truck drivers on how to operate safely and avoid incidents attributable to blind spots. The advice is excellent and no one should be left out of this important discussion. ●

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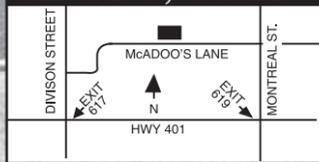


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Continued from page 1

tor-trailer of this size and you only have eight minutes to call out a variety of inspection items, plus find the five actual defects we planted on the vehicle. I don't know how many of the competitors will find everything; there will be a few and that's why it's a competition."

The event also allows drivers and fleet managers in attendance to interact with transport enforcement officers in a relaxed setting. It was especially timely this year, just days ahead of the North America-wide CVSA Roadcheck enforcement blitz.

Back on the track, drivers in six categories filed through the course under progressively worsening storm clouds. Categories included: straight truck; single-single; single-tandem; tandem-tandem; B-Train; and back this year after a hiatus, step van. The tandem-tandem category was the most hotly contested and it was during this portion of the program that the skies opened up, sending drivers, onlookers, judges and other volunteers scattering in all directions in search of shelter. But the sheets of rain soon gave way to sporadic showers and the competition resumed.

Asked if rain impacts a driver's approach to the competition, veteran competitor Rennie Barran of Speedy Transport said it's no big deal. Waiting around for your shot at competing is the bigger concern, he explained.

Competitors must arrive early in the

day for the driver's meeting, and it can be difficult to maintain focus when you don't get your chance to drive until late afternoon.

Another challenge, pointed out Jack Fielding from Bison Transport, is to adapt quickly to an unfamiliar vehicle. All competitors use the same trucks, meaning a driver in the tandem-tandem category such as Fielding, whose everyday truck carries a large sleeper cab, must quickly acclimatize to driving a shorter wheelbase day cab during the competition.

Fielding was back for his second kick at the can, having captured second place in the tandem-tandem division last year as a rookie.

"First is on order," he joked before taking his turn behind the wheel, but it wasn't to be this year.

Many of the drivers who participated did so with the full support of the carriers they work for and showed up in uniform, proudly representing their companies.

The usual suspects were well represented: Speedy Transport; Fortigo Freight; Fed-Ex; Con-Way; YRC Reimer and a few others. Murray Hutchinson is the new chair of the Toronto Regional Truck Driving Championships and he said the committee would like to double participation by next year, when Ontario hosts the National championships. It's an ambitious goal but not an unrealistic one, he said.

"By doubling the numbers, that would only get us back to where it was five years ago," he said. "Five years



Drivers are required to navigate rows of tennis balls with inches to spare.

ago there were 80-100 competitors and 200-250 people out to the banquet. We want to get it back to that."

Some carriers that used to support the championships dropped off the map when the recession hit and haven't yet returned. Others choose to host their own internal driving competitions. But doubling participation will require a commitment from more carriers, Hutchinson acknowledged, since few drivers compete without the backing of their company.

"You need that support. The winners in each class here go on to the provincial level and that usually means a day - maybe two days - off work. If they happen to win at the Ontario level they go to the national level

which this year is in Regina. So they have to have the company's support so they can go. It's a big commitment for the companies to allow their drivers the time to put into it," Hutchinson explained.

There are many benefits for the carriers that participate in the program. There's some serious camaraderie on display at the championships, with drivers from each team supporting each other and offering tips on how to best navigate the course.

It also brings together drivers' families and support staff from the company as well as management, giving drivers some extra incentive to perform well. And the preparation work that goes into competing in the championships serves as a great - and inexpensive - form of remedial training for drivers.

"This weekend's Rodeo was a great opportunity for carriers like Fortigo to support our drivers in an endeavor that tested their sizable skill sets in competition with their peer group," said Elias Demangos, president of Fortigo Freight. "This was a great spec-

The winners:

Grand Champion: Preetpal Nijjar of Flyers Trucking

Rookie of the Year: Daniel Wink of Speedy Transport

Team Trophy: Con-Way Freight

Straight Truck:

1. Kevin Bradshaw, Canada Cartage
2. Daryl Poole, YRC Reimer
3. Anges MacCormac, Bison Transport

Single-single:

1. Shawn Pietracupa, Con-Way Freight
2. Blair Gerelus, YRC Reimer
3. Guy Woolcott, Con-Way Freight

Single-tandem:

1. Sebastian Tatar, Con-Way Freight
2. Jason Wigle, Con-Way Freight
3. Daniel Wink, Speedy Transport

Tandem-tandem:

1. Preetpal Nijjar, Flyers Trucking
2. Craig Babin, Speedy Transport
3. Gregory Flear, Speedy Transport

B-Train:

1. Dan Congdon, YRC Reimer
2. Stephan Hughs, Canada Cartage

Step van:

1. Sergio Hirsch
2. Stephen How

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tacle of concentration and finesse and we felt honoured to be present in support of their efforts like the fans that we are. The Rodeo is a wonderful event for drivers, carriers and industry alike."

The Toronto Regional Truck Driving Championships are a precursor to the Provincials, which will be held July 11 in London, Ont. There, top performers from the Toronto and Central On-

tario Regional Truck Driving Championships will face off to see who will represent Ontario in the Nationals this fall in Regina, Sask.

Truck News on-road editor Harry Rudolfs will be covering the Central Ontario championships June 13 at Conestoga Collage in Cambridge, Ont. Look for his report, as well as coverage from the Provincials, in the August issue and on Trucknews.com.

Trucking industry urged to 'wear plaid for Dad' June 19

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Ontario carriers are 'wearing plaid for Dad' this month and raising money for prostate cancer research.

In order to raise awareness about prostate cancer as well as money to help fight the disease, a movement is underway to wear plaid for Dad on June 19. James Steed of Steed Standard Transport, and an Ontario Trucking Association board member, wants the trucking industry to get involved.

He's challenging other OTA members - and the trucking industry at large - to participate.

"I am James Steed and I accept the challenge and will be wearing plaid on June 19 to raise awareness for prostate cancer," he announced. "We encourage you to wear plaid for Dad as well and challenge your industry competitors and anyone else you wish."

Steed's own father battled prostate cancer, so he knows all-too-well the impact the disease can have. One in eight men will be diagnosed with prostate cancer in their lifetime, stats show.

Ontario fleets worried about Pan Am Games disruptions

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Ontario carriers are concerned about traffic congestion that could occur when Toronto hosts the Pan Am Games this summer.

An Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) survey indicated many carriers feel their normal service levels will be in for "heavy disruptions" once the Games arrive. Traffic in downtown Toronto is expected to increase and lanes on Hwy. 401 and other busy routes have been designated HOV-only for the duration of the Games.

More than 85% of responding carriers said they're anticipating lengthy delays during the Games in servicing their customers. Only 47% said they'd developed an alternative strategy in anticipation of the Pan Am Games.

Of the 53% of carriers that have yet to develop a contingency plan, most cited "lack of customer engagement" as a reason. Some carriers, the survey found, have warned customers that there could be disruptions to their normal service levels. A third of carriers are implementing, or considering implementing a surcharge to address anticipated increases in congestion.

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Trison Tarps celebrates 10 years in business

By James Menzies

BRANTFORD, ONTARIO

Almost a year to the day after Trison Tarps celebrated moving into its large, state-of-the-art manufacturing facility, the company once again invited back guests for some of Trison president Paul Vandenberg's specialty: pulled pork, straight off the smoker.

The 217-lb pig had been smoking since 4 a.m. when guests started arriving May 20 at 11 a.m. The occasion this year was to celebrate 10 years in business, and more than 300 customers and industry friends were expected to file through by 3 p.m.

"Last year, we celebrated our move into the new facility," Vandenberg told *Truck News*. "This year we're celebrating 10 years in business; it has nothing to do with this facility. Ten years in business is something to celebrate."

It's also a good excuse to roll out the custom-made smoker that was designed by Vandenberg's son Doug. He has three sons - Brad, Matt and Doug - and they inspired the company name: Trison Tarps. Each of them work in the business today, along with about 30 employees in total.

Trison manufactures its own tarps on-site. It also offers accessories and recently broadened its portfolio with the purchase of Rock Hard Liners.

"We've started installing liners in dump bodies to complement our



Paul Vandenberg mans the smoker as guests begin to arrive at Trison Tarp's tenth anniversary celebration May 20.

business," Vandenberg said.

The new facility is 48,000 sq.-ft. and features a 2,500 sq.-ft. showroom and 10,000 sq.-ft. tarp manufacturing area. More than a year after moving in, Vandenberg said the transition has been smooth.

"We have the business rolling quite smoothly here now and it's working quite a bit better than at the old facility," he said. "It's been rewarding and challenging at the same time. The amount of space we have is more efficient but we haven't hired too many extra people yet. We're still looking

for good people and it's difficult to find people who want to work with their hands."

This day, it was Vandenberg's smoked pork that was the main attraction, which should come as no surprise. In addition to carving it up for customers and industry friends, Vandenberg puts the custom smoker to work for numerous good causes. He has cooked for more than 800 people at one church function, raising thousands of dollars for a local charity. It took four pigs to feed that many mouths. ●

TTSAO, province of Ontario look to crack down on substandard training providers

HAMILTON, ONTARIO

The Truck Training Schools Association of Ontario (TTSAO) and the province of Ontario have been in talks over cracking down on substandard driver training operators they say are exploiting a loophole to offer cheap, ineffective training.

The organization met recently with the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities and the Ministry of Transportation to discuss the issue. While TTSAO member companies are bound to a 200-hour curriculum devised by MTCU, it says it has identified at least 36 unregistered training schools offering AZ and DZ training programs in Ontario that don't comply with the minimum.

TTSAO says these operators are exploiting a loophole that allows courses that cost less than \$1,000 to be exempt from the MTCU training requirements.

"We were pleased with the open dialogue between all parties who were at the table and we have a commitment from the MTCU that discussions will continue with our association to resolve the issues," said Yvette Lagrois, president of TTSAO.

Kevin Pattison, a TTSAO board member and president of the Northern Academy of Transportation Training (NATT) in Lively, Ont. says, "It is the responsibility of our board to listen to our membership and be proactive in addressing their concerns about issues that affect their businesses, especially from a regulatory and government perspective." ●

Timmins home to worst roads in Ontario: CAA

TIMMINS, ONTARIO

The two worst roads in Ontario can be found in Timmins, according to the 2015 CAA Worst Roads campaign.

More than 2,000 roads were nominated this year, but Algonquin Blvd. West and Algonquin Blvd. East earned the notorious #1 and #2 spots, respectively. Selections were verified by the Ontario Road Builders' Association. Timmins had three roads in the Top 10, while Toronto was home to two.

Here are the 10 worst roads in Ontario, according to the CAA campaign:

- Algonquin Blvd. West - Timmins
- Algonquin Blvd. East - Timmins
- Dufferin Street - Toronto
- Hwy. 144 - Greater Sudbury
- Carling Ave. - Ottawa
- Radical Road - Port Dover
- Burlington St. East - Hamilton
- Riverside Drive - Timmins
- Dominion Road - Fort Erie
- Bayview Ave. - Toronto ●



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Why are drivers choosing to drive less?

Continued from page 1

for an average rate of 50.39 cents per mile.

"Company drivers' average annual income was up about 2.61% and their miles were down 3.59%, so they are making more money and running fewer miles," concluded CarriersEdge president Mark Murrell, who was presenting the first in a series of Webinars that examined trends and best practices that emerged during the Best Fleets to Drive For evaluation process. "If we look at it differently and break it out to an average rate per mile, their rate per mile has gone up about 6.5%, which is pretty nice."

The trend was even more pronounced among owner/operators, who saw their average income climb from \$175,673 to \$192,135 between the 2014 and 2015 program years, representing a 9.37% increase in revenue. This, while averaging just 108,968 miles, down from 117,942 the previous year, a decrease in miles of 7.61%. This equates to an 18.37% increase in the average rate per mile enjoyed by owner/operators hauling for the Best Fleets to Drive For between the 2014 and 2015 program years.

"Much like company drivers, if they had kept their miles the same as the previous year, they would've seen fairly dramatic income increases, but they didn't," Murrell said. "Which leads to the question, why?"

Murrell speculated the implementation of more restrictive driver hours-of-service in the US, which went into effect in the summer of 2013 - and were fully reflected for the first time in the 2015 program year - could've played a role.

It's also possible drivers were taking advantage of pay increases to simply work less while maintaining their current income levels.

Whatever the reason, they didn't seem to mind.

"We know one thing - if drivers were forced to run fewer miles and were unhappy about it, we'd see that in the driver surveys," Murrell said. "In all the surveys, there wasn't a single mention about the hours-of-service regulatory change...so if drivers are being forced to run fewer miles, they don't seem to be super unhappy about it."

Another trend that appeared this year was the emergence of guaranteed pay among some of the Best Fleets winners. As many as six of the top 20 fleets in the program were offering some form of guaranteed pay or minimum miles.

Examples include: Nussbaum, which offered a guaranteed weekly minimum of \$1,050; Boyle Transportation, which promises 5,000 miles over five days or 5,500 miles over six days (for teams); Motor Carrier Service, which offers a daily minimum of 500 miles; and Veriha Trucking, which has a tiered program that guarantees between \$900 and \$1,125 per week.

"Fleets that are doing it get very good marks from drivers for that," Murrell said. ●

What is Best Fleets to Drive For?

And just how do you become one?

The Best Fleets to Drive For program was the brainchild of Jane Jazrawy and Mark Murrell of Canadian online training firm CarriersEdge. They wanted to celebrate trucking companies that offer excellent overall workplaces for professional drivers. The program received the support of the Truckload Carriers Association and has now been held for seven years. Any for-hire fleet in the US or Canada that operates at least 10 trucks can qualify, however they first must be nominated as a Best Fleet to Drive For by at least one of their drivers or owner/operators.

From there, Murrell and Jazrawy submit to the nominated company a corporate questionnaire.

Last year, 115 fleets were nominated by drivers and 85 of them completed the questionnaire. The company evaluation process is exhaustive.

It includes two interviews with company executives as well as driver surveys. Carriers are scored across a number of categories, including: compensation; benefits; HR strategy; operational strategy; performance management; development and career path; and work/life balance.

The Top 20 fleets are recognized as the Best Fleets to Drive For, with overall winners rewarded in small and large fleet categories. Five 'Fleets to Watch' are also singled out; companies that came just short of making the list but have a good chance to do so as their programs evolve.

Naturally, not everyone agrees with the results. Murrell said carriers occasionally become upset when they're not among the winners, claiming they pay better than the Best Fleets or have cleaner CSA scores. But that's not what this competition is about, he added.

"Best Fleets to Drive For isn't just a salary survey," he pointed out. "There's a

lot more to total workplace experience than just compensation. It also isn't just about safety and/or driver retention.

Those things factor in, but you can have a safe fleet that's terrible to work for, or low turnover when you're just good enough to keep drivers."

So how do you become a Best Fleet? Well, it's up to your drivers and owner/operators to get the ball rolling with a nomination. One nomination is all it takes, Murrell pointed out. He also offered a sneak peek of several key questions nominated fleets will be asked during this year's selection process:

- How does your company ensure its total work environment meets the needs of its drivers?

- How do you ensure drivers are not subject to, or contributors to, inappropriate, hostile or toxic work environments?

- What technology is provided to help drivers be more efficient?

- What mechanisms are in place to resolve problems with shippers?

- Is driver performance evaluated?

How? ●

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Dealing with the driver shortage the 'Best Fleets' way

No one is immune to the driver shortage. But here are three ways the Best Fleets winners are dealing with it.

By James Menzies
TORONTO, ONTARIO

Being recognized as one of the Top 20 Best Fleets to Drive For in North America doesn't mean a carrier is completely insulated from the driver shortage.

Only 38% of the Top 20 fleets indicated to the program's administrators that the driver shortage had a "minimal impact" on their operations.

That means 62% are affected: 31% say it is limiting their ability to grow; 19% say the driver shortage has a "moderate impact" on their operations; and 13% say it has had a "strong impact."

So what are the best fleets doing to address the issue? Mark Murrell and Jane Jazrawy of CarriersEdge surveyed more than 80 carriers in the US and Canada that were nominated by their drivers as being among the best for whom to drive. Some of the trends that emerged through this process were shared in a series of seminars and Webinars on the program.

Here are a few examples:

Reaching out to women

Only 5% of professional drivers in the US are women and the figure is

an even more woeful 3% in Canada. This represents a "huge untapped resource," Jazrawy noted.

For the first time this year, she said she's noticed carriers making a more concerted effort to attract and retain female drivers. Fleets that offer team runs, such as Boyle Transportation, have been the most successful.

"When there's a high percentage of women (drivers within a fleet), they're almost always teams," she said, adding 32% of Boyle's driving force is made up of women.

In five of the Top 20 Best Fleets, female drivers account for at least 10% of the driving force.

One that stands out is Interstate Distributor, whose driving force is 13% women. Jazrawy said the carrier's parent company is owned by three sisters who place a strong emphasis on ethics and have made it a point to make women welcome at the company.

"They have a code of ethics and it's important to them in running their business to encourage more women to join the company," Jazrawy explained. There's also a women's group within the company, headed by one of the female owners.

Another company that wasn't among the Top 20, but has had some

success attracting women is Con-Way. Jazrawy said it's the only one she's seen that has a Web site dedicated specifically to its female drivers. Some carriers, Jazrawy said, target women from the military, as they are accustomed to working in a male-dominated profession and transition well to a career in trucking.

Offering continuous learning

Half of the Top 20 Best Fleets now offer some form of tuition reimbursement for drivers who would like to pursue an education.

"It spiked this year," said Murrell. "A full 50% of our Best Fleets have formalized programs. We've never seen that before. In addition, another 25% have informal programs. They're not doing full tuition reimbursements but they're taking advantage of the programs associations offer that allow people to continue their learning, learn new skills and expand their knowledge in different areas. This was a big shift."

One carrier offers \$500 tuition reimbursements on approved courses, for example.

"This is very attractive to millennials," Murrell noted.

Boyle Transportation offers a scholarship program that Murrell said is "unlike any other we've ever seen." It pays a \$2,000 grant to every driver's child who's pursuing a post-secondary education.

"There's no limit on the number of people," Murrell explained. "Every person who qualifies gets it. If you're a driver at Boyle and you have two kids going to university, you're getting \$4,000 per year to cover that."

Equipping drivers with technology

Some carriers are also using technology to lure drivers and to keep them satisfied. Boyle Transportation gives new hires an iPhone with a company e-mail address.

Others give drivers a tablet, pre-loaded with useful apps and programs.

"It's kind of like an electronic flight bag," Murrell said. "It's a very interesting idea and I expect to see more of that in the next couple years."

A new trend that emerged this year is the use of EpicVue to attract and retain drivers.

It's a new service - not yet available in Canada - that provides satellite TV inside the truck. Murrell said four of the Best Fleets are offering this to drivers.

More of the Best Fleets are also designing custom apps to keep drivers connected while on the road. Last year, only two of the Best Fleets had their own app; that number has climbed to nine this year.

Driver surveys collected through the evaluation process show drivers want to stay connected and like to have WiFi available in their trucks. ●

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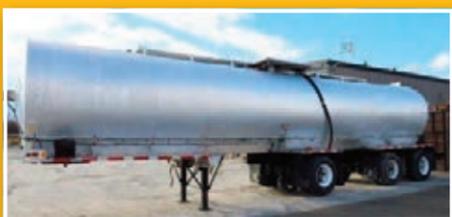
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IN STOCK

Seven ways to become a more driver-friendly fleet

By James Menzies

TORONTO, ONTARIO

The job market for professional drivers is highly competitive and it's difficult for carriers to differentiate themselves based on pay packages alone.

This has prompted progressive fleets to look for creative, yet effective ways to keep their drivers engaged and satisfied.

Here are seven tips that caught our attention during a recent Best Fleets to Drive For Webinar:

Host driver-focused conference calls: Landstar hosts regularly scheduled conference calls with drivers, which have proven to be immensely popular. They're divided into three parts: a company update; answers to questions and issues brought up during previous calls; and new business, where drivers can bring up any issues or concerns.

If management can't resolve the issues or answer the questions right then, they'll do so during the next call. Issues aren't allowed to fester or go unresolved.

Act early to resolve issues with shippers: Some Best Fleets, including Kriska, send office staff on ridealongs with drivers so they can see first-hand any challenges drivers encounter on the road and at customer facilities. Visiting customers unannounced from inside the cab gives executives a true look at how their drivers are treated by shippers and receivers. Problem shippers are dealt with early this way.

Treat drivers like sales reps: Progressive fleets are providing their drivers with iPhones and tablets as well as company-issued e-mail addresses. Grand Island Express offers personal e-mail inside the cab so drivers can stay in touch with family while on the road. Boyle Transportation provides iPhones with a company e-mail address. Taking it a step further, Central Oregon Truck Company pays its drivers a per diem for meals and incidental expenses while on the road. Several carriers no longer refer to drivers as drivers. Central Oregon calls them 'driver team members' so they feel less isolated from the rest of the company and more a part of the team.

Dress'em up, not down: Boyle Transportation has company uniforms for its professional drivers, and surveys indicate drivers like this. It helps that the company pays for eight full outfits per driver and also kicks in an annual allowance for jeans and boots. The company's drivers have all their clothing paid for by the company, which makes them happy to dress the part and represent the company well when on the road and interacting with customers.

Help drivers stay healthy: Many fleets now have a driver health and wellness program in place and others just take simple measures such as providing free fruit at company facilities. Drivers at one Best Fleet are encouraged to load up before heading out on a trip.

This means doling out about 60 lbs of fruit each week but it helps drivers stay healthy on the road - not to mention productive, since they're no longer stopping to grab that bag of chips.

Stock the truck: When new drivers at Nussbaum Transportation complete their orientation, they're handed a \$50 Walmart gift card so they can stock the truck to their liking.

This allows them to personalize their truck; load it up with cleaning supplies, food or whatever else they like. It gives them a sense of ownership and they head out on their first run feeling prepared - and pretty good about the company they signed on with.

Give them the rock star treatment: Central Oregon Truck Company provides its drivers (ahem, driver team members) with a concierge when they return from a trip.

The concierge coordinates with the driver to quickly get the truck in for service and to outline their options for their next delivery.



New drivers at Nussbaum are given a \$50 Walmart gift card so they can stock the truck to their own liking.

This company also offers an "overnight service" featuring double occupancy rooms and complimentary meals so they can rest up before their

next run.

Sure beats spending another night in the sleeper while parked in the company's yard. 🚛

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Sleep apnea: The monster under the bed

Northbridge Insurance hosts day-long seminar examining the issue of sleep apnea in trucking

By **Sonia Straface**

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Being healthy isn't always about hitting the gym, eating a balanced diet, and drinking enough water. There's one component of health and wellness that is often overlooked and brushed off: sleep.

Sleep is vital to one's well-being and more often than not, not getting enough sleep can be a nightmare. For some it's about following a strict routine and getting to bed at a certain

hour. For others, sleep apnea is the monster under the bed that keeps them from getting the rest they need.

According to a study conducted by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) in 2001, obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) affects more than a quarter of commercial truck drivers.

To help combat the issue and bring it back into the spotlight, Northbridge Insurance held a sleep apnea symposium in May titled: *Obstructive Sleep Apnea - The Impact on Canadian Trucking & Logistics*.

Truck News publisher and editorial director Lou Smyrlis moderated the event and helped the conversation flow as several speakers discussed the impact sleep apnea has from a driver, medical, legal and claims perspective.

Living with sleep apnea

The first speaker was Dave Nawton, risk services specialist for Northbridge Insurance. Nawton was diagnosed with sleep apnea back in 2005 and says he didn't get treatment until 2007.

"Truthfully, I think I had the symptoms of it long before that but I was in a state of denial," he said.

Symptoms of sleep apnea can be tricky because, like most conditions, even if you have all the telltale signs, it doesn't necessarily mean you have it. Symptoms of sleep apnea include loud snoring, choking during sleep as well as feeling exhausted during the day and having to nap on a regular basis.

Nawton explained he would frequently shut the door to his office during the day to nap because that's what his body needed to make it through the day. He said his work projects were always completed last minute because his focus was never in the right place at the right time. He was constantly craving sleep.

"In 2005 when I was diagnosed with it, the first thing that led to it was my doctor noticed my blood pressure had gotten really high," said Nawton. "They were treating that with medication and then referred me to get a sleep study because I had a bunch of other symptoms. That sleep study came back as positive but I didn't want to get treatment at that point. In 2007, it was actually my wife who gave me the ultimatum and truthfully at that point in time, I needed to do it because I was exhausted. I was physically and mentally tired every day. I needed naps in the middle of the afternoon at work just to be able to function. The wife complained about snoring constantly, (I had a) sore throat. It was just lousy, like the quality of life was just bad."

Nawton explained that refusing treatment when he was first diagnosed was a combination of his denial and his benefits packages at work that didn't cover the cost of the



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\$3,000 CPAP machine required to treat sleep apnea. Around the same time his wife gave him the ultimatum, his work updated the benefits plan it had for its employees, which then covered 90% of the machine's cost. Nawton said after he used the machine he saw the results immediately.

"I will always remember the second morning I woke up from treatment," he said. "The first night I was on the machine, I woke up the next day, I felt about the same. The second day I woke up, it was a Sunday morning and honestly, I felt like I was 19 again. No headaches, no sore throats, energy...Two o'clock in the afternoon comes around and I'm not tired. Then I remember, the Monday going into work and sitting down at my desk and actually having the mental abilities to say, 'Where am I at? What am I going to get done?'"

He left the audience with simple advice: if you have any symptoms of sleep apnea or suspect you or a loved one has it, get tested.

"I cannot express enough the wow factor when you wake up after being on the machine and you got a full night's sleep," he said. "You'll be amazed...It's such a rush because you don't realize how tired you are until you've actually been treated. Once you get that energy back, it's amazing."

The medical outlook

Also on the list of speakers were two medical experts - Dr. Geoff Fernie, research director and Dr. Hisham Alshaer, scientist at the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute - who spoke about the medical effects of sleep apnea.

Fernie first explained the definition of sleep apnea saying, "An apneic event is a pause in breathing. When you stop breathing during the night for more than 10 seconds, it's described as an apneic event."

Those who stop breathing for more than 10 seconds 10 times per night have obstructive sleep apnea, according to Fernie, who added that the lack of oxygen in the body during these breath pauses cause a spike in blood pressure - and causes even more strain on the patient's health.

"When the blood pressure goes up, what is happening is that it tends to stay up in the day," he said. "So you have about four times the chance of being hypertensive, and that's not a good idea because hypertension also has its consequences."

Alshaer explained why sleep apnea is so prevalent in the trucking com-

munity, according to many American studies.

"Sleep apnea is twice as common in males than females," he said. "So we are at higher risk and most drivers are males, so this is one factor. Another thing is the lifestyle...prolonged sitting."

He explained that a "fluid shift" happens when one sits for too long during the day, like at an office desk or behind the steering wheel of a truck. When there is little movement in the legs during a majority of the day, fluid builds up in the legs and when one goes to lie down to sleep, that fluid travels upward into the neck and can cause an obstructed airway, which is sometimes the

"I felt like I was 19 again. No headaches, no sore throats, energy...Two o'clock in the afternoon comes around and I'm not tired."

Dave Nawton, Northbridge Insurance

cause of sleep apnea in adults.

He added diet is a factor as well since obesity is also linked to sleep apnea. Many professional drivers get their meals at truck stops and this has been pointed to as a reason why so many drivers are obese.

"These all add together to aggravate the problem," he said.

To help make diagnosis less of a production for truck drivers and busy people in general, (going to a sleep clinic overnight and therefore being out of the truck) the doctors showed off Dr. Alshaer's latest invention, the world's first portable, cordless medical device for sleep apnea diagnosis.

"What we basically did is to develop a simple thing that you take home and you wear," explained Fernie. "Just put it on and you just go to sleep. It's not really a mask. It's really a frame that's holding a microphone in there. It's holding that microphone in front of your mouth and your nose, so it's able to listen very carefully and record the sounds of your breath."

By recording the breathing patterns during your sleep the data collected by the machine can be analyzed by doctors who can determine whether or not the patient has sleep apnea.

All things legal

From a legal standpoint, Rui Fernandes, partner at Fernandes & Hearn LLP, explained the obligations

fleet owners have to test their drivers for sleep apnea because of the recent guidance the FMCSA issued to medical examiners on how to identify sleep apnea.

"The guidance doesn't carry any legislative weight," said Fernandes. "It's a guide only to doctors, but obviously, people are very concerned that the doctors are going to identify or mis-identify sleep apnea. We are waiting for some formal rule to come forward."

He explained that if a formal US rule comes out of this guidance and a number of factors are outlined legally to determine that someone has to get tested for sleep apnea, it will affect Canadian truck drivers who

travel to the States on a regular basis.

"Canadian standards are going to be affected," he said. "If you have the five factors that are set out by the US as what is reasonable to test, that's going to be important into Canada, whether it's going to be imported through our parliament and legislation or whether it's just done through the court system when they say, 'Well, that's the standard,' because when we're looking at negligence and how people determine liability, you're looking at the reasonable and prudent driver and the reasonable and prudent company."

Fernandes said that because so many US companies are now testing their drivers for sleep apnea, they are setting a safety standard. He predicted that companies that do not test are going to fall behind and if an accident occurs, they are going to be found negligent by the courts.

"The fact that we don't have any current legislation that specifically mandates testing is going to be irrelevant because once there's an accident and they come to your company and you're being examined and cross-examined...They're going to say, 'Well, why didn't you do any testing?' The fact that Northbridge is holding a seminar sets a standard. 'Were you at the Northbridge seminar?' 'Oh, yes.' 'Did you then institute testing?' 'No.' That's going to be an impact."

Peter Aumonier, senior vice-pres-

ident, claims, national litigation and technical management at Northbridge echoed Fernandes' perspective and stressed the importance of how being negligent can impact your business.

"In terms of a claim event, there's nothing new here," he said. "Again, you've all been counseled over the years and run your businesses from a risk management perspective to report claims timely."

What the FMCSA has to say

Representing the FMCSA was Chuck Horan, director, office carrier, driver, and vehicle safety standards.

Horan explained to attendees the long process it would take to make sleep apnea testing mandatory or to set a standard on who should be tested.

"On our major regulations that we deal with, generally, it takes a minimum of two years from start to finish," he said. "That's the regulation process. You add that 12 to 18 months (to do research) and we're looking at four years or so before you see a regulation written by FMCSA on obstructive sleep apnea."

Horan added that with a presidential election coming up, that could also slow things down.

"We're talking now 2020 before you see anything from us," he said.

Horan explained the FMCSA's position on obstructive sleep apnea.

"I think it's important to know what our position is and has been since about 2000," he said. "Obstructive sleep apnea is filed basically under one of 13 disqualifying offenses, and...basically our regulation says that you are allowed to drive if you have no condition respiratory-wise that would prevent gradual or sudden incapacitation, which makes perfect sense: you don't want somebody driving a truck who could suddenly or gradually become incapacitated. I think that position is one that needs to be understood is that is disqualifying. There's a little line underneath the disqualification. That is, if it's not treated, people forget about that part. They only hear the OSA and disqualified, and they go crazy. They freak out, 'Oh, my God! There goes my livelihood.' That isn't necessarily true. It's the untreated obstructive sleep apnea that is disqualifying."

Horan's final message to fleets that attended the conference is one that he says he tells drivers in the US all

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Some carriers already screening for sleep apnea

Continued from page 19

the time: take action now and get tested before legislation comes in effect.

What Canadian fleets are doing

The last speaker of the day was Mark Seymour, CEO of Kriska Transportation, who talked to attendees about his own personal struggles with sleep apnea and how he didn't wait for legislation to test his own fleet for the condition.

"My personal story really is one that is very similar to David's," said Seymour. "For a long time, I would get drowsy in the afternoons, I would wake up most mornings with a dry throat. My wife would be very upset about my snoring all night and how it interrupted her sleep, all those things.

It was part of my life and I thought it was just the way it was."

Seymour says he was never exposed to what sleep apnea was and the treatment available for it until he visited his father in the hospital one day who was asleep with a CPAP machine on his face. After that, Seymour went to his family doctor to get tested and after a sleep study, his test results came back positive: he had sleep apnea, just like his father. He says for the first two years of diagnosis he chose not to deal with it out of "sheer embarrassment and shame."

"A couple of years goes by, for some reason I decided to go back another sleep study and decided to treat it," he said. "My experience was very positive...I don't even know what it feels like not to use it anymore because in seven years, I've gone two nights without it."

In January 2011, Seymour decided it was time for Kriska to take action and create a mandatory sleep-testing program for its drivers and employees.

"I personally had my own experience that I could dovetail into why we would do it," he said of why he began the program. "Since January of 2011, every commercial driver we have hired has had to go through pre-screening. It's widely been embraced. We have 138 commercial drivers at Kriska today treating obstructive sleep apnea. There's more. That's just the number of drivers that we have captured since January 2011."

Seymour says the program has been widely accepted by everyone at the company because it aligns with the company's wellness program. He also said he has seen a significant impact on safety.

Seymour explained that during the testing, if one of the drivers is diagnosed with sleep apnea, he or she is treated with a CPAP machine. The clinic will then follow up with the driver four times a year to make sure they are using the machine. However, if drivers are found to be non-compliant, Seymour says there are major consequences.

"They're parked until they start using their machine again and can prove that," he said. "I was told yesterday not once, not once since January 2011 have we parked a driver for non-compliance from the sleep clinic. I think it's evident that people realize that they're not being made to do something that isn't helpful and very positive to their quality of life. Again, I cannot tell you how much better one feels by treating OSA. It's profound. The sleeping and the nodding in the middle of the day, all those things for me went away."

Seymour says he jumped the gun with sleep apnea testing for his company because he believes legislation is just around corner and wanted to help others who may have been suffering like he had been. He also alluded to the fact drivers who don't want to be tested for sleep apnea need not apply to his company.

"Mandatory testing for OSA is just another pre-cursor that we think that is coming and we're ready," he said. "Much like electronic on-board recorders. It's part of the fabric of our organization and people have accepted it. If you don't want to participate in the program, then don't come and work at our place. It's just that simple. It's not a law yet but it's only a matter of time." ●

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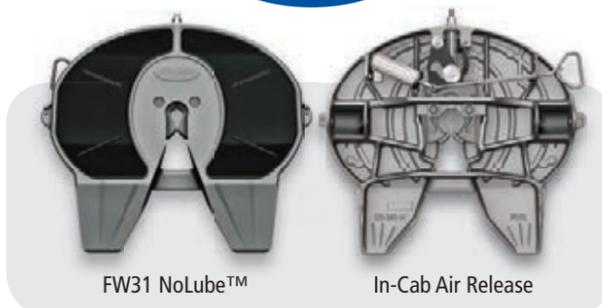


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Researchers seeking fleets to participate in Canadian sleep apnea study

By **Sonia Straface**

TORONTO, ONTARIO

A new sleep apnea study in the Canadian trucking industry is underway and researchers are hopeful it will answer a lot of questions concerning the safety of our roads and drivers' health.

The study – pioneered by the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, together with Bresotec Inc. – is aimed to resolve the problem with research surrounding sleep apnea from a Canadian standpoint.

According to scientists and researchers behind the study, there is currently no reliable research providing evidence on the severity of sleep apnea in the trucking industry here in Canada. To solve this issue, they proposed a study for which they need 1,000 truck driver participants to analyze the impact sleep apnea has on both the road and trucker health.

"It's really important to get a handle on how significant the problem is," said Dr. Geoff Fernie, research director at the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute. "Some of the (US) reports we were reading were really quite frightening. We weren't sure if the same applied to Canadian long-haul truck drivers as it does in the United States. And so (with the study) we want to find out within the industry how common it is, and see what affect it has on road accidents."

Sleep apnea and trucking are no strangers. The two actually go hand-in-hand, because of the lifestyle and demographics of the trucking industry. Research has shown that sleep apnea is more prevalent in men (more than 95%



Drivers diagnosed with sleep apnea can treat it by using a CPAP machine.

of truck drivers in Canada are male) and those with sedentary lifestyles.

"Because we're aware of the problem with road accidents, we became very aware that truckers were perhaps particularly at risk for sleep apnea," added Fernie. "There are reports in the literature, particularly in the United States, that a very high proportion of truckers have sleep apnea and that's a worry to us."

Fernie said it is estimated that "roughly one in 10 people have sleep apnea, but only one in 10 of those one in 10 really knows that they have it. That means 90% haven't been diagnosed and that's a problem because if you have sleep apnea and you're not diagnosed, therefore not treated, you have four times the chance of having a heart failure or stroke and we're not quite sure but somewhere

around three or four times more likely to cause a road accident as well."

Dr. Hisham Alshaer, a scientist at the Toronto Rehabilitation Institute, added the study will try to find the correlation between sleep apnea and road accidents.

"We also want to find out if those who have obstructive sleep apnea had some kind of car accident trigger in the past, so we want to find the link between obstructive sleep apnea and the record of vehicle accidents," he said.

The Institute is currently seeking volunteers to be a part of the study, and has its eyes set on fleet managers and owners who would be willing to volunteer his/her fleet for the study.

"We are actively looking for participants for the study, and we've talked to CTA and they are very willing to help,"

said Dr. Xavier Cheng, strategic partnerships officer at Toronto Rehabilitation Institute. "The key issue here is we want a homogenous population of truck drivers. We don't want individual volunteers coming up because they feel like they have sleep apnea because they will bias the study, and we also don't want truck drivers volunteering who know they don't have sleep apnea coming up because they too will bias the study. Essentially we would like to test a whole fleet of truck drivers."

Cheng added that the way drivers will be tested for the study won't be in a sleep laboratory overnight. Instead, drivers will use a device they can take with them at home or on the road.

"With the nature of the device we can test the whole fleet at once," he said. "There will be no down time for the truck drivers. It's a very convenient process."

"We want to assure drivers that the study really is in their interest," added Fernie. "Because if they do have sleep apnea, it's a good idea to know it and to treat it."

There is no firm date yet on when the study is to officially begin because it is still in the fundraising stage, but the institute hopes it can kick off in the fall.

"We've now raised \$800,000 of the \$1.2 million we need to run the study," said Fernie. "And now that we've raised this much we are confidently going ahead and planning to start the study, if possible, in September." Fleets interested in joining the study should contact Dr. Xavier Cheng at xinran.cheng@uhn.ca for more information. You can also follow @Bresotec on Twitter to learn more. ●

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Over the Road

AL GOODHALL



Automation has its limits

Is automation levelling the playing field between drivers when it comes to performance? The notion that advanced engines and automated drivetrains can nullify a driver's lack of experience or poor driving habits seems to be gaining some traction in safety and operations departments.

My experience shows that this simply is not true. Sure, you will bump up the average mileage when switching from a stick to an automated transmission, but when you compare a driver's performance to the fleet average on equipment with identical specifications, you will still have drivers performing well above or be-

low that average and at every point in between.

This speaks directly to the level of skill and experience within the driver pool as well as the amount of time and money that is being invested in educating and training drivers.

Has the adoption of automated transmissions and other in-cab technologies affected how drivers are valued? I think it has, and not for the better. There is no doubt that technology is shifting standards and expectations within the trucking industry, but my fear is that we are moving towards an increasing dependence on monitoring a driver's performance rather than enhancing it. The latest technology should not cage a driver's ambition

and cap their performance, it should help them tap into their full potential and enhance their productivity.

Let's take the truck with an automated transmission, limit its speed via the onboard software, and then add two cameras, one facing forward and one facing the driver. Let's not forget the truck is equipped with satellite tracking and an electronic log.

At this point, if you are an experienced driver, ask yourself a few questions: How many hours of training time have I received on this piece of equipment? Have I received training instilling me with confidence that my performance and safety will be enhanced? All of my actions are now being monitored, when and how is that

information to be used? Do I trust my employer? Have any concerns over privacy been addressed? What is my employer's goal in adopting this technology?

I've been an advocate of adopting new technology, but not at any cost. There are some real advantages and disadvantages to the truck I've described above.

Automated transmissions are a real boon to the driver. They're far more fuel-efficient (in the summer months I consistently post between 8 and 9.5 US mpg) and as far as improving driver safety goes, they are simply excellent. The ability to avoid hazards is greatly enhanced when all you have to do is steer and brake while the transmission rapidly downshifts for you while applying the engine brake at the same time. Add disc brakes along with stability control and the reduction in stopping distance combined with rollover prevention is impressive.

Speed limiters have resulted in a lack of training when it comes to defensive driving and improving fuel efficiency. This is ironic, since most companies instituted the use of speed limiters to save money. The attitude seems to be that since we have speed limiters installed, the fuel efficiency factor is being fulfilled. But what's happening is that inexperienced and poorly trained drivers are simply running at the governed speed in every imaginable situation.

The result is packs of trucks running down the road at the same speed jockeying for position. So I'm not at all surprised at the number of multi-vehicle truck accidents that have occurred over the past couple of winters throughout North America as a result.

I can understand in today's litigious society the need for trucks to be equipped with forward-facing cameras, but that's where I draw the line. Driver-facing cameras don't do anything to prevent fatigue. Driver fatigue stems from many factors and that is a topic that deserves its own column. I've been privy to discussions between people that feel driver-facing cameras are the only way to clamp down on cell phone use and distracted driving. I disagree with this position and feel it is a cop-out on taking the time to build strong trust-based relationships between drivers and management.

That brings me back to my opening statement about how drivers are valued and their relationship between the safety/human resource/training department. Drivers on a whole are feeling as though they are operating under a microscope these days. This may not be the intention of a company's management team but it is often the perception that drivers operate under. This needs to change. We need more bottom-up involvement across our industry. There needs to be a far greater focus on how the latest technological tools at a driver's disposal can enhance the driving experience rather than be seen as a burden. This is the challenge safety and HR departments face in the immediate future if they hope to resolve issues of recruitment, retention, and productivity. Most drivers I have talked to are all in. All we need is an invitation. ●

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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.

Ask the
Expert

MATT GRAVELINE



Trucking will always be a competitive industry. The difference between a profit and loss is often dictated by the pennies shaved from a cost per kilometre. The final figure on a quote can mean the difference between securing freight for a backhaul and moving an empty trailer.

It's why fleet managers focus so much of their time on cost controls.

But there is always a danger that cuts will carve too deep. Hasty decisions to slash rates often sacrifice the margins needed to make future investments, secure profits, or even cover ongoing operational demands.

Delayed investments can be equally damaging.

The road-weary trucks that do not carry monthly payments, for example, might be responsible for rising maintenance demands and unplanned downtime. They may burn more fuel than their newer counterparts, or have been over-spec'd to meet the needs of customers who no longer exist. The money not invested in something as simple as a bunk heater? That can lead to increased idling and higher fuel bills.

The aging equipment can play a role in recruiting and retention efforts as well. Every driver wants to take pride in their ride.

Some of the most damaging cost controls of all are made on the backs of drivers. Lower per-kilometre or hourly rates offer short-term savings but usually encourage the best employees to explore other career opportunities. Fleets that are able to find new candidates despite this fact are often blind to the underlying costs of high turnover.

There is no escaping the fact that new drivers need to be recruited, evaluated and prepared for the job. Each step carries a cost. Revenue opportunities can certainly be lost if a truck needs to be parked against a fence until the recruiting process is completed. Even existing customers may begin to look for another carrier if they grow tired of the ever-changing personnel and the learning curves that come with them. Fleet managers who rush to fill an empty driver's seat have also been known to sacrifice traditional hiring criteria. This leads to a higher risk of everything from customer complaints to collisions.

The damaging cost controls are not always limited to pay packages alone. The managers who see benefits plans and wellness programs as nothing more than a cost may overlook the underlying values. These are the types of initiatives which show existing employees that they are seen as more than a number, and help them to return to work more quickly after an illness or injury.

The most effective programs also evolve to reflect the fleet's demographic makeup. Drivers with young families, for example, might be drawn to the promise of life insurance and dental coverage, while older drivers might prize enhanced drug plans to cover maintenance medications. Wellness programs can help to control medical costs and enhance a sense of teamwork at the same time.

Cost cuts are not always the answer

Investments like these are becoming more important with every passing year. We know the challenge of recruiting and retaining drivers is going to get worse.

The Conference Board of Canada reports that for-hire truck fleets will need as many as 33,000 new truck drivers as early as 2020.

To compound matters, fleets are facing new competition for the available labour pool.

Other industries are facing labour shortages of their own, and will do everything they can to recruit people who might otherwise have been sitting in a driver's seat.

Given the need for ongoing investments, it's important to think twice

before slashing rates or surcharges in the race for business.

Surcharges, for example, help fleets to buffer themselves from factors beyond their control, such as a sudden jump in fuel prices or unexpected delays.

It may be reasonable to include two hours of loading time in a quote, but someone will need to pay for additional delays at a loading dock.

I'm not naïve. I know that customers are not going to accept higher costs without question. But rates can be justified by describing the benefits customers will enjoy.

A commitment to using newer equipment can translate into promises of increased reliability. Invest-

ments in telematics might ensure tighter controls on reefer temperatures and fewer freight losses. The promise of paying drivers competitive wages and additional benefits reinforce a commitment to safety and customer service. That means fewer delays at roadside scales, and less damaged freight.

Reasonable customers will recognize valuable investments when they see them.

Let your competitors try to compete by slashing rates. ●

This month's expert is Matt Graveline, risk services specialist with Northbridge Insurance. Matt has more than 20 years' experience in the trucking industry as both a long haul driver and an owner/operator. 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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Small Fleet, Big Attitude

BILL CAMERON



Company drivers vs owner/operators

Many large carriers offer positions for both owner/operators and company drivers. Any method of getting a moving truck hooked to a trailer is generally utilized. Smaller companies, for some reason, usually stick with one or the other. If they hire both owner/operators and company drivers, they usually have a solid preference one way or the other, as can be seen by the vehicle numbers. Since I don't have a nickel invested in your company, I'm not trying to change your business model.

This column is meant to present pros and cons of each choice.

For the record, our own company's

original business plan didn't include company-owned power units and drivers. Most of the times we've strayed from this plan, I've been generally disappointed with the results. If you knew the kind of impatient perfectionist I am, you'd see why I lean towards owner/operators. Also, company drivers willing to do flat-bed work seem to be nearly non-existent.

It's much easier to grow a company with owner/operators. Every expansion requires operating capital, and another trailer. With owner/operators, your outlay is much less, because you didn't need to also buy another truck. The flip side to this is your share of the revenue is smaller. An owner is usually fussier about vehicle appearance and maintenance (although I've seen exceptions to this rule),

than a company driver. Appearance and obvious pride of ownership is a visible trait, one that improves the image of your own company. As the driver pool gets shallower, we've seen the work ethic of anyone in any industry to be decreasing.

An owner/operator often provides a more solid and predictable work pattern. This may either be from years of business experience, or the fact that an owner/op may often be older than a typically available company driver. As they have a financial investment at stake, they're usually more apt to connect sensible, reliable work with financial success.

They may also have a little better concept of time management, again, from seeing the financial benefit. If the owner/operator hasn't properly learned fuel

economy skills, it comes out of his pocket, not yours. Some of the downfalls to owner/operators are that some will get a little power hungry, and may think they can refuse certain loads, since they also have money invested.

This attitude doesn't fit with a company that has limited equipment. We've also had a recurring issue with long-time owner/operators buying impractical trucks, because after years in the business, they rightly feel that they deserve a nice ride. But a big bunk, big engine, and a lot of accessories make for an often unworkable TARE weight.

We sometimes haul freight that pays by volume, so this is just a clear financial loss for everybody. If an owner/operator quits, and can't be immediately replaced - which is usually the case - your loss, besides the revenue, is just a parked trailer, a possible monthly outlay of \$700-1,000.

With company-owned trucks, more of the revenue stays with you, although your financial investment was higher. If you're a former owner/operator that's still driving, you have obvious pride in your equipment. Unnecessary damage can be infuriating. Your standards for interior cleanliness may be ignored. (My pet peeve was a previously immaculate interior reeking of smoke).

Some company owners prefer running their trucks, because if a driver leaves, after the usual due diligence, you can send the truck right back out. Unlike hiring a new owner/operator, a safety check, permits, licensing, etc., is already in place. On the other hand, how easy is it to find another good, qualified, safe driver? A parked truck could exceed \$3,000 in payments and insurance, a complete out-of-pocket loss.

You have more control over company trucks. Paint colour, anti-idling systems, fuelling locations, are largely your decisions. A hired driver is less apt to attempt to refuse a dispatched load. Personal interpretations of labour laws may empower some drivers in such a way that they may not be as productive or disciplined in time management, translating to less revenue. I've seen it require five company trucks to produce the same work as four good owner/operators. Key word: 'good.' We've often found that no matter what type of equipment you own, it seems every driver you interview wants something else. If your equipment is clean, well equipped and well maintained, with competitive remuneration, this can be terribly frustrating. Company drivers may often need to have routing specified. We've seen some drive extra mileage just to use roads they prefer, or strictly interstate routing.

This consumes extra fuel, which you're paying for, and often causes unjustified hard feelings if the driver's paid mileage is drastically different than the odometer. They rarely remember that they caused this issue.

Owner/operators are often guilty of the same offence; but in that case it doesn't cost you anything except trailer wear and tear. Company trucks, obviously, rigidly adhere to your own maintenance expectations. Unless your owner/operators are as diligent as you are, this situation can cause strife, especially when their actions, or inactions, sully your safety record or reputation.

I've admitted where my preference on this issue lies, but it's an apples to oranges comparison. Do you prefer red or orange? 🍅

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Bill Cameron and his wife Nancy own and operate Parks Transportation, a flatdeck trucking company. Bill can be reached at williamcameron.bc@gmail.com.

You say tomato I say tomahto

MARK LEE



Dealing with the unexpected

My trials and tribulations as an owner/operator have continued. When I took my truck to the dealer for its annual service and general check-up, an oil leak was discovered that involved removing the transmission and a lot of general messing around.

The result was that I lost my truck for over a week.

Two weekends were lost and that impacted my revenue dramatically as I generally leave on a Sunday afternoon, so I lost another trip. But that's trucking.

I got my truck back and to be honest I was not impressed with the condition that it was in. In order to get to the rear of the engine the doghouse had to be removed from the inside of the cab. In the process of doing this, some of my stuff had to be removed.

Had I known this was part of the process I would've removed it myself, but I never knew so I never did. Whoever did move my stuff obviously wasn't too happy about having to do it either, as some damage occurred. I pointed this out to the service representative and he took pictures and said all the right things to try and keep me from going over the cam.

The best was yet to come though. After returning home with my bobtail I sent an availability message in to the office and they dispatched me on a load the next day.

When pulling away I noticed a slight vibration, which continued to get worse as the day went on. It was more noticeable when in eighth gear as that's the point when the truck starts getting down the road. I inspected everything obvious and could find nothing loose, so I called the dealer.

They said to bring it back in and they would take a look, so I set off on my way again.

At highway speed it was fine, but as soon as I stopped and started off again the vibration came, so much so that it became a shake and there was no way I was going to continue like this. So I pulled into a truck stop and put on my coveralls.

Now I'm not the most streamlined chap, so sliding under the truck is not something I do for fun, but there was something wrong in my driveline and I needed to figure out what before I drove another mile.

It wasn't long before I discovered my problem. The hanger bearing was about to come away from its mounting on the cross-member.

I called the dealer and told them the problem and they referred me to the call-out service, so I called them. The only way to deal with the problem was to send out a tow truck and bring my truck to the nearest dealership, they told me.

Oh well, if that's what it takes, then it is what it is...except they wanted to know how I was going to pay. I told them I wasn't paying a cent - it was down to the incompetence of the dealer and it was on them.

They disagreed as there was no indication on the job order that the hanger bearing had been removed. However they did say that if it was

proven that it was due to their mistake, I would be fully reimbursed for any expenses.

Now that's all fine and dandy, but it wasn't what I had planned, as you can imagine. I also had the inconvenience of a hot load that needed delivering and had to call in to dispatch for them to send out another truck to grab my trailer and take it to the customer. This was my priority, so once I did that I had time to ponder the situation. Did I really need towing for what was a simple nut-tightening exercise?

My thoughts were, no I didn't. All I needed was another pair of bolts to replace the ones that had worked loose. Luckily there was a garage on site, the guy inside gave me exactly

what I needed and with the help of a ratchet strap to hold the very heavy driveshaft in place, I replaced the bolts. I must confess I didn't think of the ratchet strap method.

I had run out of curse words and retired to my cab after unsuccessfully trying to hold the driveshaft up with my raised knee and putting the bolts through the holes whilst lying under the truck.

Fortunately a friend phoned me and came up with the ratchet strap idea. It then took me all of five minutes to get back on the road.

I called the shop manager at my carrier and explained what had happened and what I had done to remedy the problem and he said it would be

okay to run back home. The first leg would be bobtail anyway as my trailer had been picked up by another truck. And that is what I did. I ran it straight back to the dealer and handed the truck over to them to put right. I have to say the manner in which they dealt with my issue was very much to my satisfaction.

The technician that neglected to tighten the bolts, also happened to be the one that messed up my cab and he was disciplined.

I am led to believe that he no longer works at the dealership as they take this kind of thing very seriously and to be honest I was very lucky; the consequences of a driveshaft coming apart and digging into the road could be deadly. ●

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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Drivers come together to discuss cab-style cookin'

By Sonia Straface

LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

The benefits of cooking meals in your own cab are endless. You can save money. It's easier to eat healthier and in turn, lose weight. And with more practice, you can improve your cooking skills without even knowing it.

That was the message given to attendees of the Cooking in the Cab Summit that took place at the Mid-America Trucking Show in Louisville, Ky. earlier this year.

The Summit was fronted by two Freightliner Team Run Smart drivers, Tom Kyrk and Linda Caffee, who are passionate about cooking all their meals in their cabs.

"The idea behind it was partly in support of the cookbook that Linda and I had done in conjunction with Team Run Smart and Rolling Strong," explained Kyrk.

"But how we kind of came up with the idea was, we realized that there's all these different cooking groups out there on Facebook and all these different resources but there's not a lot of communication between them. So we wanted to try to work together to try and bring some community and cohesion among all the various groups. So we came up with the idea of a summit. Just basically to exchange ideas, resources, Web sites, as well as tips and tricks."

Kyrk said there were between 25-50 attendees at the summit and that it was informative.

Different aspects of cooking at every level were discussed and people who attended the session got to learn different ways to cook their meals.

One man brought in a sample of his fermented vegetables for all to try, while another woman explained how she can cook a full meal in less than five minutes with her pressure cooker.

"I think everyone who tasted the fermented veggies last night liked them," Kyrk said in an interview at the show. "There wasn't a complaint about them. We're always learning new ways to cook in the truck and that's most exciting part for us. We don't pretend to know everything... and that's what last night was about."

Caffee said she and her husband, who have driven team for 10 years as owner/operators leased to Landstar,



Tom Kyrk (far left) and Linda Caffee (right) are proponents of cooking healthy meals in the cab and came together at MATS to share some tips.

began cooking in the cab after they realized how expensive eating out was.

"For both of us to eat out every meal, it cost us \$25 a meal," she said. "Unless we ate fast food, which is cheaper but a lot less healthy. So eating out came out to \$75 a day and that's really expensive."

Caffee and her husband, Bob also have special nutritional requirements, which make it harder for them to eat at truck stops and in restaurants.

"Bob and I are both gluten-free so

pot. For a solo driver crockpots are great, because while they're driving their food is cooking. But what happens for us, is while our food is cooking, one of us is trying to sleep and it's distracting to have strong smelling food in the cab."

Caffee said she even uses the rice cooker to wash her utensils at the end of her meals.

"It's very convenient for me," she said. "And it's not expensive. You can buy a rice cooker at Walmart for \$30."

Kyrk, who has been driving profes-

"For both of us to eat out every meal, it cost us \$25 a meal. Unless we ate fast food, which is cheaper but a lot less healthy."

Linda Caffee, owner/operator, Landstar

it creates a little bit more of a challenge," she said, adding her favourite cooking appliance is her rice cooker.

"I found I can cook a full meal in 30 minutes with my rice cooker," she said. "I can do a meat and a steam at one time. My deal with team driving is, I don't want to smell really strong food cooking while I'm trying to sleep and that's why I didn't like the crock-

sionally for almost a decade, began cooking in his cab as a way for him to shed the 50 lbs he had gained when he first began driving professionally.

"I've always had some interest in cooking since I was young but when I started driving I weighed what I do now - 250 lbs - and then I got up to 300 lbs and I was having a lot of trouble losing the weight and basi-



Small, inexpensive cooking tools such as rice cookers can give drivers more options when preparing meals inside their truck.

cally I started cooking actively in the truck," he said. "And my weight starting dropping off fairly quickly, and I started feeling a lot better and saving money, which is always good."

Kyrk said he uses a variety of different cooking equipment to make his meals, though he swears a kitchen doesn't have to be a pricey ordeal.

"You don't have to have a lot of money to have a kitchen in a truck," he said. "The most expensive thing to buy would probably be a refrigerator or a cooler. Or if you don't have an inverter, you could get a 12-volt lunchbox. So, if you want to cook in the truck, you can do it. And that's really what we're trying to do - show people that it can be done and it doesn't have to be expensive."

The e-cookbook that Kyrk and Linda compiled, titled *The Rolling Kitchen Cookbook*, focuses on healthy meals that can be cooked exclusively in a truck. It is for cooks and chefs of all calibers, added Kyrk, even those who believe cooking is opening a can of vegetables and dumping them in a pot.

"The ultimate goal is to show people and drivers that you can eat healthy in the truck and save money," Caffee said. "There's all these different options to get healthier in your truck from opening a can, to choosing a cheese and meat wrap at the grocery store, to cooking full gourmet meals in the cab. And that's the message we want to give to people."

Kyrk said he expects to host a similar Summit at the Great American Truck Show. You can download the e-cookbook at www.atbsshow.com/cookbook and visit Kyrk's blog at www.roadtestedliving.com.



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Driving the International PayStar with UltraShift Plus MXP

How heavy is too heavy for automated manual transmissions? According to Eaton, there's no such thing.

By James Menzies

AJAX, ONTARIO

"That was Grumpy," Frank Naccarato said as he closed his flip phone. "The driver you're going out with today."

"You call him Grumpy?" I asked. "He's just grumpy today." Oh, good. Naccarato is the fleet manager of Ajax, Ont.-based C&G Haulage, which runs about 15 company trucks and enlists the help of some 35 brokers. He had agreed to



Wayne Gray, the everyday driver of this PayStar with C&G, dumps a load of gravel at a cement plant north of Toronto.

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let me ride along in – and potentially drive – one of the company's newest additions, an International PayStar with 500-hp Cummins engine and 18-speed Eaton UltraShift Plus MXP (Multipurpose Extreme Performance) transmission.

We'd be grossing close to the provincial limit of 63,500 kgs (139,700 lbs) pulling a load of gravel from a Dufferin Concrete gravel pit near Mosport, an hour east of Toronto, to a cement plant on Woodbine Ave. north of the city.

It was a tri-axle PayStar dump truck with a pony pup in tow, but the pur-

pose of the drive was to test Eaton's claim that automation is a concept no longer limited to on-highway applications.

The UltraShift Plus MXP, initially launched in 2013, has no published gross combination weight limit.

Some Canadian heavy-haulers have pushed it beyond 200,000 lbs, according to Stephen McCallum, territory sales manager for the Greater Toronto Area, but Eaton would like to have a chat with you before you deploy it into any outrageously severe applications.

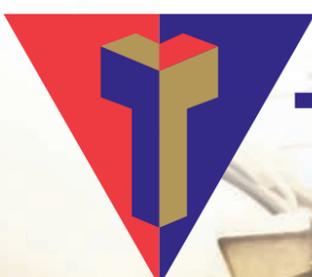
"We like to be involved in any obscure application requests, just simply because we want to make sure they have the appropriate axle ratios," McCallum told me. "We're willing to work closely with any engine manufacturer when the spec's are going together on the new truck to make sure we're matching the axle ratio to get some decent fuel economy, but at the same time we have to be aware of startability and gradeability."

At that point in our discussion the PayStar's big rad appeared in our rearview mirror, signaling my ride had arrived. I soon learned that Grumpy wasn't grumpy at all.

The moniker was simply a function of the good-natured banter that exists within a small, family-run trucking company. The everyday driver of this rig was the type any fleet would be proud to call one of their own.

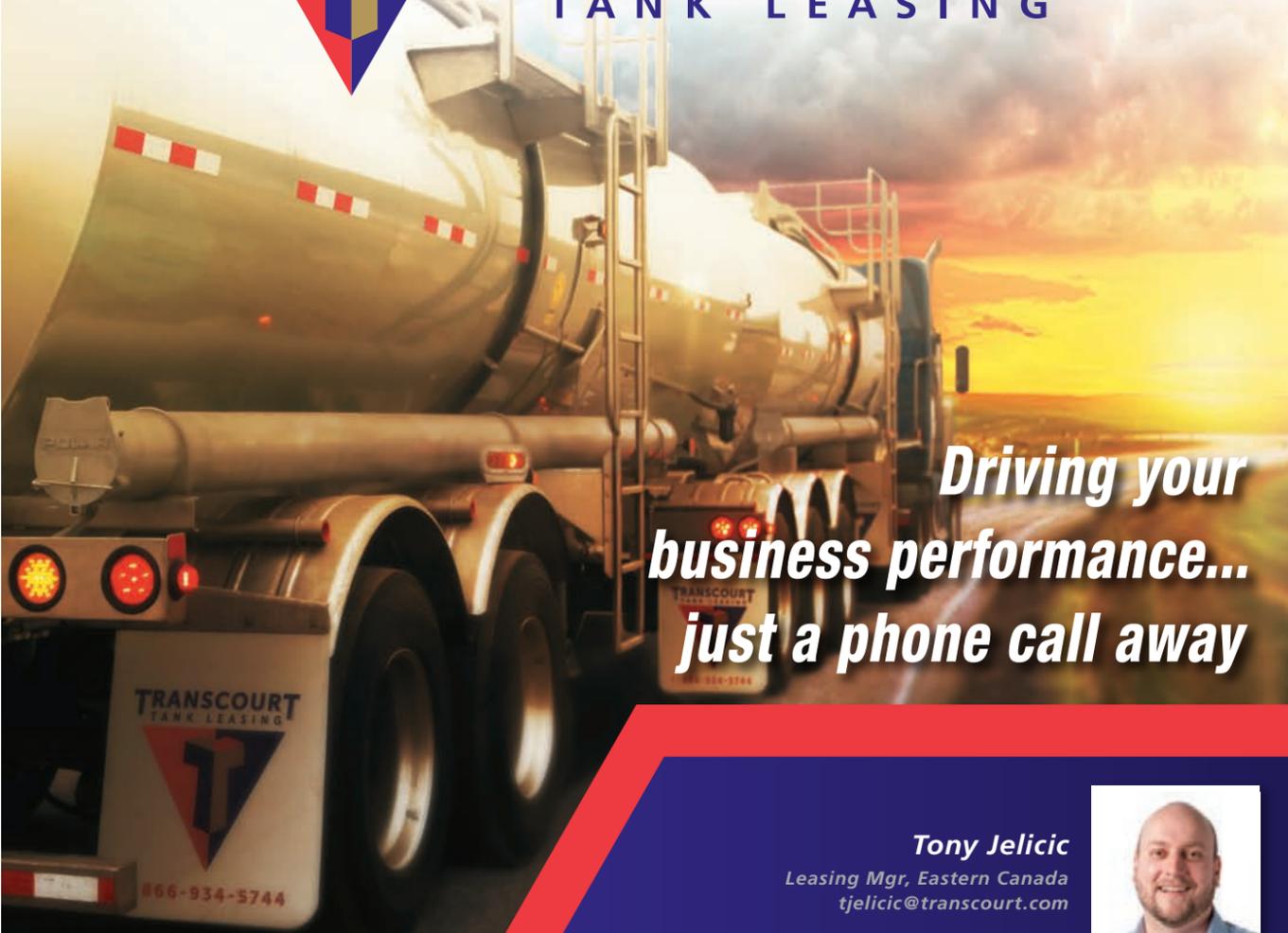
Wayne Gray started driving farm trucks at the age of 18 and since then has piled on 45 years of trucking experience. He has been with C&G Haulage since 1998 and likes it there. This day, he's already on his second run, having started, as usual, at 4 a.m. He picks up a load of gravel – usually about 44,000 kgs (96,800 lbs) of payload – at the Dufferin quarry near Mosport and delivers to the cement plant on Woodbine Ave., and then repeats, making four trips a day, easily within his allowable daily driving hours. He's paid a percentage of revenue and says it's a fair arrangement that works out well for him.

This batch of five PayStars marked a switch for C&G from Peterbilts. Naccarato said he made the change because the nearby Tallman International dealership supports its trucks well. But he also realized swapping out high-end Petes for Internationals could spark a small uprising among the drivers, so he spec'd the PayStars out luxuriously, with leather, heated seats and other upgrades.



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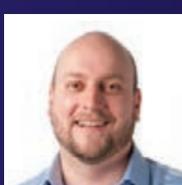
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The uprising never materialized, with most drivers taking to the PayStars almost immediately.

Gray has only one complaint about his new truck – the more rearward positioning of the door-mounted mirrors.

“Cavemen mounted mirrors like that,” he said with a gesture, the only grumpy comment he’d make during our time together.

The PayStar is enjoying a bit of resurgence. It all but went away for a few years, when Navistar severed ties with Cummins and halted development of its own 15-litre engine. This is a truck that really requires a 15-litre engine. With Cummins back in the fold, International is once again ramping up production of this proven workhorse.

As for the transmission itself, Gray went through the typical acclimatization period that occurs when a veteran driver loses his stick. After a few weeks of reaching for the shifter that’s not there, and trying to depress a clutch pedal that’s also not there, he got used to it, and in time, even came to trust it.

“Once I figured out how it works, I grew to like it,” he said. “But when you first get one of these, it’s like learning to drive all over again.”

I asked Gray if he’d choose a manual or automated manual if he were to buy his own truck for this type of work, all other things (ie. cost) being equal?

“I’d go with this,” he responded.

This PayStar was put into service in early January and had 38,086 kms on the odometer. It hasn’t been into the shop for any work since it was deployed and Gray said he likes the quiet ride and how well it holds the road.

For the first leg of the journey we were grossing 63,270 kgs (139,194 lbs), with the dump body and pup trailer filled with 3/4” (19 mm) stone.

Hauling in and out of gravel pits, getting stuck is always a concern this time of year – especially in an automated manual. This has happened once to Gray since he began driving his new truck, but he escaped from the mud fairly easily.

McCallum explained the UltraShift Plus MXP allows the operator to choose a higher starting gear when stuck in material or looking for better acceleration.

“We’ve got a default start gear and a max start gear programmed in there, for forward and reverse,” he explained. “So the driver is able to use the upshift button on the shift console to pick that higher gear and sim-

ply press down on the accelerator pedal, and as you feel the vehicle lift out of the hole, you can release it and

and clutch actuator.

While an AMT isn’t likely to attain better fuel economy than a manual

“You’ve got to have a happy driver. If they’re not happy, they’re not producing and they don’t want to come to work.”

Frank Naccarato, fleet manager, C&G Haulage

fall back in and basically rock yourself out of it by just feathering the accelerator pedal.”

The UltraShift Plus comes loaded with its complete menu of capabilities as standard, rather than as upgrades. That means this transmission also featured Hill Start Aid and a grade sensor, essential features in a heavy-haul environment.

“In this application the grade sensor is really beneficial, because it can determine shift points and it also functions the Hill Start Aid feature by identifying the grade the truck is on,” McCallum explained. “And when coming down a hill with a load, it’ll help determine the shift points as well to maximize the efficiency of the engine brake.”

Hill Start Aid will hold the truck on a grade for up to three seconds while the driver moves his or her foot from the brake to the accelerator; it’s not intended to be a holding device, something drivers should be mindful of when driving this product for the first time.

There’s still a lingering perception in the industry that automated manual transmissions are meant for the mainstream line-haul crowd and not for heavy-haul vocational applications.

However, you could make the case that heavy-haul operators have more to gain from automation.

Applications with frequent starts and stops are harder on a transmission’s sliding collars and synchronizers, which in a manual transmission are prone to wearing out over time. The UltraShift Plus shifts so precisely, always in complete synchronicity, that it protects those items from premature wear.

The base box of the UltraShift Plus is nearly identical to its manual sibling, so servicing the transmission is easy. The MXP requires the same 50-weight synthetic lubricant as an 18-speed manual as well as the same maintenance requirements, basically just periodic greasing of the clutch

you’ve got a guy who’s getting all he can get with a manual transmission, it’s probably not going to exceed what he is doing,” McCallum said. “But not every fleet has the best drivers for fuel economy, so in a fleet situation, we can equalize that average across the fleet and make everybody a good driver for fuel economy.”

Fuel economy isn’t always top of mind for heavy-haul fleets, but at C&G Haulage, it is. Naccarato told me he monitors fuel mileage daily.

The five PayStars with ISX15 and UltraShift Plus MXP are attaining nearly identical fuel mileage, Naccarato said, supporting McCallum’s

Continued on page 31



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Automated manuals can handle the heavy lifting

Continued from page 29

theory that automation can bring fuel economy parity to a fleet.

Initially, the AMTs were getting worse mileage than the manuals, but as drivers got used to them and the engine and transmission were reprogrammed for C&G's specific duty cycles, they're now pretty much on par – and the AMTs are hauling heavier payloads.

When it comes to automation, C&G is a pioneer. It used to run Autoshift's – the first-generation, three-pedal AMTs.

When Eaton was developing its first UltraShift transmissions for heavy-haul applications, it took those trucks to its Marshall, Mich. engineering centre, tore out the Autoshifts and replaced them with some of the first-ever severe-service UltraShifts. C&G put more than a million kilometres on those trucks; one was later sold to a broker and the other remains in service today.

For Naccarato, it's all about driver comfort.

"You've got to have a happy driver," he said. "If they're not happy, they're not producing and they don't want to come to work."

Even so, it did take some time for some of the drivers to warm up to the automated transmissions, he admitted.

"The drivers get used to them. They sometimes forget it has its own brain, and they have to adapt to it. It doesn't always shift at the same time they would, no, but it has its own brain – it thinks. Some of them take it as an insult. They say 'I can drive.' It's not a question of you driving, it's an easier, more relaxed day for you, you're not stressed, you're not looking for a gear going around the corner – it does all that for you."

After dropping our load at the Dufferin cement plant, it was back to the sprawling Mosport gravel pit for another load. Sixty-three thousand kilos and change this time and I managed to talk my way into the driver's seat for a spell, even though Naccarato's voice climbed several octaves when I first broached the subject of driving.

I wanted to get a feel for the UltraShift Plus MXP with a full payload on the 115's rolling hills between Orono and the 401.

The ISX15 purred, the truck held the road well, the transmission maintained top gear – there was nothing about this job that made any piece of the equation feel out of place.

Eaton has programmed this truck



C&G Haulage fleet manager Frank Naccarato (pictured) says the drivers have come to appreciate the automated manual transmissions.

with its heavy-haul shift point configuration, designed for applications from a 80,000-140,000 lb GCWR, so

it chose the right shift-point for the load, without fail. This is enabled by the grade sensor, which helps the

transmission select the perfect shift point on flat land as well as when climbing or descending a hill, keeping the engine within its peak torque range.

Driving along Hwy. 401, smoothly dropping two gears while climbing a long grade, I was reminded of the slogan for a frequently advertised bathroom cleaner: 'We work hard so you don't have to.' Seems like a pretty fitting description of the UltraShift Plus MXP as well.

If you still think AMTs should be confined to on-highway linehaul applications, your thinking is outdated. Today's automated manual transmissions have been designed specifically for this type of work and the benefits are getting more difficult to deny as the technology evolves and the highly-skilled, experienced drivers like Gray become more difficult to find. ●

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A new Cat vocational truck is on the prowl

Caterpillar has rounded out its line of vocational trucks with the new CT680

By James Menzies

TUCSON, ARIZONA

It felt counterintuitive, even ill advised, but I put my faith in the Cat guy sitting in the passenger seat and stopped the CT680 halfway up a long 18% grade topped with loose gravel.

Brad Zingre told me to transition from brake pedal to throttle and slowly depress the accelerator – *don't mash it*. I did as he instructed and the truck eased effortlessly up the grade, as though it were flat and as though there weren't 28 tonnes of boulders inside the side-dump Trail King trail-

er we were pulling.

"This engine's *stout!*" he beamed.

This demonstration, conducted at Caterpillar's sprawling 6,500-acre Tinaja Hills test centre and proving grounds south of Tucson, Az. was the grand finale in a day-long demonstration of the CT680, the newest addition to Cat's line of Class 8 vocational trucks. Cat got into the truck business in 2011 with the introduction of the sleek, set-back axle (SBA) CT660.

It followed that truck up late last year with the pug-faced CT681, a set-forward axle (SFA) no-frills truck designed to be functional, if not beautiful. The brand new CT680 rounds out the line and features the longest



A pair of Cat CT680s in the Arizona desert at Caterpillar's sprawling Tinaja Hills demonstration centre.

cab of the family, with a 124-inch BBC (bumper-to-back-of-cab) measurement, just slightly longer than the CT660 and a full 10 inches longer than the CT681.

This time, Cat is smartly offering the new truck in two exterior styling configurations – one for image-conscious customers who care about ease of repairs and another for those who are resigned to the fact their truck's going to get banged up and probably aren't too worried about it.

The CT680L is the truck you'd bring to the show'n'shine. It features a three-piece Metton hood, three-piece chrome bumper and three-piece stainless grille surround. These give the truck a distinctive look and damaged sections can be easily replaced so the truck can be kept looking good throughout its life.

The CT680LG comes with a one-piece fiberglass hood, three-piece black bumper and integrated fiberglass grille surround. It's a plain Jane CT680 but every bit as capable of getting the job done. Both can be had with dual external air cleaners, for easier serviceability in dirty environments and for that classic-styled look befitting a truck with a long, square hood. The other key difference between the two offerings is in the lighting: The L features composite halogen headlights and incandescent park/turn signals, while the LG comes with sealed-beam halogen headlights and LED park/turn lights.

Naturally, Caterpillar chose to make the sexier CT680L available for rides and drives in mid-May.

I was awfully happy to get one in Viper Red, because what could be more appropriate for a drive in the Arizona desert?

For the on-road portion of the drive we hooked on to a side-dump trailer loaded up with 28 tonnes (about 62,000 lbs) of boulders. The 'stout' engine under the hood was Cat's CT 13 rated at 475 hp and 1,700 lb.-ft. of torque. It's well known this engine is a Navistar N-13, re-programmed and re-rated by Cat for vocational applications. It's available in three power ratings: 410 hp/1,450 lb.-ft.; 430 hp/1,550 lb.-ft.; and 475 hp/1,700 lb.-ft.

Cat officials revealed at the CT680 launch that a 15-litre is coming later this year. Both the CT660 and CT680 were designed to accommodate it and Cat's CX31 automatic transmission, rated at 1,850 lb.-ft. of torque, can too.



A handhold at the bottom of the hood is one of the uniquely-Cat features on the CT680.

While they were tight-lipped about who their engine partner will be, there's really only one possibility and the bigger question would be: will it be painted red or yellow? We'll have to wait to find out, but the 15-litre engine will be a welcomed addition, especially here in Canada.

Even before climbing inside the CT680, it's clear Caterpillar engineers have had their way with this truck and where appropriate, they haven't been shy about straying from industry norms. The hood opens differently. Instead of mounting a grab handle to the front of the hood and requiring drivers to plant their foot on the bumper and heave it open, they've placed two handholds along the side, allowing for easier lifting.

The exterior grab handles are textured for a better grip when climbing into the truck, though the external air cleaners on the one I drove seemed to limit the door opening. Even so, climbing in was no problem.

The interior of the cab is where Cat really went to town with this truck and evidence of this can be seen everywhere. Round vents are said to deliver more efficient heating and cooling and on my drive in the Arizona desert, the A/C kept the cab comfortably chilled.

The gauge cluster has been carefully arranged to ensure the most important gauges are always visible through the steering wheel. This includes consolidating the speedometer and tach so that both road and engine speed can be determined with one, quick glance.

Extra wide rocker switches snap authoritatively into position, making them easier to activate with gloves on.

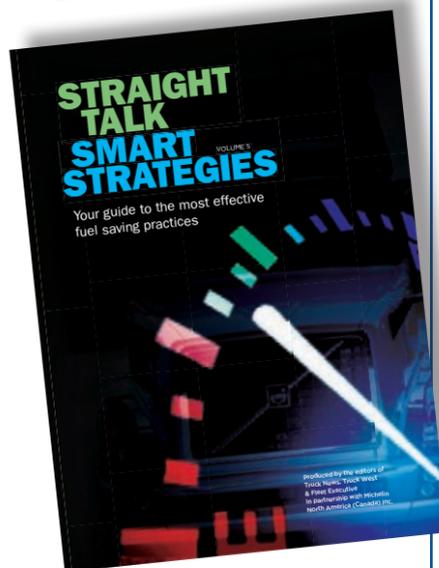
"They're nice and wide and you get

Continued on page 34

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Caterpillar says a 15L engine is coming to its trucks later this year

Continued from page 32

a nice tactile feel with those switches, so you can tell you've engaged that switch and you can keep your eyes on the road," Zingre explained.

They've also been logically placed on the centre stack, with the most frequently used of those switches located closest to the driver. And the centre stack itself is angled towards the driver, providing a cockpit feel with everything within easy reach.

The CT680 I drove featured a one-piece windshield but if you're worried about chips and cracks, a two-piece is available. A long, flattish hood extends in front of that windshield but all-around visibility isn't bad. The cowl-mounted sideview mirrors have been positioned far enough back to afford a good left-right view at intersections and also excellent visibility of the space around the truck and trailer. Those mirrors are heated and also feature an integrated turn signal.

One small detail I didn't like is that the signal light stalk was a bit of a reach from the steering wheel; you pretty much have to take your hand off the steering wheel to activate the turn signals, rather than flicking them on with one finger while keeping both hands on the wheel.

The CT680 was comfortable to drive. It seemed everything was just right in terms of driver comfort - the positioning of the elbow rests, the angle of the dead pedal, etc. The seat was comfortable and the ride was smooth.

The interior has an automotive-type feel to it, with soft-touch materials that look and feel nice but are also easy to wipe clean. The standard leather-wrapped steering wheel is just one example of this, but other examples can be seen throughout the cab. Even the flooring has extra matting to provide better insulation from ambient sound and temperatures. The CT 13 is a quiet engine and combined with the well-insulated cab, this is a nice, quiet truck to operate.

As for drivability, I really enjoyed the CX31 transmission produced



We drove this Viper Red Cat CT680 on highways near Caterpillar's Tinaja Hills demonstration center.

by Cat itself. It's a six-speed torque converter-style automatic transmission that communicates well with the CT 13 engine and provides seamless powershifting. Cat claims this transmission boasts the industry's best power-to-weight ratio.

The shift console is located fairly far back on the driver's seat, so that you have to turn your head a full 90 degrees from the road if you want to confirm what gear you're in, but there's little need to fret about gear selection with this transmission; it's on the mark, all the time.

About 50% of Cat trucks are being ordered with the CX31, but Eaton automated and manual transmissions are also available as options. The engine, with its graphite iron block, weighs up to 200 lbs less than other 13Ls on the market and coupled with the aluminum alloy cab provides a total weight savings of 400-600 lbs. That can be converted straight into revenue-generating payload.

The Jake brake on this truck was incredible - and incredibly quiet, at least from inside the well-insulated cab. The route we drove was fairly hilly and we were heavily loaded but

I seldom required the maximum engine brake setting. Off-road, it kept the truck reined in down an 11% grade, no problem.

The ride quality was also exceptional. Cat guys attribute this to the parabolic taper leaf spring suspension that's standard on this truck and now an option on the CT660.

Any lingering perceptions that this is an International truck with a Cat logo on the grille are grievously inaccurate. Yes, Navistar provided the donor chassis upon which the CT-series trucks were built but it's a true, genuine Caterpillar piece of equipment. As such, it can be serviced through Cat's network of 400 dealers in the US and Canada.

Back at Tinaja Hills is where Zingre saved the best for last - a demonstration of the CT 13's pulling power. As already mentioned, the engine easily passed this test. Zingre, who comes from a trucking family where horsepower was always king, said many customers are surprised by the power put out by this 13-litre engine. The truck I drove was rated to 120,000 lbs GCW.

However, he also acknowledged there's a time and place for 15-litre

power and that is especially true in Canada.

The new CT680 rounds out Cat's vocational truck line and gives it more complete coverage of the segment. Offering it in two exterior stylings also gives this model broader appeal to what is a diverse customer mix. Add to that a proven 15-litre engine and it seems Cat is poised to become a bigger player in the vocational truck segment. ●

The spec's:

Truck: 2016 Cat CT680L 6x4

Engine: CT 13 475 hp, 1,700 lb.-ft. torque

Transmission: CX31 automatic, first-generation controls, six-speed, includes oil level sensor

Front axle: Meritor MFS-13-143A wide track, I-beam type, 13,200-lb capacity

Rear axles: Meritor MT-40-14X-5DCR-P, single reduction, 40,000-lb capacity

Rear suspension: Hendrickson HAS-402-55, 40,000-lb capacity, 9.5" ride height ●

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Private
Matters

MIKE MILLIAN



Spring is not a time of year when we traditionally talk about snow. It's when meteorologists try to take credit for sunny weekends.

That all changed this past April, when Ontario Auditor General Bonnie Lysyk released her report on efforts to clear snow from the province's 17,000-km highway network.

Her research found that the quality of winter maintenance has been dropping for five years.

"The ministry has been successful in reducing and containing escalating winter maintenance costs, but this has been achieved at the expense of a reduction in the timeliness of ensuring

Don't seek savings at expense of safety

pavement in 2009/10. By 2013/14, they took an average of 4.7 hours to clear the way.

There was so much pressure to cut costs, many suppliers felt squeezed into reducing equipment levels. In one case a contractor lost out on a bid by \$700,000, despite the fact that it proposed to use 22 additional pieces of equipment.

The ministry is now spending another \$1.7 million a year to pay the successful bidder for 13 extra pieces of equipment.

"If the second-lowest bidder hadn't lost out on the contract, the area could have been served with significantly more equipment at a significantly lower cost," the report found.

Nobody will argue that government budgets need to be controlled, and private businesses need some flexibility in the way they fill contract requirements. But when highway safety is at stake, governments need to be careful not to sacrifice more important goals in the name of a few dollars.

In a country that can see such extremes in weather, and has the possibility of receiving winter-like driving conditions for up to six months or more some years, the regulators must ensure that the roadways are kept as clear and as safe as possible, 24 hours a day.

This is important for all road users, but even more vital for the men and women of the transportation industry. The road is their workplace, and for the

sake of a few dollars, their workplaces must not be allowed to become unsafe. If a private company were to cut an internal budget that led to unsafe work conditions, workplace health and safety regulations would hold them accountable, and no less should be expected from government regulators.

In Minister Steven Del Duca's defense, he has taken ownership of the report and has pledged to ensure that the province will work to address the issues in the report as soon as possible.

We at the PMTC are glad that the Minister has acknowledged the issues raised need addressed, and sincerely hope the issue of winter maintenance is able to be tackled properly prior to the next winter driving season. ●

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.

There was so much pressure to cut costs, many suppliers felt squeezed into reducing equipment levels.

Ontario highways are safe for motorists in the winter," the report says.

The Ontario Ministry of Transportation (MTO) has been outsourcing highway maintenance since the 1980s, but several related checks and balances have eroded along the way.

Under the existing regime, bidders have been able to decide on the number of snow plows, salters and other equipment they use, not to mention the volume of de-icing solutions and salt they apply.

Contractors took an average of 2.1 hours to clear highways down to bare

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Industry
Issues

STEVE LASKOWSKI



Carbon trading: How does trucking fit in?

There is one famous adage from Thomas Edison I recall that somewhat reflects the message I wanted to deliver in this column: "Opportunity is something that is missed by most people because it arrives dressed in overalls and looks like work," he said.

In other words, upon first glance, opportunity often presents itself as a bug, not a feature.

I'm sure that's what many of you were thinking when the province of Ontario recently announced it would establish regulations that will govern carbon emissions.

The carbon trading rules, expected to be finalized in 2016 and come into force in 2017, will no doubt be similar to those introduced in Quebec, British Columbia, California and other jurisdictions that are a part of the Western Climate Initiative.

So, what does that mean for truckers in the province of Ontario? The bad news first: There's no doubt when the rule kicks in, you'll pay more for fuel. The number being tossed around is two to three cents per litre.

Why is that the case when there's no actual carbon tax being imposed? Well, a carbon trading system imposes a similar cost on fuel makers and distributors.

Fuel production and its carbon intensity will result in a compliance tax of sorts, which will be applied to the individual companies involved in fuel manufacturing and distribution - the lower the carbon intensity of their manufacturing process and product, the lower the compliance tax.

If a fuel manufacturer or distributor hits its target, the tax is zero. If it doesn't, it will pay the tax. The bigger the compliance gap, the more they pay.

It is fully expected that fuel makers, at least in the short- to mid-term, will not be able to meet their carbon trading compliance targets, resulting in compliance fines, which of course, will be expected to be downloaded in the form of higher fuel costs for the consumer.

Understandably, that's a bitter pill to swallow for many operators, who - on top of other escalating operational, equipment and permit/fee compliance costs - already pay a sizeable portion of their fuel bill towards government taxes and frankly, have seen very little benefit in return as only a fraction of those funds have been reinvested into infrastructure over the decades. And now, we're being asked to fork over even more.

I'll save you the 'Investing in a greener environment is investing in the future' speech. While I believe it to be true in a broad sense, who knows whether this specific program will actually pay such dividends in the real world?

That being said, is there any possible good news - a silver linings opportunity dressed in sullied overalls? Perhaps.

To be clear, individual trucking companies will not be asked to comply with carbon targets. Enforcing individual targets on trucking companies would be an administrative nightmare; something no jurisdiction has ever attempted. Nor does the Ontario Trucking Association (OTA) expect the province of Ontario to be the first canary in the

coalmine - if you'll forgive the carbon-laden metaphor.

There could be, however, legitimate opportunities for individual trucking firms to build a market advantage under a provincial carbon trading system. All trucking fleets are constantly examining ways to reduce their fuel usage. That has a huge impact on the bottom line. Secondarily, it also reduces their carbon footprint. The less fuel burned, the less carbon emitted. It's that simple.

So, what if the provincial government were to create a voluntary system where carriers could employ a government-approved software system that captured and audited your fuel savings over a pre-determined base year and then measured and compared how

many tonnes of carbon was saved each operating year thereafter? Your company could then exchange these annual carbon savings into annual carbon credits.

The non-compliant energy companies and others regulated by the carbon policy would be very interested in purchasing these credits from trucking companies who've amassed them via quantifiable carbon-cutting practices and technologies.

The companies can use the purchased credits to offset their inability to hit the annual carbon compliance targets. It's a simple matter of economics; purchasing the credits you make available is cheaper for these firms than paying the compliance penalties.

It's true that over time, compliance credits probably won't continue to make sense for larger, sophisticated manufacturers as they discover new ways to make less carbon-intensive products, which is the ultimate policy objective of a carbon trading system.

But, in the short- to medium-term at least, there's no reason why trucking companies who are aggressive in reducing their fuel usage shouldn't benefit from this system, offsetting their higher fuel bills.

OTA will be exploring these possibilities with the government over the coming months and will report back to the industry. In the meantime, brush off those overalls. 

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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Tax
Talk

SCOTT TAYLOR



Deducting expenses for cars and pickups

Last month I gave a short presentation at a carrier's driver meeting. At the end, I always encourage attendees to ask any questions they have about what "other guys" are doing or talking about. To be honest, I learn a lot this way.

Of all the topics we covered, we spent the most time talking about service vehicles – a car or truck used for business – and specifically the expenses you can deduct.

One of the great myths of being self-employed is that if you lease a service vehicle you can deduct 100% of the payment and related expenses as business. Others will say that the type of vehicle – ie., pickup truck vs. a car – affects the

amount or percentage of your allowable deduction.

And there's always one guy who insists he can fully write off his new F-150 as long as he runs the odd business errand.

None of it's true.

In fact, a tax auditor doesn't care what type of vehicle you have or how you finance it. He only wants to see that your vehicle-related expenses were incurred to earn business income and that you have documents to support your claims.

Deductible expenses

CRA is clear about the type of vehicle expenses you can deduct. These include: licence and registration fees; fuel

costs; insurance; interest on money borrowed to buy the vehicle; maintenance and repairs; and your lease payment or capital cost allowance (CCA or depreciation).

If your vehicle is categorized as a "passenger vehicle," your claim for your financing expense (ie., lease payments or CCA and interest costs) has limits. Lease payments can't exceed \$800 per month. If you purchased the vehicle, the cost can't be more than \$30,000.

If it costs more, you can only add \$30,000 plus the appropriate taxes (PST, GST, or HST) onto your CCA schedule. The other cost of purchasing – interest on your loan – is limited to \$10 per day. So if you own the vehicle

for the entire year, \$3,650 is the maximum claim. If you own it for less, you must prorate the interest expense claim for the appropriate number of days.

Keeping records

To support your vehicle expense claim, you must keep a record showing the total kilometres you drive in a year (ie. your odometer readings on Jan. 1 and Dec. 31). Then, each time you use the vehicle for business, list the date, destination, purpose, and the number of ki-

What's not valid (to claim) is the drive from home to your truck. This is considered commuting – a personal trip.

lometres you drive.

You need these figures in order to determine the percentage of business use to be applied against your overall vehicle expenses (divide your business-use kilometres by your total kilometres for the year, giving you anywhere from 1% to 100%). If you can't produce a journal or log detailing the business use of the vehicle and validating that percentage figure, CRA can deny or reduce your claim.

If you use more than one vehicle for your business, keep a separate record that shows the total and business kilometres you drive in each. Calculate and deduct the cost to run and maintain each vehicle separately based on its own business use.

Is it business?

There are all kinds of business reasons to use your vehicle, from a revenue-producing courier delivery to a trip that involves banking, a run to the parts store, or a meeting with your carrier. What's not valid is the drive from home to your truck. This is considered commuting – a personal trip.

I've argued this with CRA numerous times, using the logic that since the business office is in the home, then driving from the "office" to a work site is business travel.

I don't think I'm wrong but I haven't found an auditor yet who has bought the argument.

Check the facts

When it comes to service vehicle expenses, don't be steered into the ditch by what you hear at the truck stop or in the driver's lounge. Talk to an accountant or someone qualified to give tax advice.

CRA's guide, *T4002 Business and Professional Income*, is a great reference on motor vehicle expenses (look for it online at www.cra-arc.gc.ca). Note how many times it mentions supporting claims with a detailed record.

If you use a vehicle for business and personal use, it's vital that you know what's deductible and how to keep valid records because I doubt there's ever been a small business audit that did not review these expenses. ●

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Rajdeep Singh is a Recruiter with Challenger Motor Freight Inc. He has eight years of driver recruiting, and safety & compliance experience in the transportation industry. His friendly nature and advanced proficiency in English, Hindi & Punjabi makes him easily approachable and he has been working closely with many communities throughout his professional career. His experience within the industry has allowed him to understand the needs and concerns that drivers face. Raj is always willing to go that extra mile in making sure that both the driver and the company is a good match for each other. Raj is very excited to have joined Challenger Motor Freight Inc. and is currently looking to hire qualified OTR drivers and owner operators. Challenger is one of Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies and is welcoming all transportation personnel to join their amazing team. You can find out more about the new driving opportunities by contacting Raj at 416-735-4386 or rajdeeps@challenger.com. You can also apply online at www.challenger.com

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Back behind the wheel

DR. CHRIS SINGH



Seeing as spring has sprung, many of us are heading outdoors to enjoy the warmth and sunshine. Whether you are hiking, camping or simply gardening in your backyard, it is important to be aware of the possible presence of poison ivy.

The rash associated with poison ivy is due to an individual's sensitivity to an oily resin called urushiol, which is found on the leaves, roots and stems of the poison ivy plant.

Not everyone who comes in contact with the plant will develop a rash. In fact, it is estimated that approximately 50% of people will experience a skin reaction to poison ivy.

In most cases, the rash will develop between 12 to 48 hours after exposure to the plant and typically lasts a few weeks. The symptoms of the rash usually include redness, itching, swelling and eventually blisters on the skin. The severity of the rash depends on how much urushiol gets transferred to the skin.

Urushiol is a sticky substance which easily attaches itself to skin, clothing, tools or pets. Thus, you can also come in contact with urushiol by touching a contaminated object. Garden tools and shoes are two very common items that transfer urushiol to human skin. It is also possible to irritate your respiratory system by inhaling the smoke from burning poison ivy plants.

The good news is that a poison ivy rash is not contagious. It is a common misconception that the fluid in the blisters contains urushiol and therefore can spread the rash to other individuals. The reality is that you can not contract a poison ivy rash from another person unless you come in contact with the urushiol that is still on that person.

Obviously, individuals with outdoor occupations such as farmers, landscapers, foresters and construction workers are at higher risk for exposure

Got an itch? Could be poison ivy rash

to poison ivy.

In most cases, medical treatment is not necessary for a poison ivy rash. However, it is important to seek medical attention if the rash persists more than three weeks or you suspect the skin has become infected.

In severe cases, your doctor may prescribe oral corticosteroids to help with the skin inflammation.

In general, the most annoying symptom associated with poison ivy rash is the severe itching. Over-the-counter corticosteroid creams and calamine lotion may help relieve this. Oral antihistamines such as Benadryl may also relieve some of the symptoms of a poison ivy rash. Some people find that soaking in a cool bath con-

taining oatmeal-based products helps to ease the skin irritation.

Although it is impossible to completely prevent contact with poison ivy, there are a few prevention measures to keep in mind.

Firstly, research and learn how to identify poison ivy plants. Also, when hiking or camping, try to stay on marked or clear paths. Try to prevent pets from running through wooded areas, as they can easily contaminate themselves and in turn, spread the urushiol to others.

If you suspect that you have come in contact with poison ivy, gently wash your skin with soap within 10 minutes of exposure. Often, this will significantly reduce the severity of the rash.

However, after an hour or so, the urushiol will have penetrated the skin.

In addition, protecting your skin by wearing long pants and shoes will significantly reduce your risk. Be sure to thoroughly wash your clothing in a washing machine using detergent if you think you may have come in contact with poison ivy.

It is important to note that urushiol can remain potent for a few years. Thus, it can still cause a skin reaction years after the initial contamination if not removed at that time.

As you can see, a poison ivy rash is not a serious medical condition. However, it can cause very uncomfortable symptoms. Keep in mind these simple tips and you will be well on your way to enjoying an itch-free summer.

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.

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KAREN BOWEN



Be a smartmouth to avoid oral cancer

More than 50,000 people in North America will be diagnosed with oral/pharyngeal cancer this year, leading to roughly 9,000 deaths. Since oral (mouth) cancer is usually discovered in a late stage, about 57% of people with oral cancer will only survive five years.

Mouth cancer includes cancer of the lips, tongue, gums, inside of the cheeks, salivary glands, and/or the roof or floor of the mouth. Although it's not clear what causes cancer cell mutations, doctors report the following risk factors: using tobacco products, such as cigarettes, pipes, cigars, snuff, and chewing tobacco; using alcohol excessively (especially with tobacco); exposing your lips to sun without sunscreen; and contracting the sexually transmitted virus HPV (human papillomavirus).

Most oral cancers (about 90%) are squamous cell carcinomas – cancers that develop in the flat, thin, squamous cells that line the inside of your mouth and lips. Mouth cancer is particularly dangerous because it is often missed in its early stages, giving the cancer time to grow and metastasize to other locations, undetected. For this reason, patients with mouth cancer have a high risk of developing a secondary cancer within 10 years.

Since early detection is vital, be alert for these signs and symptoms: loose teeth; tongue pain; a mouth sore that won't heal; a lump or thickening of the skin and/or lining of your mouth; a white or reddish patch inside your mouth; a change in how dentures fit; pain or stiffness in your jaw; difficulty or pain when chewing and/or swallowing; a sore throat; and/or a feeling that something is caught in your throat.

Although these signs and symptoms may simply indicate an infection, if they last longer than two weeks, visit your dentist or doctor. Get checked to see if your lips and mouth have any irritated areas, sores or unusual patches of colour.

During your check-up, any suspicious cells will be scraped or incised for a biopsy. If cancerous, your doctor will determine the stage using staging tests. Staging tests may include using a scope (endoscopy) to inspect your throat and see if cancer has spread beyond your mouth. Imaging tests may also be recommended, including: X-rays, magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), computerized tomography (CT) scans, and positron emission tomography (PET) scans.

Based on test results, Roman numerals I through IV will be used to indicate the stage of cancer. Stage I (a lower stage) indicates a smaller cancer which is confined to one area. A higher stage, such as stage IV, indicates a larger tumor and/or that the cancer has spread to other areas of the head, neck, or even other areas of your body.

An appropriate treatment depends on the location and stage of the cancer, and your overall health and personal preferences.

Some treatment options may include surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy and targeted drug therapy. Your treatment may be just one of these, or a combination. Be sure to discuss the options with your doctor.

If surgery is required, a surgeon may remove the tumour and a small portion of healthy skin surrounding the tumour. Small tumors can be removed with minor surgery.

However, larger tumors may require a more extensive procedure, such as the removal of a portion of your tongue or jawbone. If your cancer has spread to the lymph nodes in your neck, they will be removed as well.

When extensive surgery is required, reconstructive surgery may be necessary to enable you to speak or eat, and/or to restore your appearance. If so, skin, muscle or bone grafts and/or dental implants may be required.

If radiation therapy is used, radiation may be enough to eliminate early-

stage cancer. For more advanced stages, radiation and chemotherapy may be combined.

Radiation side-effects include tooth decay, dry mouth, mouth sores, bleeding gums, fatigue, a stiff jaw and surface burns.

Chemotherapy, another treatment option, may be used alone or in combination with radiation. Common side-effects include: nausea, vomiting and hair loss.

Targeted drugs can also be used to treat mouth cancer. Cetuximab (Erbix) is an approved targeted therapy for treating mouth cancer.

This drug affects the cancer cell's ability to grow by changing aspects of a protein that is denser in certain

mouth cancer cells than in healthy cells.

Targeted drugs are usually used in conjunction with chemotherapy and/or radiation therapy.

If you have been diagnosed and are being treated for mouth cancer, avoid tobacco and alcohol; they reduce the effectiveness of the treatment, impede your body's ability to heal and increase your risk of developing another cancer.

If you haven't; reduce your risk of developing mouth cancer. Avoid tobacco. Drink alcohol moderately.

Eat a variety of fruits and vegetables rich in Vitamins A, C & E. Avoid sunburning your lips. Have your mouth thoroughly examined during regular dental/medical check-ups. Avoid oral cancer. Sometimes it's good to be a smartmouth.

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

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Nearly 85,000 miles walked by Healthy Fleet Challenge participants in May

By **Sonia Straface**

TORONTO, ONTARIO

It's been five long months, but it's finally over.

The longest ever Healthy Fleet Challenge came to an end May 31 at 11:59 p.m. The competition began back on Jan. 1 in hopes of encouraging fleets and trucking companies across the US and Canada to become more active. For the challenge, all participants had to wear a Fitbit (wearable device) or use the MOVES application on their smartphone to track their daily activity.

January, March and May were competition months where participants had to step as much as they could to earn the top spot on the online leaderboard. February and April were "break months," in which competitors were told to focus on things like sleeping and eating better rather than their activity level.

Healthy Trucker says it is impressed with the commitment of fleets who stepped up to the challenge to make themselves more active.

"We are blown away by the success of all teams during this five-month challenge," said Andrea Morley, nutritionist and health coach at Healthy Trucker. "Five months is a long time to stay fully committed, but teams like Challenger and TST Solutions had no issues pushing through to maintain their spots on the leaderboard. We saw teams dropping down a few spots at times, and then climb-

ing back up the leaderboard by motivating each other within their companies. Every team and individual should be proud of what they accomplished over the last five months, as the Healthy Fleet Challenge participants have really demonstrated what both teamwork and self-improvement

"We are blown away by the success of all teams during this five-month challenge."

Andrea Morley, Healthy Trucker

are all about."

The live online leaderboard gave participants a look at where they ranked against the rest of the competition. Every month, TruckNews.com gave readers a look at who was in the Top 5.

On May 31, the final day of the competition, the online server crashed because so many participants logged in to check where they stacked up against their competition.

It was evident that participants had their eyes on the prize for the month of May, as a grand total of 169,137,485 steps were taken by all participants. That equates to almost 85,000 miles.

In first place for the month of May is **TST Solutions L.P.** The nine-person team walked an average of 18,234 steps (daily) for the month. In second is **Meyers Transport**. The 12-person team walked 15,421 steps on average every day in May. Third place

goes to **Challenger Motor Freight**. The nine-person team walked an average of 14,445 steps per day in May. In fourth is **Coastal Pacific Xpress**. The 13-person team walked an average of 13,633 steps per day in May. Not far behind and in fifth is **Dynamic Transport**. The three-person team walked

an average of 13,435 steps a day in the month of May.

Sherri Hanley of Coastal Pacific Xpress took first place on the individual side for the month of May. She walked a whopping total of 1,075,404 steps for the month. **Chris Foster** of Transport America placed second. He walked 991,275 steps for the month. In third is Meyers Transport's **Brent Bell**. He walked a total of 935,406 steps last month. In fourth place is **James Peters** of Prime Inc. In the month of May, Peters walked a total of 859,858 steps. And finally in fifth place is **Paul Bomben** from TST Solutions Inc. He walked a total of 833,666 steps last month.

Because the competition was stretched over such a long period of time, Healthy Trucker and *Truck News* made sure to recognize all monthly winners. However, the online leaderboard came equipped to track the

overall winners.

The fleets with the highest number of steps in January, March, and May combined – and the overall winners for the five-month long Healthy Fleet Challenge are:

Challenger Motor Freight: Average daily steps for Jan-Mar-May: 15,209

TST Solutions L.P.: Average daily steps for Jan-Mar-May: 14,735

Dynamic Transport: Average daily steps for Jan-Mar-May: 12,792

Meyers Transport: Average daily steps for Jan-Mar-May: 11,963

Transport America: Average daily steps for Jan-Mar-May: 11,729

Healthy Trucker also made a note to congratulate Northbridge Insurance's efforts to get as many participants as it could on its team. The team started out with 41 members and grew to 61.

"We want to congratulate Northbridge Insurance for building the largest team and recording the largest step count over the competition," said Glenn Caldwell, vice-president, sales at Healthy Trucker. "Although the initial challenge was based on the average step count of each team, it's evident that Northbridge Insurance wasn't in it to win it, but in it to encourage as many employees as possible the chance to gain better health."

According to Healthy Trucker, the 61-member team walked 33,624,899 steps over the competition.

Check TruckNews.com for upcoming news about the next Healthy Fleet Challenge. ●



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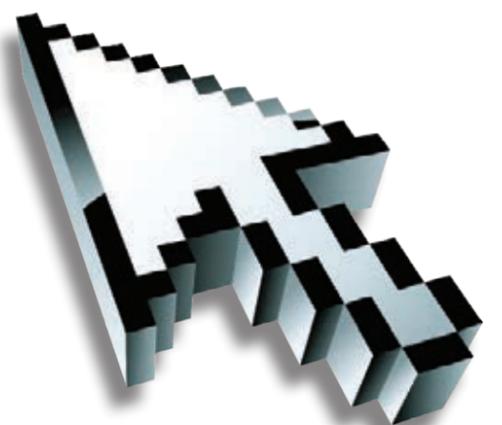
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TMC panel looks to get to the bottom of truck seating

Could better truck seats be an overlooked way to retain drivers?

By Steve Sturgess

NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE

Truck driver seating comfort is a major concern at any time but never more so than at present, with the driver shortage and recruitment and retention top of mind for any fleet. To showcase the thought behind – and to get to the bottom of – seat comfort, a panel at the spring meeting of the Technology & Maintenance Council (of the American Trucking Associations) was assembled to gain insights from vehicle and seating manufacturers and end-users.

Cab and seating

As program manager for the newly introduced Peterbilt Model 579 and vocational 567, product manager Anthony Gansle is responsible for one of the newest and most driver-friendly trucks currently available. He explained that in deciding on the basic configuration for the new cab and interior, drivers were invited to sit in a four-way expandable cab, nicknamed “Gumby.” Then these 400 drivers were interviewed to test the interior buck for optimal seat positioning to be able to reach and operate controls.

He explained that not only is the seat developed for comfort and control but

for safety as well. It has to have sufficient travel and support, it has to be adjustable by the driver without taking eyes off the road and many other considerations.

To ease entry and egress, the Peterbilt seat is designed to quickly drop to its lowest position but is equipped with a memory function. With a single switch it returns to the driver’s pre-selected, preferred position.

Gansle said that comfort development of the seat overlaps with safety, and ergonomic research to keep posture correct while providing a range of adjustments to allow a driver to shift position from time to time.

“Drivers want to feel the limits of the truck going down the road, so we widened cab mounts then widened the seat mounts as well, then used a scissor suspension to keep the driver connected to the truck,” he said.

Part of the comfort process is mapping pressure points for even support across the seat and to pull any load off the tailbone. During the development process, engineers were surprised by drivers’ different preferences for comfort, he said. In the end, there had to be a balance be-

Continued on page 47

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The science of truck seats

Continued from page 45

tween the soft "showroom" cushion that drivers initially preferred and long-day firmer support.

"One size doesn't fit all. And bolsters and backrest are important to reduce fatigue," he added.

In the near term, seating must address driver retention, he said, to keep drivers healthy and accommodate different-sized drivers. Different health-related technologies have to be incorporated: massage, heated and cooled surfaces, adjustable cushions for different preferences and being able to "wiggle around."

In the longer term, driver interaction with the truck may be cause for a rethink of the traditional driver's seat. The autonomous truck that effectively drives itself while the driver takes care of other tasks may mean a different, more flexible environment, Gansle concluded.

Seating features

Representing the seating manufacturers, Gordon Cooley, director of seat engineering at Commercial Vehicle Group summed up seating targets at CVG's Bostrom and National brands. Obviously, he said, safety, initial and long-term comfort, and durability are the drivers in developing seat designs. Also, mountings, seatbelts and attachments must meet federal requirements.

Pressure maps relate to blood flow through the drivers' body capillaries. Short- versus long-term comfort has to be considered. So work goes into develop-

ing foam shapes, what controls are to be included and where they are placed on the seat. Foam choice is a key element, he said, and it takes a lot of experience. You need comfort and long life. A digital model is constructed to check eye tracking to make sure the driver can adjust the seat without looking away.

Durability is also vital and long periods without seat deterioration means greater vehicle uptime. So does the ability to get in and maintain the seat mechanisms. To test for durability, data is gathered in field studies and used to build accelerated durability rigs. The shake tables can duplicate the conditions the seat would see in a million miles in just 84 hours, said Cooley. Components each have specific tests: seat slides for instance are cycled 25,000 times.

New features being incorporated in the seats include a back massager, adjustable ride characteristic, air adjustable lumbar and bolster, and map pockets. Wider cushions are offered up to 22 inches. In the future, seats will have to accommodate bigger drivers but at the same time a lot of women and smaller statured drivers are coming into the industry, so greater seat operability must be considered along with reduced buzz, squeak and rattle. And at the same time we must maintain durability, Cooley said.

The science

One of the greatest innovations in truck

Continued on page 49

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Truck seats an important spec'

Continued from page 47

seat design is the Bose Ride System. Based on the same technology used in noise-cancelling headphones, the seat suspension actively detects the vibrations and applies an opposite force to cancel them.

Jim Parison, principal systems engineer at Bose, explained why seat suspensions are so necessary. He said back injuries are a significant problem in the truck driving career and whole-body vibration is a major contributor to back pain and injury.

Long-term exposure to lower vibration results in truck drivers having two to three times the incidence of back pain than other industries. Musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) accounts for 41% of injuries in trucking and because the focus of safety professionals is on crashes, no one knows the real costs of MSD. Whole body vibration at low frequency causes motion sickness. But vibration in the range of two to 20 or 30 cycles per second are the frequencies at which body parts and organs are affected.

In the short term, exposure to this vibration causes nausea and back pains. But over the long term it results in herniated discs and other injuries. To avoid this, he said that seat manufacturers must strive to improve posture and reduce the vibration through the seat bottom and through the backrest.

And exposure is cumulative over time, leading to back damage.

Daily limits to the amplitudes of whole-body vibrations show a driver can survive with no injury only if they spend less than 6.8 hours per day in a conventional spring seat. But with the active cancellation this stretches out to 11.6 hours with a suspension like the Bose Ride, said Parison.

The end user

Titan Transfer is a 450-tractor fleet with seven locations in the eastern and Midwestern US. Wayne Finchum oversees maintenance in all locations and says good seating and the retention of drivers go together.

"Our driver turnover is about half the national average, but we saw it increase over 2011 to 2014," he said at the panel meeting. So it was time to address it with some new policy decisions.

Finchum says Titan has a completely open door policy to encourage driver recruitment and retention. Driver feedback is welcomed. A guiding principle is that drivers are treated with respect. So they are encouraged to talk about and bring seating concerns to support staff: lower back pain, shoulder blade area pain, blood flow to legs, chronic fatigue, etc.

Cab ergonomics are important for drivers. Finchum says the company makes sure all options and components are tested before they're included in a spec'. A driver panel is recommended in all cases but especially where seating is concerned.

"Most things are conducted under a panel situation," he said.

Driver safety, through online safety training, is essential, he says. You have to use all tools at your disposal, he says, and online is essential. Drivers have to be addressed with every type of training and safety. Titan has a policy of addressing workers' comp. "All employees are encouraged to assume good posture – it's essential to a healthy back so it's part of training," he said. ●



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PacLease honours two Canadian dealers

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

PacLease Edmonton Kenworth has been named one of the top North American PacLease dealers, recognized with a Standard of Excellence award.

It was one of two North American dealers to be recognized with such an award, the other being Rush Truck Leasing - Houston.

"PacLease is committed to exceeding customer expectations. We are pleased to recognize two franchisees this year that have exceeded expectations by showing commitment throughout their enterprise while providing outstanding service and performance to their customers," said Neil Vonnahme, president of PacLease.

Also winning a regional award for Canada was Camions Excellence PacLease, a Peterbilt dealer in Saint Julie, Que.

They were among the top-performing PacLease franchises in North America in 2014. ●

OBAC members to get deal on Western Star 5700XE

OTTAWA, ONTARIO

The Owner-Operator's Business Association of Canada (OBAC) has added the Western Star 5700XE to its "Any Way You Like It" rebate program.

Eligible members will get \$1,200 back on a day-cab or sleeper model 5700XE. The rebate can be applied to the purchase price of the truck, dealer parts/service credit, or cash back through the dealer.

The 5700XE has aerodynamics to rival the best, according to the company. It is the second most aerodynamic truck in the Daimler Trucks North America lineup, next to the Freightliner Cascadia.

Here are the rebate details:

- Valid for any new Western Star 4900 or 5700XE model truck or tractor - new orders or from dealer stock (gliders not eligible);
- Offer valid for any new truck purchase regardless of truck model year;
- Current OBAC members qualify for rebates based on truck configuration: \$1,200 rebate for 5700XE day-cab or sleeper; \$1,500 rebate for 4900 model day-cab; \$2,000 rebate for 4900 model sleeper cabs;
- Truck must be delivered by December 31, 2015.

To be qualified for the program, one must be an active OBAC member and must present the dealer with a their current membership card at time of purchase; their OBAC membership must be current for at least 30 days at time of purchase; each member/company is limited to three rebates per calendar year; rebate must be claimed within 30 days of retail sale. For more information, visit www.obac.ca. ●

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Peterbilt shows off autonomous truck

Advanced Driver Assist combines camera and GPS capabilities

By James Menzies

DALLAS, TEXAS

Freightliner's Inspiration Truck may not be the only autonomous tractor cruising Nevada highways before long. Peterbilt has an autonomous truck of its own and is interested in licensing it to operate on roads in Nevada, the only state or province thus far to allow such trucks.

Peterbilt refers to its system as Advanced Driver Assist, and says it's more of a stepping stone to a true autonomous vehicle. However by NHTSA's definition, it does qualify as a Level 3 autonomous vehicle, according to Bill Kahn, manager of advanced concepts for Peterbilt.

NHTSA describes Level 3 automation as enabling "the driver to cede full control of all safety-critical functions under certain traffic or environmental conditions and in those conditions to rely heavily on the vehicle to monitor for changes in those conditions requiring transition back to driver control. The driver is expected to be available for occasional control, but with sufficiently comfortable transition time."

During a demonstration in late May at Texas Motor Speedway, the Peterbilt truck with Advanced Driver Assist did everything Freightliner's Inspiration Truck did earlier this month, and some things it did not.

Both trucks use cameras to seek out lane markings and steer the truck within its lane. But when lane markings are absent, Peterbilt's uses "high-precision GPS mapping" to follow a route that's been pre-programmed into the system. So it was able to navigate the road course at Texas Motor Speedway even though no lane markings were present, choosing the safest and most efficient path as determined in advance by Peterbilt engineers.

The idea is to eventually enable the system to achieve lane-keeping by both modes and to be able to switch seamlessly between the two, so that in construction zones or other areas where lane markings aren't present, the truck can continue to find its way. The GPS system Peterbilt uses is accurate to within five centimeters, the company claims.

Still, Peterbilt has shied away from the term 'autonomous,' providing frequent reminders a driver must always be the chief decision-maker. Even so, in typical driving situations, its system can take over steering control about 85% of the time, Kahn said.

Loading acceptable truck routes into the system will be a painstaking process, at least initially, until all well-travelled truck routes have been programmed.

"The truck can't follow automo-

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Peterbilt's Advanced Driver Assist uses cameras to identify lane markings but when no lane markings are present, can also use high-precision GPS.

tive GPS maps, because of the trailer," Kahn explained. "So we go out there and teach it what lane it needs to be in and how fast it can go around each of the corners, to drive the route as efficiently and safely as possible."

When it comes to lane-changing, the driver will still need to advise the system on whether or not it's safe to do so.

The system in the truck we rode in could be activated and deactivated using a green rocker switch on the dash.

Peterbilt has built two trucks with the Advanced Driver Assist system, one of which was developed for Walmart. Before it becomes viable commercially, Kahn said production costs will have to be reduced. The LIDAR laser system on the truck we rode in cost close to \$15,000 and will need to be \$1,000 to be economically palatable to fleets. And the pricey cameras will also have to come down in price significantly, Kahn pointed out.

Both the Freightliner and Peterbilt autonomous systems are spectacular, but the truck makers have taken substantially different approaches to achieving automation.

While the Freightliner system relies solely on cameras to detect lane markings, and can currently only function when lane markings are clearly visible to the cameras, the Peterbilt system supplements such cameras with the use of high-precision GPS, potentially broadening the scenarios in which its driver assist system can function. That is only, of course, if that specific route has been programmed into the system.

Freightliner's Highway Pilot system currently only becomes available at highway speeds, while Peterbilt's Advanced Driver Assist can be activated from a complete stop and will bring the truck up to road speed without driver input.

However for its part, Daimler has demonstrated the confidence in its system to work with the state government in Nevada to have it legalized and has tested its Highway Pilot autonomous driving system extensively on public roads there. Peterbilt, to date, has limited public demonstrations of its system to off-highway environments and at Texas Motor Speedway, sans trailer. Both companies, however, have made clear the technology is ready to roll when regulators and the motoring public are comfortable with it. Peterbilt, for its part, seems resigned to the fact it'll be a while before the systems are approved for widespread use.

"The technology's there; the technology works," said Darrin Siver, general manager of Peterbilt. "We've done a lot of testing but we would do a lot more testing before we'd ever think of going into production with that. Reg-

ulatory hurdles need to be overcome first, then you come to public perception. The technology is there and it works but it has to be accepted and it's hard to say when that'll become a reality. Others have made some more optimistic predictions." ●

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Peterbilt showcases latest technologies

By James Menzies

DENTON, TEXAS

While Peterbilt's autonomous truck commanded the most attention at its Technology Showcase last month, the company also revealed details about other technologically advanced systems it has been working on.

Walmart Technology Demonstrator

One of the most interesting of these was a Walmart Technology Demonstrator vehicle, which uses cameras to provide 360-degree visibility around the truck. Brent Hankins, with Peterbilt's Advanced Concepts Group, said the truck was designed to maximize safety.

It features a four-camera system that provides a bird's eye view of the tractor and displays it on a screen



Peterbilt has replaced hood-mounted mirrors with small cameras on its Walmart Technology Demonstrator truck.

mounted inside the cab.

"There are four cameras positioned around the truck, looking at different angles, and it gives you one view that looks as if you're 30-40 feet above the truck looking down," he explained.

This truck has replaced hood-

mounted mirrors with small cameras that provide a better view along the side of the vehicle. There's another camera system at the rear of the truck that provides visibility of the king pin to help drivers align it properly when coupling and to ensure the king pin has been locked into place.

The screen inside the cab automatically displays the most appropriate camera view (ie. a side view will be shown when turn signals are activated and the fifth wheel camera will take priority when the truck is in reverse. Most of the time, the 360-degree bird's eye view is shown).

The truck also features a solar panel used to charge the SmartAir cab comfort system, which reduces the load on the batteries and alternator.

The SuperTruck

Also on display was Peterbilt's Super-

Truck, which achieves 10.7 mpg by incorporating a number of advanced technologies.

The SuperTruck inspired certain elements of the company's current Model 579 EPIQ, including predictive cruise and some of the aerodynamic fairings.

Peterbilt's SuperTruck looks less futuristic than the one Daimler has built, because the company chose to base it off an existing production truck - the Model 579.

"We took a production truck and turned it into a SuperTruck," explained Darrin Siver, Peterbilt general manager.

Driver Performance Assistant

Peterbilt also demonstrated its Driver Performance Assistant, a real-time driver coaching system that is now in production.

The system monitors drivers' use of the brakes and throttle and grades them on their coasting, braking and acceleration.

It also provides tips on fuel-efficient driving techniques, but only when the truck is stopped so as to not provide a distraction. Messages are communicated through the driver display. Fleets can use the reports to determine which drivers require additional training.

A study at Paccar's Mount Vernon Technical Center showed drivers using the system improved their fuel efficiency by 5%, according to Peterbilt's Matt Cullum. It's now standard in Peterbilt trucks with the Paccar MX engine.

SmartNav 2

Peterbilt this summer will be launching the second generation of its SmartNav infotainment system. It will feature up to 25 customizable virtual gauges and will integrate any automated camera systems installed on the truck.

Truck navigation is provided by ALK's CoPilot. Traffic services will be available on a subscription basis and Peterbilt will now be able to provide software updates remotely so the system is always up to date.

It will also be able to accommodate third-party apps, such as electronic logging, giving customers more flexibility to expand its use. The new version will be launched in July, said Pete's Drew Harbach.

SmartLinq

Peterbilt also demonstrated its new remote diagnostics platform dubbed SmartLinq. It monitors approximately 800 fault codes generated by the Paccar MX engine and aftertreatment system and advises the driver or fleet manager on any actions that need to be taken - ideally before an engine de-rate or breakdown occurs.

Steven Sinclair said new Peterbilt trucks will come with the hardware installed beginning in June, as well as a free two-year data subscription - or longer, if an extended protection plan is chosen.

Fleets will be able to choose the types of warnings they wish to receive by e-mail.

They can monitor their fleet at www.PaccarSolutions.com and tell at a glance which trucks have active fault codes.

The interactive map shown on the portal also displays traffic and weather conditions, giving the fleet another way to track its assets. Of course, Peterbilt dealer locations are also loaded onto it. ●

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Peterbilt's Model 579 EPIQ opening doors with large fleets

By James Menzies

DENTON, TEXAS

Peterbilt is feeling pretty good about its position in the marketplace – especially among large fleets – thanks to the success of its Model 579.

And now with the addition of the EPIQ package, the company says it has never been better positioned to sell to large fleets in the US and Canada. Three quarters of the trucks Peterbilt builds are now aerodynamic models.

"It has opened a whole new customer base for us," Robert Woodall, assistant general manager, sales and marketing with Peterbilt, said during a press briefing at the company's Denton truck plant.

Woodall said the EPIQ package improves fuel economy over a base Model 579 by 4% and contends it's the most advanced, fuel-efficient truck on the road. It's certainly the most fuel-efficient truck ever produced by Peterbilt.

Woodall said the EPIQ package is just now entering production and already fleets are making the transition, despite an upcharge he said is quickly recovered through fuel savings.

"Most of the interest in EPIQ is going to be the big fleet guys, those guys who are all about fuel economy," Woodall said. "That's where EPIQ is playing out."

The EPIQ package consists of: a more complete aerodynamic fairing package; the Paccar MX-13 engine integrated with the Fuller Advantage Series automated manual transmission; a single horizontal exhaust; the SmartFire tire pressure monitoring system; low rolling resistance tires; and optimized software.

New additions to the package include GPS-based predictive cruise technology to ensure engine and transmission are being optimally operated and neutral coast, which disengages the transmission while travelling downhill to save fuel. Also new is a Driver Performance Assistant, which coaches drivers on fuel-efficient driving techniques.

The 579 EPIQ can also be ordered with the Cummins-Eaton SmartAdvantage. However, both the SmartAdvantage and the Paccar/Eaton pairing (dubbed APEX) are limited to a GCWR of 80,000 lbs, meaning this package won't fit all Canadian needs. For the Canadian customers, a 16-speed Eaton UltraShift Plus LSE will be available, rated at up to 110,000 lbs, but they won't be calling that an EPIQ, even when all the other aspects of the package are spec'd. It might not be EPIQ, but it'll still be a fuel-efficient option for fleets seeking the versatility to haul heavier Canadian payloads.

Fleets running north-south with US-legal loads on the other hand, may be well served by the true EPIQ, straight out of the box.

The Model 579 itself is the result of an exhaustive design process.

Andrew Weiblen, director of product planning with Peterbilt, said the development process began by reaching out to customers to find out what they wanted in a truck. They visited truck stops with a mobile, adjustable cab and surveyed drivers on the ideal configuration. Most preferred a 2.1-metre cab width, which was adopted for the 579.

"A 2.1-metre cab is the perfect width to give drivers ample space, without making them feel like they're driving an RV down the road," Weiblen said.

Determining the market needs was the first in a five-step design process. Next came: ideation; concept; validation;

and final design.

As part of the ideation process, designers studied how customers use the truck. When they noted some were placing their cell phones in the cupholder, a special phone-sized storage slot was developed.

The concept stage included the building of prototypes. Clay models were built in 20%, 40% and full-sized scale. Next, as part of the validation process, full-sized functioning prototypes were built and rollover and frontal impact testing was conducted. Peterbilt wanted to ensure the truck would last a million miles or more. The 579 is the foundation from which all other models – including vocational and severe-service trucks – are built, so it had to be constructed tougher than required for the on-highway line-haul applications it was intended for.

Finally, in 2012, came production. ●

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Smart trailers, predictive safety systems part of the future of trucking

By Lou Smyrlis

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

Can you imagine driving a tractor-trailer combination where the trailer is smarter than the tractor and can operate independently? Volvo Trucks can and its executives took the opportunity to share with clients and media their view of how different trucking can be in the future. The information session with Volvo C-suite executives took place during the North American leg of the Volvo Ocean Race hosted by Newport, Rhode Island.

"Why does the tractor have to pull everything?" asked Jeff Cotner, chief designer with Volvo Trucks in presenting a future vision where trailers can

operate under their own power and, having no physical connection to the tractor, are free to join up with and follow the tractor in platoon formation with other similarly smart trailers and

“Drivers stepping away from the steering wheel is coming – it’s not if but when. Does that make the profession more interesting?”

Jeff Cotner, chief designer, Volvo Trucks

then break off and drive themselves to different destinations along the way, all done at road speed.

Essentially in such a vision truck-

ing would operate similar to railroads with the driver in the lead vehicle monitoring the constant coupling and uncoupling of smart trailers in the platoon formation. Perhaps such a pla-

toon of trailers can also include passengers in specialized trailers who, using an Uber-type booking system, can join the platoon if it's heading to-

wards their destination. Although the technology is still not there, passengers being part of commercial movements is not far-fetched. It already occurs in global ocean freight transport. Some container ships include berthing for passengers.

Considering such trailers would be far more costly and the trailers currently are the lowest-cost part of the tractor-trailer combination, *Truck News* asked Cotner if there could be enough savings found through improved operational and fuel efficiencies to justify the much higher cost in trailers.

Cotner pointed out that in such a vision the trailer, which operates under its own power, replaces the truck in many situations and fleets will save money by not having to purchase as many trucks. Also in platooning situations where there is a driver in the lead truck but no drivers in the trailers that follow it, there are considerable savings in labour costs.

Such a vision would also likely require changes to the road system so that such combinations can travel in their own lanes, acknowledged Cotner, but Volvo is already working with California on a bill that would allow for platooning of three to four trucks using sensing technology to follow each other in tight formations that would be considered tailgating under current legislation. By tightening up the following distance, significant drafting advantages are created which improve fuel economy and the advanced sensing and camera technologies onboard make it safe to do so, according to Volvo.

Cotner also wondered how autonomous vehicle technology – which enables the tractor to drive itself while the driver simply monitors operations, rests, or looks to other tasks while in the cab such as communicating with customers – would affect the profession's image.

"What can we do inside the truck to make the profession more interesting? What can we do so the driver can have a better lifestyle but for it to also be good for business?" he asked. "Drivers stepping away from the steering wheel is coming – it's not if but when. Does that make the profession more interesting? Does it allow owners to get better people?"

In the meantime, Volvo is using lessons learned by participating in the SuperTruck project to make powertrain and tractor fairing design changes which have made for a 3.5% gain in aerodynamics and a 2% powertrain improvement for specific applications. As the inventors of the three-point seatbelt, Volvo has a strong tradition of focusing on safety and company officials vow that future technologies will continue that focus.

"Why do accidents happen? Why do some drivers have more accidents than others? We've been learning from accidents since 1969 and 90% are due to human error," said Carl Johan Almqvist, director, traffic and product safety.

Distraction, alcohol, speed, and no seatbelt use all contribute to accidents caused and the injuries and fatalities that result. Speed is a particular issue because the human brain is not equipped with a particularly good speed sensor, according to Almqvist.

"We human beings don't understand speed at all. We don't have a speed sensor. This is a challenge for us in traffic. Speed kills," Almqvist said.

For example, when we come up too fast on slow-moving vehicles we often need to see a change happen – such as brake lights coming on – to recognize

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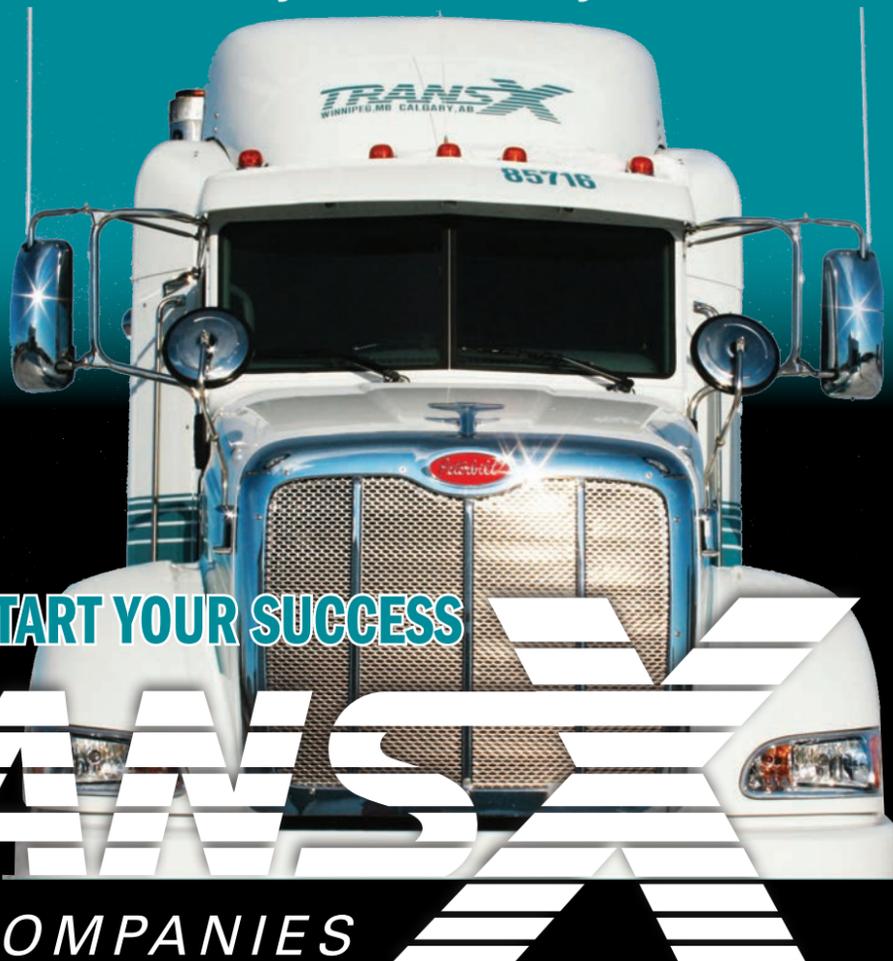
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Volvo offered an interesting glimpse into the future of trucking, including the possibility of mixing passenger and freight transport.

quickly enough the danger of the situation. Yet when we are distracted or look away and miss the brake lights coming on, we may not react quickly enough and end up running into the back of the slower moving or stationary vehicle.

Almqvist said Volvo believes in employing technology such as enhanced cruise with active braking to support the driver in such situations. When a crash is imminent and the driver is not responding to alerts, the system takes over and brakes the vehicle to avoid the collision. Looking further ahead, Volvo Trucks wants to further develop its active safety technology with the aim of going beyond where human eyes can see.

"We are trying to create an artificial brain that can predict what's going to happen (in traffic) and support the driver to keep him out of trouble," Almqvist said. For example, Volvo is experimenting with technology that pro-

vides a 360-degree scan of the truck's environment and takes over to avoid an accident. The driver missed the cyclist in the blind spot on his right and is about to attempt a right-hand turn that will cause the cyclist to smash into the truck? No problem, the active safety system takes over and stops the vehicle from making the right turn.

Almqvist said such systems will be available five to 10 years from now.

He added Volvo Trucks has a vision of attaining zero accidents with its vehicles. Think that's impossible? Almqvist doesn't think so.

"I think it is actually possible. This is where you get into mindsets," he said pointing out that in 1997 Sweden adopted a zero vision for fatalities on its roads. Many scoffed at the impossibility of such a goal yet last year Sweden enjoyed no fatalities on its roads for 30% of the year. ●

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Volvo outlines how connectivity will reshape trucking

By Lou Smyrlis

NEWPORT, RHODE ISLAND

Vehicle connectivity innovations will soon change the face of the trucking industry, reshaping everything from maintenance practices to driver productivity, according to Goran Nyberg, president of Volvo Trucks North America.

Nyberg was one of several Volvo C-Suite executives gathered in Newport, home of a leg of the Volvo Ocean Race, to share their vision of the industry's future.

Data connectivity with trucks was established back in 1990 and since then there has been a steady evolution of connectivity in the business world, but Nyberg feels trucking has fallen a bit behind other industries in keeping up with connectivity. By

2008 the number of things connected to the Internet exceeded the number of people on the planet - 6.6 billion. By 2020 it's predicted the number of things connected to the Internet could rise to 30 billion.

So why shouldn't there be greater connectivity with truck equipment? There will certainly be great demand for it from new people entering the industry, according to Nyberg.

"People under 25 have never lived one day without the Internet and connectivity. Their expectations are different (from previous generations). In a few years they will be in management positions and they will have different expectations when it comes to connectivity. We need to think differently," Nyberg told Volvo customers and business media gathered for the event.

Volvo is already starting to em-

ploy the "different thinking" Nyberg called for with its focus on platooning vehicle technology. Such technology, where trucks can communicate with each other and team up to follow a lead vehicle, is technology that is possible today because it can be applied to existing vehicles and infrastructure, provided the regulations that would allow its use on North American highways was available, said Susan Alt, senior vice-president of public affairs for Volvo Group North America. Vehicles operating in platoon mode are able to greatly reduce the following distance between them than is currently acceptable thanks to the on-board sensors. By tightening up the following distance, significant drafting advantages are created which improves fuel economy.

Alt said Volvo is working with the state of California on a bill that would

allow platooning of three- to four-truck combinations.

"We are doing it state by state and hoping NHTSA will jump in federally," Alt said. "The technology is available but your average soccer mom is not going to be ready for it (on our

"If we can have road trains in the future with the following vehicles running driverless, it will improve the driver shortage."

Goran Nyberg, Volvo Trucks

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roads). I see this as something starting small and growing. I see starting with two-truck platooning."

Two-truck platooning provides advantages over running B-trains because the two tractor combinations are not tied to each other and don't even need to be from the same company to enjoy the advantages of better fuel efficiency while travelling the continent's highways, pointed out Jeff Cotner, Volvo's chief designer.

Another advantage would be that the drivers in the following vehicles would get a chance to rest since their vehicles would simply be following the motions of the driver in the lead vehicle. And eventually the following vehicles could be driverless, according to Nyberg.

"If we can have road trains in the future with the following vehicles running driverless, it will improve the driver shortage," Nyberg said.

Predictive shifting is another area where connectivity can change the face of trucking, improving safety and productivity. For example, as the truck approaches a hill, pre-programmed information on the terrain allows the truck to handle the climb and descent in the most efficient manner. As the truck comes into the hill it is automatically sped up to delay downshifting, then the truck's momentum and stored energy is employed on the downhill portion to accelerate and get better roll off.

Maintenance is another key area to be affected by advances in connectivity.

"Remote diagnostics is something we are putting a lot of focus on. We believe it will be one of the game-changers in the industry," Nyberg said. "We need to change the mindset. It's not acceptable to have an unplanned stop. That's a vision that we need to strive towards."

Remote diagnostics capabilities lead to a 70% reduction in diagnostic time and a 22% reduction in repair time, Nyberg said.

Volvo has now included its I-Shift automated transmission to the list of components that can be dealt with through remote diagnostics, and Nyberg adds "our ambition is to include the entire truck."

There are 15 different ECUs on a Class 8 truck, all of them collecting vast amounts of data. If all that data

could be brought together maintenance could become much more predictive. For example, the truck itself could become smart enough to alert the maintenance department of a pending alternator failure so that replacement of the alternator can be included on the next preventive maintenance check.

"The wireless workshop is coming. Vehicles will self-evaluate and will be repaired remotely via wireless updates," was the prediction from Rich Ferguson, senior vice-president, aftermarket and soft products.

But the massive amounts of data harvested should not mean a huge dump of data on truck owners. The focus should be on providing solutions, not reporting problems with fault codes.

"When we started the journey into remote diagnostics in 2012, we quickly understood that customers didn't want data overload. They want solutions. They just want to know when they will get their truck back," Nyberg said.

Volvo is also using connective technology to ensure it is meeting its own standards on repair times and getting a handle on how quickly repairs are made under real-world conditions. It tracks turnaround times for repairs by operating geofencing around all its dealers, tracking when a vehicle enters the dealership for repairs and when it leaves. Nyberg also sees this massive collection of data applied to determining which components fail and when, having an impact on future component design. ●

Tremcar expands, eyes US growth

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Trailer manufacturer Tremcar has announced its expansion and intent to become a larger player in the US market.

The company made the announcement last month in front of about 50 employees, indicating the current low value of the Canadian dollar makes it a good time to invest.

"We must be more efficient in order to compete with the American market," said Daniel Tremblay, president of Tremcar. "We need to provide a higher quality product at the lowest price. The decline of the Canadian dollar gives us the opportunity to take a greater share of the US market. Now is the time to invest and expand our facilities to make more space for tank production."

The company plans to restructure its factory and install advanced equipment to lower production costs and facilitate precision work. It will expand its plant in Saint-Jeansur-Richelieu, Que., adding 20,000 sq-ft. to the existing facility at a cost of more than \$2 million.

In March 2014, the company bought Boston Steel, a truck-mount manufacturer in Malden, Mass.

It also invested more than \$1 million in its head offices and opened a service centre in Levis, Que.

Tremcar is also about to open a new service facility in Edmonton this summer, the company announced. ●

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Daimler to skip Mid-America Trucking Show next year

PORTLAND, OREGON

Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) will not be participating in the Mid-America Trucking Show next year, instead focusing its efforts on the global IAA Commercial Vehicles Show in Hannover, Germany.

The OEM, which owns the Freightliner, Western Star, Detroit and Alliance Truck Parts brands, has notified MATS management of the move and

hopes to persuade show organizers to create a larger global trucking showcase in the US, held every second year.

"Daimler Trucks North America (DTNA) confirms that it will not attend the Mid-America Trucking Show (MATS) in 2016," company spokesperson David Giroux confirmed. "DTNA intends to return to the MATS in 2017 and attend the show bi-annually thereafter. DTNA expects to engage in an ongoing dialogue with MATS show management and industry leaders to discuss how to further supplement the show with additional activities for the collective benefit of OEs, suppliers and customers."

Giroux said the decision will not affect DTNA's attendance at other industry shows, including those in Canada. ●

Kenworth dealership relocates

AMOS, QUEBEC

Kenworth dealer Centre du Camion Amos has relocated. The dealership has moved to a new 37,000 sq.-ft. facility near the intersection of Quebec Routes 109 and 111 in Amos.

"We're pleased to offer this new site so close to two of the main truck routes in this area of the province," said Alain Sayeur, general manager of Centre du Camion Amos. "With this facility's drive-through service bays covering nearly half of the building, we'll have room to provide service for at least 15 trucks at one time. We'll also have additional parts inventory capacity with a large 20,000 sq.-ft. parts department, including more than 10,000 square feet of warehouse space and nearly 2,500 square feet of parts display."

The new facility more than triples the size of the old dealership, which is now operating as a parts and service facility called Kenworth Val d'Or.

Centre du Camion Amos is located at 145 Quebec Route 111 East. The phone number is 819-732-6471. ●



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Benefits of tire pressure inflation systems discussed

By **Sonia Straface**

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS

Tom Brady may not be the only one with underinflation problems – you could be too, if you don't have the Meritor Tire Inflation System (MTIS) by P.S.I. installed on your trailer tires.

That was the message given to attendees and customers at this year's Annual Fleet Technology Event put on by Pressure Systems International (P.S.I.) and Meritor in San Antonio in mid-May.

The event focused on the popular MTIS, an automatic tire inflation system that is used to reinflate a punctured trailer tire as well as provide proper and uniform inflation for all tires to avoid underinflation while in motion. If continuous inflation is re-

quired, the system will alert the driver to check the tire, or seek out service.

It is currently the leading automatic tire inflation system in the North American market, and the company has shipped its product globally to

“Every trailer we've purchased since (2011) has the system on it.”

Brock Ackerman, president, K&B Transportation

45 countries. P.S.I. invented the first automatic tire inflation system 22 years ago, and partnered with Meritor back in 1999 (one year before Brady was drafted by the NFL's New England Patriots, oddly enough).

Though automatic tire inflation systems were invented by P.S.I. more than

two decades ago, that doesn't mean the company isn't working hard to update its technology and find better ways to inflate tires on the go.

“We're continuously improving the product by reinventing the tire infla-

tion system and every time we reinvent it, we reinvent it with one thought in mind – the KISS principle,” said Frank Sonzala, executive vice-president, P.S.I. “Keep It Simple, Safely. We never take it to the complicated side so you have difficulty installing it or understanding it.”

Nearly 90% of fleets using automatic tire inflation systems are using MTIS by P.S.I. in North America, he added.

Al Cohn, director of new market development and engineering support at P.S.I. explained to attendees during a presentation why maintaining tire inflation is important to fleets and drivers.

“Tires continue to be the number one maintenance cost for commercial fleets and fleets take tires very, very seriously,” he said. “Inflation pressure is an issue because it takes way too long to check 18 or more tires, you get dirty when you bend over to check the pressure. And inflation gauges are inaccurate. And trailer tires always have the worst tire pressures. In addition, the number one cause of road breakdowns is tires.”

Cohn added that it has been reported that 90% of tire problems are because of underinflation. MTIS, according to the company, solves the problem of underinflation by flowing air through the axle to the tire to constantly maintain perfect pressure to keep the tire at its intended psi.

“Underinflated tires leave a bigger footprint on the road, causing more wear and tear,” Cohn explained. Whereas a well-inflated tire has a smaller footprint, causing less wear and tear. In addition, a well-inflated tire has less of a chance of catching a nail or sharp object that could puncture the tire, because it is occupying less of the road, he added.

In addition to saving fleets money, the company said the system is so simple, it can be installed by almost anyone in under four hours – not just those who know about truck maintenance. The system can also be retrofit on any axle and parts can be replaced quickly and easily.

Brock Ackerman, president of K&B Transportation, a refrigerated carrier, said MTIS is the best investment his company has made in an optional piece of equipment for a tractor or trailer with respect to return on investment. He attended a similar event in 2011 hosted by the companies, and immediately made the decision to retrofit all 1,200 of his trailers with the system. “Every trailer we've purchased since then has the system on it,” said Ackerman.

“(During the 2011 presentation) I was thinking about all the times we had a flat tire on a trailer at midnight and I had a delivery 400 miles away at 8 or 9 a.m.,” he said. “And now instead of waiting on a service truck to come out and charge me a lot of money and make my delivery late...the tire can

just reinflate itself with MTIS.”

Ackerman added the nature of his company doesn't allow for delays to be a regular or comfortable occurrence.

“All of the commodities we haul are perishables...so all our deliveries are time-sensitive and so late is just not acceptable and that's where this product has really helped us,” he said, adding that K&B currently does deliveries to retail giants like Walmart and Costco. “

Ackerman said the system has increased his company's uptime and productivity, as well as saving it a heap of money. He estimated that the system saved him around \$58,000 per month since installation. K&B currently operates 1,150 trailers, so with eight tires per trailer it has just over 9,000 trailer tires spinning every day. He added that after installing MTIS his tire changes per month went from 562 to 375.

After the presentation, attendees that included customers, potential customers and industry journalists were invited on a tour of the PSI plant in San Antonio, where the systems are made.

The plant is manned with 85 employees who work the assembly lines 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. to put the tire systems together and get them shipped out to customers. All kits are quality controlled and checked several times to ensure the product is exact before reaching the customer.

You can learn more about MTIS here: www.psi-atis.com.

Navistar buys 668-acre proving grounds

NEW CARLISLE, INDIANA

Navistar has purchased a 668-acre proving grounds, featuring a three-mile paved and banked oval, the company announced.

It was purchased from Robert Bosch LLC and will be used to test and demonstrate Navistar's full product line of Classes 5-8 vehicles.

“The new Navistar Proving Grounds is a strategic addition to our product development operations and will play an important role in our mission to deliver industry-leading uptime for our customers,” said Bill Kozek, president, Navistar Truck and Parts. “Beyond testing our latest vehicles and innovative technologies, we will also use the site as a customer center to showcase new products and give customers an opportunity to experience our vehicles first-hand.”

The new proving grounds is located about 90 miles from Navistar's Lisle, Ill. headquarters.

Navistar will use it for: brake testing; structural durability/accelerated mile accumulation testing, including over multiple road surfaces; and specialized testing, including vehicle noise and handling, centre of gravity, rollover and roof crush testing. It will also be able to evaluate performance on grades of up to 60%, the company announced.






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SAF-Holland introduces fully integrated mechanical trailer suspension

Systems approach to mechanical trailer suspensions is an industry-first, SAF-Holland claims

By James Menzies

MUSKEGON, MICHIGAN

With more fleets spec'ing mechanical trailer suspensions, SAF-Holland has come out with a new system it says will reduce weight and maintenance costs and simplify OEM installation.

The ULX40 UltraLite is offered as a complete system, something only SAF-Holland can offer as the industry's only supplier of both axles and mechanical suspensions, according to the company.

This systems approach follows a trend seen some time ago with air suspension systems.

The ULX40 uses composite springs designed to last four times longer than steel springs, and the company claims they also provide ride performance comparable to air ride.

Mechanical suspensions are said to save a fleet about \$650 in maintenance costs over a 10-year period. There are fewer parts to worry about, as they don't require shock absorbers, air springs, height control valves or dock lock devices.

"This new spring-ride suspension



SAF-Holland's new ULX40 UltraLite is available as a complete system with either disc or drum brakes.

product will change the way fleets look at mechanical suspensions," said Jeff Talaga, executive vice-president, trailer systems. "It's an engineered all-in-one system that is lighter weight, offers a lower total cost of ownership, and the industry's first 10-year suspension and axle system warranty. It will be spec'd by on-highway fleets in the van industry who are looking for a versatile option to help reduce costs for hauling requirements."

Trailer OEMs will also like the ULX40, since it simplifies installation and supply chain management, said Bill Rector, director of sales and marketing, trailer systems business unit with SAF-Holland.

The ULX40 is up to 125 lbs light-

er than other mechanical trailer suspensions, the company claims. Weight savings can be attributed to the composite springs, which are 80 lbs lighter than steel, as well as a lighter-weight 5.75-inch diameter axle.

Talaga said more dry van fleets are favouring mechanical trailer suspensions, due to the maintenance savings and an improved ride performance that now comes close to matching that offered by air ride suspensions. Today, about half of new dry van trailers are being spec'd with mechanical suspensions.

"The large fleets are looking at moving away from air ride to mechanical suspensions," Talaga explained.

One such fleet is Schneider, which published a white paper that concluded ride hasn't been significantly compromised by moving to mechanical trailer suspensions. This trend suits SAF-Holland well.

"We are the market share leader in mechanical suspensions," Talaga pointed out.

Until now, there has been no fully unitized mechanical trailer suspension available in the industry.

"We are the only ones who can do that today," Talaga said.

"The end user no longer has to worry about chasing down this supplier for this piece of axle, spring or suspension. It comes from us, one warranty."

The 10-year warranty is an industry first, SAF-Holland claims.

Doug Dorn, vice-president, fleet and end user development, said the latest offering from SAF-Holland rounds out its suspension offerings.

"What I'm most excited about from a fleet perspective is, I now have the ability to speak to any fleet customer in the US and Canada - I've got it all," he said. "If they're an air ride fleet, I've got it in the CBX40. If they're mechanical, I've got it in the ULX40."

The ULX40 can be ordered with disc or drum brakes. Drums remain the predominant choice, but Dorn said many carriers are placing small orders with disc brakes to evaluate their performance.

The ULX40 UltraLite is available now for order. ●

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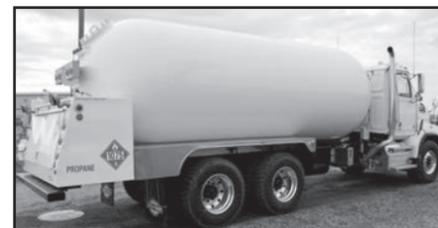
2016 WESTERN STAR 4700 280 hp, Automatic 3499 Propane Bobtail, Stainless steel rear enclosure. **Stock WS20163499**



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At WasteExpo 2015, Mack Trucks introduced the new **Mack LR low-entry cabover refuse model**. The new model was designed to meet the challenges of refuse customers who require enhanced maneuverability, increased driver comfort and improved visibility. Mack says the truck was built with input from customers, and is available in three-axle 6x4 configurations and can be powered by diesel or natural gas.

The LR model was built with body builders in mind, offering many ac-



cess points and mounting locations for wiring, controls and joysticks.

Inside the cab, there are tilt and telescopic steering columns, power windows and power door locks, memory mirrors, in-dash air-conditioning, standard in-cab LED light-

ing and an instrument cluster with color LCD display. The rear cab windows now wrap around the rear cab corners, improving driver visibility. It also offers centre storage for lunch coolers, two-liter bottles, beverage cups, cell phones and MP3 players.

The 11-litre Mack MP7 diesel engine comes standard in the LR model, delivering 325 to 345 horsepower and 1,200 to 1,280 lb.-ft. of torque. The Cummins Westport ISL G natural gas engine is optional. It is also equipped with an Allison RDS five-speed or six-speed automatic transmission.

XZA3+ line provides a solution for today's evolving tractor equipment and aids in reducing greenhouse gas emissions - factors that are important to Michelin, original equipment manufacturers and the industry as a whole," said Bianca Hogan, director of marketing for Michelin Americas Truck Tires. "Along with the ability to handle heavier tractor weights, the XZA3+ will continue to deliver the fuel savings, tread longevity and casing retreadability fleets expect from this proven tire." The company says the line is being expanded to meet market demands which require steer tires to handle heavier tractor weights.



Goodyear has unveiled its longest-wearing **waste haul tire** that it believes will become the "go-to" tire for waste haul fleets across North America today. The new tire was unveiled at Waste Expo. Goodyear's DuraSeal Technology is an optional feature of the tire. The company says the tire will be available in late 2015 in size 315/80R22.5, Load Range L. The Goodyear Endurance WHA features: New sidewall protector shingles to help resist sidewall scuffing in high-scrub applications, which will help enhance casing life; A steel belt and casing package for enhanced toughness, endurance and retreadability; An optimized shoulder design to help direct pressure away from the tire's outer tread, which promotes uniform tread wear; Four wide circumferential grooves for all-season traction on wet, snow-covered and dry roads in stop/start waste haul truck applications; And a wide footprint to enhance cornering and handling when used on local streets.

Michelin Americas Truck Tires announced the launch of **two new sizes of Michelin XZ3+ tires** - 11R24.5 and 275/80R24.5 both load range H and reinforced with added steel belts for more carrying capacity. The tire is fuel-efficient and is SmartWay-verified.

"The expansion of the Michelin



Alliance Truck Parts has expanded its exhaust product line to include **torsional and standard bellows**. The company says its Alliance bellows are the first true all-makes product of their kind in the industry. They're Tier 4 compliant and built to meet or exceed EPA10 leak requirements.

"The launch of our new bellows marks the first time that drivers are able to purchase these exhaust parts as an all-makes product that can be used on nearly any truck make or truck model," said Catherine Auckland, director, aftermarket marketing, Daimler Trucks North America. "We are always looking to increase our product portfolio to meet customer needs. The launch of Alliance bellows is the result of a new opportunity in the market and feedback from our customers."

The bellows are made from 300-series stainless steel and offer a 60% longer life than some OEM counterparts, Alliance claims.

They're sold as kits that require all installation parts.

Bendix announced it has expanded its lineup of **remanufactured components with the launch of its new All Makes product line**. The company says the line was designed initially to address the growing demand for remanufactured compressors.

The new line features more than 100 non-Bendix compressor part numbers, and 20 new offerings from Bendix. The company adds that when it comes to remanufactured parts, quality manufacturing and testing are critical, so Bendix ensures every All Makes compressor completes an end-of-the-line validation to ensure optimal field performance and increased service life.

Visit www.bendix.com for more information.

Idle Free Systems announced recently that it has signed **two Canadian dealer agreements**.

The first is Fort Garry Industries and its group of companies based in Winnipeg, Man. with 28 locations across Canada.

The second is Parts for Trucks headquartered in Halifax, N.S. with 15 locations throughout Eastern Canada in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and Prince Edward Island.

Both are now authorized Idle Free electric APU dealers. According to Idle Free Systems, the agreements will provide sales, installations and support for the company's all-electric APU.

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PRODUCT/SERVICE INDEX

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trucker Radio 29
Truck News.com 44

BUSINESS CONSULTANTS

C.U.T.C. 27
EZ Truckin 47
IPS (Invoice Payment System)..... 30
McLeod Software..... 4
Stateside Transportation Consultants 67
Brandt Finance..... 17

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Truck News/Careers 33,34,35, 36,37,38,39,40,41,42,43, 44,45,46,47,48,49,50,51,52, 53,54,55,56,57,58,59,60
Truck News/Driver Link 69
Truck News/Truck Ops 59

CHILD FIND/MISSING KIDS..... 69

CLASSIFIED 64

CONTAINERS

Z source Equipment 29

CONFERENCES

Surface Transportation Summit.. 36,37

CROSSWORD

July 15 Taxis Crossword Puzzle.... 9
July 15 Taxis Crossword Solution... 65

EXHAUST

Taxis Truck Exhaust 9,64,65
The Truck Exhaust Place 20

FIFTH WHEELS

SAF-Holland 20

FINANCING

Accutrac Capital Solutions 13
Brandt Finance..... 17

FUEL

Davis Fuels..... 21

INSURANCE

Burrowes Insurance Brokers..... 19
Hargraft Schofield LP 18
Nal Insurance..... 8
SGI 2

INVOICE PAYMENT

IPS (Invoice Payment System)..... 30

LIGHTING

Peterson Manufacturing 23

LUBRICANTS

Castrol/Wakefield Canada 25
Shell Canada Products Ltd. 71

MEDICAL SERVICES

Ontario Drivers Medical..... 61

OWNER OPERATOR OF THE YEAR

AWARD 27

RADIATORS

Atlantis Radiator Truck Auto Service 67
King Radiator HD..... 61
XL Radiators 26

SAFETY AND COMPLIANCE

Stateside Transportation Consultants..... 67

SEATS

Bose/BoseRide..... 24

SOFTWARE

McLeod Software..... 4

STORAGE TRAILERS

Trailer Wizards 13

SUBSCRIPTION TO TRUCK NEWS.. 61

TANKER SALES (NEW & USED)

Dependable Tank 10
Eastway Tank 63
Tankmart International..... 16
Tremcar 6

TANKER LEASING

Tankmart International..... 16
Transcourt 28
Tremcar 6

TARP SYSTEMS

Trison Tarps..... 15
Verduyn Tarps 31

TIRES & TIRE SERVICE

Benson Tire..... 22
Michelin 32,66

TRAILER LEASING & RENTAL

Action Trailer Sales..... 7
Glasvan Great Dane 5
Trailer Wizards 13

TRAILER PARTS & SERVICE

Action Trailer Sales..... 7
Glasvan Great Dane 5
Kingpin Specialists 62
Traction..... 20
Trailer Wizards 13
Trison Tarps..... 15
Verduyn Tarps 31

TRAILER SALES (NEW)

Action Trailer Sales..... 7
Glasvan Great Dane 5
Trailer Wizards 13
Z Source Equipment..... 29

TRAILER SALES (USED)

Action Trailer Sales..... 7
Glasvan Great Dane 5
Penske..... 21
Trailer Wizards 13

TRAINING

David Benjatschek: Authenticity 67

TRUCK PARTS & ACCESSORIES

Bose Corporation 24
Morgan's Diesel Truck Parts..... 11
XL Radiators..... 26

TRUCK SALES (SHUNTS, YARD TRACTORS)

Capacity of Ontario..... 14
Capacity Trucks..... 18
Glasvan Great Dane Autocar..... 5

TRUCK SALES (USED)

Morgan's Diesel Truck Parts..... 11

TRUCK SERVICE & REPAIRS

Benson Truck Service..... 22
XL Radiators..... 26

ALPHABETICAL LIST

Accutrac Capital Solutions..... 13	Laidlaw Carriers (Bulk/Dumps)..... 48
Action Trailer Sales 7	Laidlaw Carriers (Tanks) 35,51
Arnold Bros. Transport 34	Laidlaw Carriers (Vans) 54
Atlantis Radiator Truck Auto Service 67	Liquid Capital Midwest..... 64
Benson Truck & Trailer 22	McLeod Software..... 4
BF Goodrich 70,72	Michelin 32,66
Bison Transport 49	Mill Creek..... 39
Bose Corporation 24	Morgan's Diesel Truck Parts..... 11
Brandt Finance..... 17	NAL Insurance 8
BTC Express..... 51	Ontario Drivers Medical 61
Burns Realty Group..... 67	Owner Operator Of The Year Award 27
Burrowes Insurance Brokers 19	Penske 21
Canada Cartage..... 39	Peterson Manufacturing 23
Capacity of Ontario 14	Purolator 33
Capacity Trucks..... 18	Q-Line Trucking..... 55
Career Opportunities 33,34,35, 36,37,38,39,40,41,42,43,44, 45,46,47,48,49,50,51,52, 53,54,55,56,57,58,59,60	SAF-Holland..... 20
Cascades Transport 43	Saskatchewan Government Insurance 2
Castrol/Wakefield Canada 25	Scotlynn Commodities 50
CDI 44	Shell Canada Products 71
Challenger Motor Freight..... 38	Stateside Transportation Consultants..... 67
Child Find-Missing Kids 69	Surface Transportation Summit.. 36,37
Classified 64	Tankmart International 16
Contrans Flatbed..... 57	Taxis Truck Exhaust 9,64
Cooney Bulk Sales..... 45	The Rosedale Group 58
Country Transport 43	The Truck Exhaust Place..... 12
Crossword Puzzle & Solution .. 9,65	Topac Express..... 53
Cushman & Wakefield..... 26	Trailer Wizards 13
C.U.T.C..... 28	Transcourt Tank Leasing..... 28
Day & Ross 53	Trans-Frt. McNamara 46
David Benjatschek – Authenticity.. 67	Transport Financial Services 65
Davis Fuels 21	TransX Group Of Companies 56
DeckX..... 57	Tremcar 6
Dependable Tank 10	Trison Tarps 15
Doyle Transportation 47	Truck News – Driverlink 69
E.T. Transport..... 41	Truck News – Subscription 61
Eastway Tank 63	Truck News – Truck Ops 59
EZ Truckin 47	Trucker Radio 29
Glasvan Great Dane 5	UAP Traction 20
G.T.I. Roll Transportation 52	Uniroyal 68
Hargraft Schofield LP..... 18	Verduyn Tarps..... 31
Highlight Motor Freight..... 59	Villeneuve Tank 43
Hyndman/A Celadon Company... 40,60	Wawa Transport 35
International Truckload Services 49	Wilson Truck Lines 47
IPS (Invoice Payment Systems) 30	XAN Systems 45
J-Line Transport 45	XL Radiators..... 26
Keypoint Carriers 52	Young Transportation – American Division..... 55
Kingpin Specialists..... 62	Young Transportation – Canadian Division..... 47
King Radiator HD..... 61	Z source Equipment 29
Kriska Transportation 42	

1	W	E	I	G	H	S	T	A	T	I	O	N	S	
	E	D	A	O		O	I	A						
8	B	I	L	L	I	N	G		P	Y	L	O	N	
	A	E	L	G		S	L	D						
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	T				12	M	E	E	A					
13	O	P	T	I	O	N		15	W	E	T	K	I	
18	G	E	A	R	O	I	L	S		19	B	E	A	N
	R	C	R	A		21	A	R	D					
22	A	T	T	I	C		23	R	E	S	E	R	V	E
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BY EDO VAN BELKOM

THE STORY SO FAR

Mark gets a regular route from Edmonton to Yellowknife, transporting supplies for the winter ice roads. Halfway through his first trip he gets sleepy and nearly drives off the road. When he takes a break and gets out of his truck, he's swarmed by insects. After jumping back into his truck, he is fighting off the bugs all the way to High Level.

After a fitful night's sleep in High Level, in which he was continuously pestered by the intermittent buzzing of mosquitoes in his ears, Mark was back on the road to Yellowknife. In the first three hours of his drive he dispatched 12 of the bloodsuckers, either in the palm of his hand or against his dashboard.

Every time he squashed one of the tiny bloodsuckers, he breathed a sigh of relief believing that that one had been the last of them.

But, sure enough, minutes later, another one would take its place keeping Mark attentive and getting him to Yellowknife without ever once dozing off or driving onto the shoulder.

When he reached the company yard in Yellowknife, Mark was more than ready for a long night's sleep.

He'd dispatched the last mosquito about an hour past Fort Providence and there was a nice secluded corner of the yard where a half dozen other drivers had parked for the night.

He should have really ventured into town and indulged in a hotel room, but that would take time and effort and put off the rest he so desperately needed, so as soon as he'd checked in with the yard boss, Mark snuck into a out-of-the-way spot at the edge of the lot and crawled into his bunk.

Sleep came almost instantly, followed by...*a woman he'd met in the grocery store who'd said her name was Rachel...who was wondering if Mark could help her with something back at her house...and he could...and when they arrived there didn't seem to be any problem that Mark could see...except for her husband angrily pounding on the door and wanting to get in...*

"Dalton!" he said. "Dalton, I know you're in there."

Mark's head jerked up off the pillow. "Huh? What?"

"You got to be in there, Mark," a voice said outside the truck. "I've come too far for it not to be you."

"Who's there?" Mark said.

"Hah! I knew you were in there. It's me, Johnny."

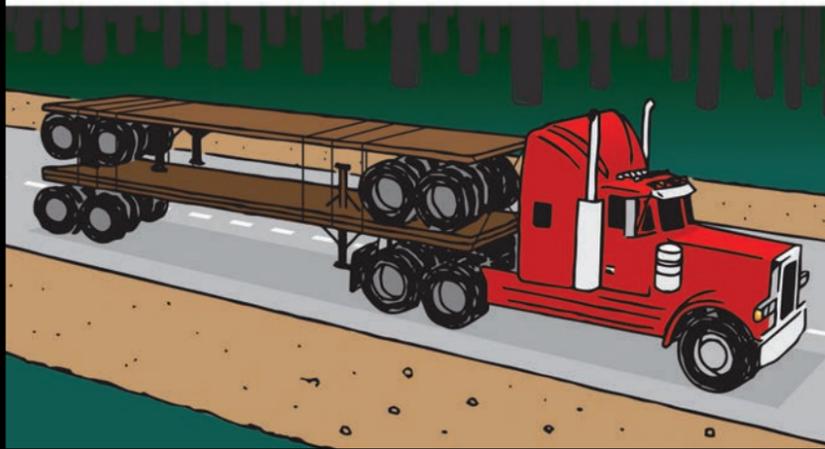
"Who?" Mark wasn't playing a game, he really didn't recognize the name.

"Me, Johnny Jones. You helped me a few years ago when I was driving for J.J. and G. and was delivering Just-in-Time loads of auto parts to GM in Oshawa. You made sure I didn't get ripped off."

Mark remembered the guy, but barely. "Things turned out alright, then?"

"Yeah. They sure did. I own four trucks now...got a bunch of drivers working for me. Life's good, and it's all because of you."

"You're welcome." Mark let his head fall onto the



Miles to go before I sleep

pillow.

A few moments of silence, then, "Aren't you coming out to see me?"

Mark realized he was being a little rude, but he was just so tired and he needed to rest. "Sorry, friend. I'm really tired and I've gotta get some rest."

"No way. It's fate that our paths crossed way out here. I've always wanted to thank you and this is my chance. I want to take you out for dinner, maybe a drink or two and a few laughs."

"Like I said, I..."

"I'm going to keep asking you till you open this door and come into town with me."

"Sorry, but..."

"I mean it. You can sleep when you're dead, I want to show you a good time."

The irony of what the man said wasn't lost on Mark.

Of course there would be plenty of time to sleep after death, especially when a lack of sleep while living might actually have something to do with bringing on that very state of death.

It was also obvious that this guy wasn't going to allow him to sleep no matter what he said, so he might as well go out, enjoy a free dinner and have a few laughs.

He almost laughed under his breath when the thought popped into his head...What's the worst that could happen?

Mark couldn't remember what time he got back to Mother Load. After he'd had a plate of char and other fish from Great Slave Lake at the Bullocks Bistro, they'd gone to a small pub on Yellowknife's main drag. After closing the place down a cab dropped him off at Mother Load and then it was morning and another man was knocking on his door.

"You in there?"

"Yeah," Mark said, his head sore. "Your load's ready. It needs to be out of the yard in half an hour."

Mark managed an "Uh-huh," and the man went away.

Then, 20 minutes later Mark was connecting Mother Load to a flatbed that had two other flatbed trailers piled up on top of it. They were all older trailers scheduled for overhauls that would extend their life on the Mackenzie Highway and the ice roads later in the year.

And because the work on the trailers would be extensive the shop time for their repairs was already scheduled, meaning there was a hard deadline for their arrival in Edmonton.

"Perfect," Mark thought aloud.

While his logbook showed that he'd had more than the required amount of off-duty hours, less than half of those hours had been spent resting.

And now, even though he was out of the yard and on-duty, he still had to take care of little things like a food, fuel and a bathroom break before he could begin to put any meaningful number of kilometres behind him.

Within no time he could feel he was driving tired and seriously wondered if he'd be able to make it to High Level without going off the road.

He put another audiobook on, an *Outlander* book by James Axler that would have lots of gunfire and sex to keep him awake and alert, but after a couple of hours he was having trouble following the storyline.

He stopped at the roadside and poured himself a cup of coffee from his Thermos and was able to carry on for close to another hour before it was obvious that he needed to rest. And so he found a safe spot to pull over and reclined his seat back for a quick 15-minute nap.

He was awakened two hours later by the airhorn of a passing rig.

Two hours, Mark thought staring as his watch. It had felt like two minutes.

Regardless, Mark was happy to have had the rest and got back onto the highway feeling refreshed and energized.

It was a feeling that didn't last.

Mark was expecting his cell phone to ring at any moment and hear Bud yelling in his ear, "You're late, Dalton. How can you do this to me?"

But thankfully, Mark's cell phone wouldn't get any reception until he was closer to Edmonton... tomorrow. ●

- Mark Dalton returns next month in Part 3 of *Miles to go before I sleep*.



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Quebec trucking firms team up to add scale, expertise

LANORAIE, QUEBEC

Two Quebec trucking firms with similar specialties and values have partnered up to better serve customers and to enhance their capabilities.

Express Mondor and Transport l'Épiphanie say their new strategic partnership allows them to collectively offer more than 80 tractors and 200 trailers.

The companies will work together serving a wide cross-section of customers in Canada and the US, according to an announcement.

Together, they say they'll be able to

better optimize their equipment.

"We are delighted with this agreement, which will allow Transport l'Épiphanie to strive for continued growth by capitalizing on additional skills and resources, in order to better meet the needs of our customers, while continuing to offer fast and personalized service, seven days a week, 24 hours a day," says Éric Morin, president of Transport l'Épiphanie.

"Express Mondor and Transport l'Épiphanie are companies that have known each other for many years. We work in the same industry, and we share the same values, in particular

regarding customer service and operational safety. We are therefore very pleased with this agreement that allows us to continue to develop our operations, as well as meet our customers' expectations even more," added Éric Mondor, president of Express Mondor.

The two firms say the agreement will allow them to consolidate their position as a major player in the non-standard transportation industry, focusing on oversized loads.

Express Mondor has been around since 1995 while Transport l'Épiphanie traces its roots back more than 65 years. ●

Titanium Group posts record Q1

WOODBRIDGE, ONTARIO

Titanium Transportation Group recently disclosed its first quarter earnings for the first time as a publicly traded company, touting record revenue. The company says its revenue was up 68% and represents an annualized run rate in excess of \$115 million with EBITDA of \$13 million.

Revenue for the first quarter was \$24 million with EBITDA of \$2.8 million, up 68% and 145% respectively over the first quarter of 2014.

Truck transportation revenue rose to \$14.7 million, up 63% over Q1 2014.

Logistics revenue rose to \$9.4 million, a 74% increase over the first quarter last year.

This is partly due to acquisitions, including Muskoka Transport, which contributed \$2.8 million in revenue in the first quarter since its acquisition March 1. Titanium reports it has an M&A pipeline of asset-based truckload companies in place.

"We are pleased to announce record results for the first quarter of 2015 including a significant increase in operating margins. These results are particularly positive, as the first quarter is historically our weakest due to industry seasonality," announced Ted Daniel, CEO of Titanium Group. ●

Canada Cartage recognizes 'everyday heroes'

TORONTO, ONTARIO

Canada Cartage is recognizing two of its drivers for being everyday heroes who went above and beyond to make a real difference in the lives of others.

The first driver Canada Cartage is recognizing is Doug Strickland based out of Oshawa, Ont.

On Oct. 14, 2014 Strickland witnessed a store clerk at a gas bar in Clarington, Ont. with his arms up in the air and a hooded suspect.

He quickly left from the store and called police who arrived while the robbery was still in progress and apprehended the suspect.

The Durham Regional Police awarded Strickland on Apr. 22 for his brave actions and quick thinking.

The second driver it is recognizing is Michael Stack, a White-

horse-based driver based out of Canada Cartage's Edmonton terminal. On Apr. 21, he was driving down a northern highway when he came across a tractor-trailer belly-up in the ditch.

He immediately stopped and assisted in the rescue of a commercial driver who was still in the cab of the twisted tractor.

As a former paramedic, Stack helped the driver and conducted cervical spine precautions, bandaged the driver's wounds, and helped him into another vehicle to meet the ambulance that was dispatched from a few hours away.

He later secured the scene by disconnecting the tractor-trailer's batteries, as to prevent a fire.

"We have everyday heroes on our team," says Canada Cartage president and CEO, Jeff Lindsay.

"We are very proud of both Doug and Michael for their heroic efforts and for demonstrating incredible humanity, one of Canada Cartage's core values". ●

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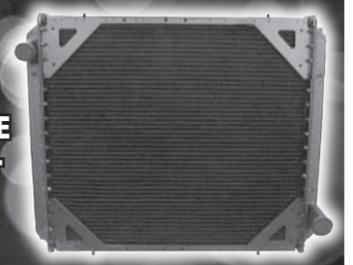
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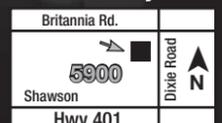


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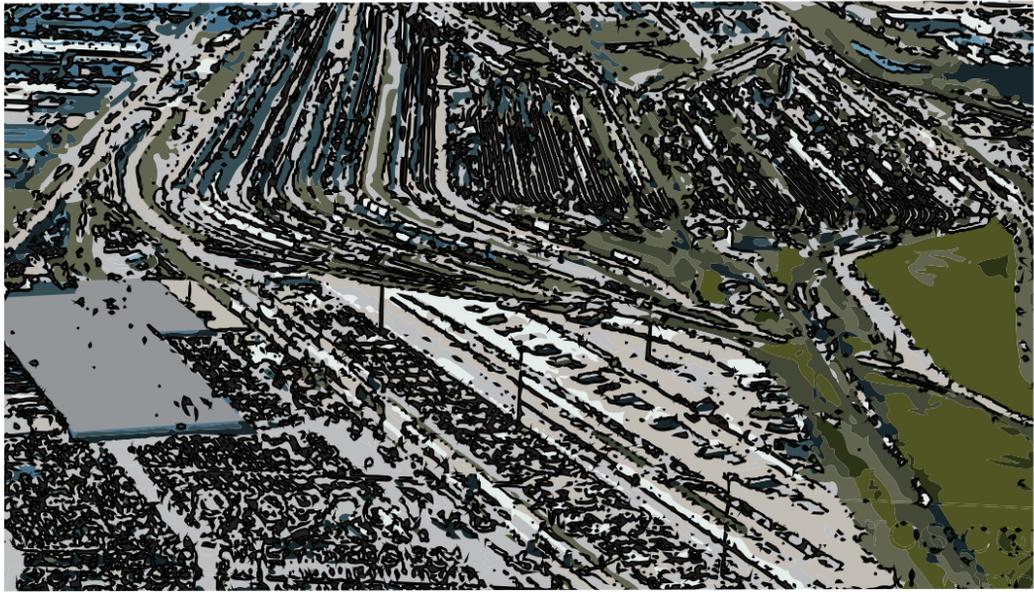
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The Adventures of NEWLAND TRANSPORT

By Edo Van Belkom

Vic signs a deal to haul container loads from the rail yard in Vaughan, Ontario. Bud's promise of a higher pay rate seems to be coming true as he's set to earn \$.35 per mile with this new job.



He arrives in Vaughan to pick up his first container. He's overwhelmed by the chaos of the place and doesn't know where to go or what to do. He asks a fellow driver for help and is given instruction that confuse him. So he goes to the spot where he thinks he should go...



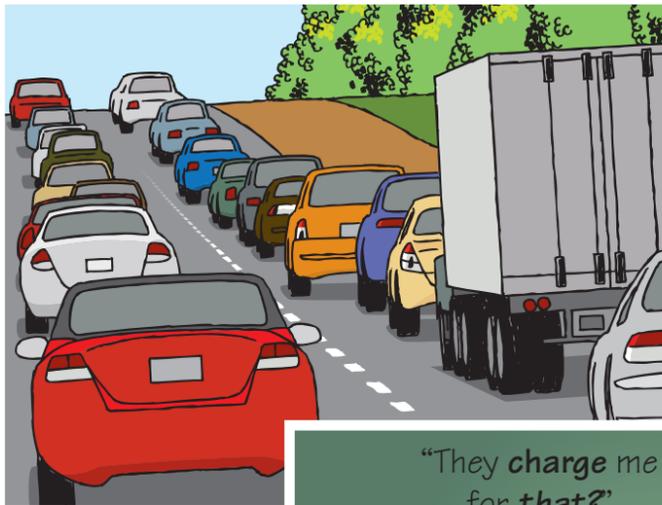
All the while trucks are moving in and out.

Finally, he sees the driver who gave him the instructions driving out of the yard with a load. He flags him down and asks him,



The driver tells Vic that lesson number one in the container business is every man for himself, then he drives off leaving Vic standing alone and feeling stupid.

He gets in line now, pushes his way in and gets a load that's destined for North Bay. It's a lot of miles but after waiting so long, it's now rush hour on a Friday afternoon and the traffic heading north is bad. No wonder this load was available to him.



Eventually, the traffic breaks and Vic gets moving. However, by the time he gets to North Bay the shop is closed and he has to wait overnight to make the delivery.

The next morning, the shop opens up and Vic is able to deliver his load.

He returns his empty container to the yard. While waiting in line for his next load he steps out of his truck for some fresh air and calculates what he makes. Mileage, minus fuel, meals, traffic, down time...

Other drivers remind him about chassis and container rentals for being late with the empty trailer.



Vic is surprised by the hidden costs and gets discouraged.



"How am I ever going to make money at this job?."

Illustration by Glenn McEvoy



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Navistar taps Paccar veteran; MTA names new safety director; and Trailcon and Trailer Wizards make key promotions in Ontario

Navistar International has named **Jeff Sass** its new senior vice-president, North America Truck Sales and Marketing. Sass joins Navistar after having spent 20 years working for Paccar in various roles, including marketing, dealer development, customer service and sales. Most recently he served as national sales manager for Paccar Parts.

"Jeff is an experienced and respected leader in the industry and has a strong track record in developing new business, generating sales and supporting customers in the North American truck industry," said Bill Kozek, president, Navistar Truck and Parts. "I have known Jeff for many years, having worked together at Paccar, and I know he'll bring new insights, high energy and excellent leadership to our International Truck sales and marketing team."

The Manitoba Trucking Association (MTA) has named **Ed Pschulski** its new director of the Manitoba Trucking Safety Program. He brings more than 14 years' safety experience to the role, the MTA announced.

Pschulski will be charged with "guiding a trucking industry-based safety program for employers and workers to engage in positive safety and health practices that ensure employees are safe and workplaces are productive," MTA announced.

After some steady growth, Trailcon Leasing has responded with several new appointments at its Brampton, Ont. head office.

The company's president Alan Boughton announced that **Mike Krell** has been promoted to vice-president, sales and marketing. Krell joined Trailcon back in 2000 and held a number of sales-related positions. In his new position, Krell will continue to service his existing accounts, acquire new business, and oversee the sales team to maximize future growth.

On April 1, **Bryan Burningham** joined Trailcon as vice-president, ser-

vice and operations, reporting directly to Boughton. He came to the position with many years of experience in the transportation industry.

In addition, **Mick Crowe** has been promoted to national accounts service manager. Most recently, he was the service and operations manager at Trailcon. He has been a part of the Trailcon team since 2007.

Colleen Celseti has been promoted to billing supervisor. She joined Trailcon in 2007 as the service billing coordinator. In her new position, she will continue to look after service invoicing, and will supervise all service, rental, and leasing billing.

Finally, **Stacey Carroll** has been promoted to marketing coordinator. Carroll has been with Trailcon for 11 years and in her new position, she will oversee the activities of Trailcon's marketing department, including press liaison, social media initiatives, Web site development, events planning, advertising, and the *Report on Transportation* newsletter.

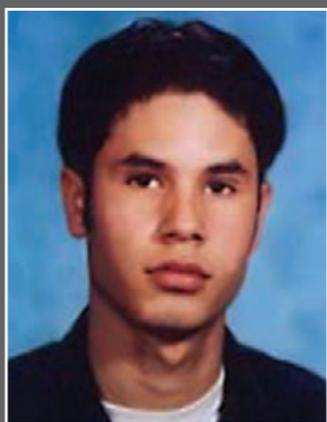
Trailer Wizards has announced that **Gary Nippard** has been appointed senior service manager for the Mississauga and Gormley, Ont. operations. With 20 years of service management experience, he will be in charge of the smooth running of shops and will work closely with the service team to ensure safety and productivity, the company says.

"Gary's extensive experience as a service manager, as well as his ability to implement best practices, makes him ideal to manage and grow our Mississauga service centre," said Anne McKee, executive vice-president. "Gary has also been recognized for his dedication to customer-friendly service, which is part of what Trailer Wizards is known for delivering."

Trailer Wizards invites folks out to meet Nippard and the rest of the Ontario team at its Customer Appreciation Day on June 25 from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at its Mississauga location (1880 Britannia Road East, Mississauga, Ont.)

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TRUCK NEWS CAREERS www.trucknews.com

Classic Freight: Doing business the old-fashioned way

It's all in the name. Classic Freight Systems, based in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, is doing business the only way old-school truckers want it to be done – the old-fashioned way. After getting new ownership in 2011, the fleet has benefited from the management of Blair Clark whose mantra is essentially, 'If we succeed, you succeed.' Sonia Straface caught up with some senior staff of the company recently.

Classic Freight Systems – a 60-truck fleet that services both the oil and gas industry and hauls a fair share of lumber and metal – isn't even in the teenage years of business yet, but it has hit a major growth spurt.

With such rapid growth since its new ownership in 2011, one would expect the company to hit its awkward stage, but surprisingly Classic Freight claims it hasn't really had any growing pains yet.

Behind the flourishing business is Blair Clark, general manager of the Dartmouth-based fleet, who says the key to the company's success is three-fold: the ownership, the customers and the employees.

"I guess Classic Freight itself has been in operation for many years with several different ownership groups but it began its real increase or stable environment when the Cherubini Group owned by Renato and Danilo Gasparetto purchased Classic Freight," said Clark.

"I came in 2008 as general manager with the understanding that, if we as a group brought it to a certain level, an ownership position would be brought to me, and we'd explore that together.

"So in 2011, we looked at that and we decided on a strategic plan of where we wanted to take Classic together, so myself, Renato and Danilo became business owners and Classic Freight Systems 2011 Limited was born."

In 2011, the business was a modest one with only 20 trucks specializing in mostly heavy metal structures for infrastructure projects.

The next year it purchased a company similar in size and nearly doubled while taking over a 10,000 sq.-ft. building.

This year, the company gained an-

other 20 trucks and is currently operating under a 35,000 sq.-ft. building.

"We've also opened up a new division of intermodal, regional container and warehousing operation," said Clark.

Though the company has grown quite a bit since 2011, Clark says it tries to mimic the feel of being a small company, where everyone knows who they work with and no one is forgotten in the sea of office staff and drivers.

"We're a big enough company now," Clark said. "But in reality, we're still a mom-and-pop company. We know all the drivers' names. We know all the dispatchers, and all the office staff. And though a lot of companies say it, we're truly involved with the people that work at Classic Freight. We want everyone to succeed with us. And I think that makes a difference in our drivers' lives."

And this kind of management style reflects not only in the company's turnover rates, but it's perception in the Maritimes as being one of the best trucking companies there is.

The company boasts a 30% turnover rate and recently received the Employer of Choice award through the Trucking Human Resource Sector Council – Atlantic.

But that's not to say it isn't struggling like the rest of the industry with the driver shortage.

"I think our biggest challenge is certainly the driver market and making sure that we're able to have qualified drivers," said Todd Seward of Classic Freight, who leads the company's intermodal and warehouse operations. "We get our fair share of driver applicants with records that we can't accept; the real challenge is getting good qualified drivers and the more you have the better you feel. We also partner with some selected training schools to participate with interns."

The company claims its enviable retention rate is thanks to a lot of contributing factors like Classic Freight's incentive program and its investment in new equipment its drivers appreciate.

"We have a valid incentive program so the guys who go to work and are productive do get rewarded financially," said Seward. "We're a pretty hands-on company so one thing that we hear often is if a driver has an is-



Classic
Freight
Systems

sue or if there's something going on they can talk to anybody at any time. And we've invested a lot in the last couple of years in new equipment. Eighty per cent of our fleet now is less than three years old."

The company has also made the switch to automated transmissions and has placed a focus on maintenance in the past few months.

"Experienced drivers tend to be hesitant to make the switch from manual to automated, but once they get out and they use it, it's less stressful on them, and they pay more attention to the road, and they are less tired at the end of the day," Seward said.

In the last year, Classic Freight has also hired a full-time maintenance manager and rolled out a disciplined preventive maintenance cycle that it follows.

Progress of the cycle is discussed daily, the company says. Classic Freight says it is hopeful of its future but isn't blind to the challenges the industry faces ahead.

"We know it's going to get tougher," said Andre Toupin, head of the open deck division at Classic. "The industry is getting older and the younger generation hasn't jumped into the industry as quickly as we'd like to see, but we are fortunate enough to have more younger drivers than most fleets."

Seward agreed.

"Trucking is tough and it's not for the faint of heart. It's 24/7. The expectations are fairly strict and there's a lot of variables that you can't put your finger on. But you have to try to manage that," said Seward.

"Transportation will continue to be challenged by the regulatory environment and the driver shortage. And the attractiveness that we need to put in the industry to encourage and entice new people."

Classic Freight says it is still looking to expand its business and grow more in the coming years, despite the scary facts and numbers that are being thrown at trucking companies of all sizes.

"You have to be working for tomorrow," said Clark. "But you also have to be looking at the task at hand today. Our task at hand today is to provide service to our customers through communication and engagement with our driving and office staff. That's what we have to do today. We would like to expand to double our size again in four years. But that being said we aren't a publicly traded company and we're not driven by quarterly returns.

"We do have some options to purchase, but they have to fit with our core group and business. So, in layman's terms, organically first is our primary direction. We aren't aggressively seeing purchase opportunities but we are evaluating." ●

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